

THE
LONDON STAGE;

A COLLECTION OF THE MOST, REPUTED
TRAGEDIES
COMEDIES, OPERAS, MELO-DRAMAS,
FARCES, AND INTERLUDES.

—
ACCURATELY PRINTED FROM ACTING COPIES, AS
PERFORMED

At the Theatres Royal,
AND CAREFULLY COLLATED AND REVISED.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS, BY
SHERWOOD AND CO. PATERNOSTER ROW.
AND SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

BM1918





THE CHANCES;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS:

ALTERED FROM BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER, BY DAVID GARRICK.



Act I.—Scene 6

CHARACTERS.

DUKE
DON JOHN
DON FREDERICK
PETRUCHIO
ANTONIO
PETER

ANTHONY
FRANCISCO
PEREZ.
PEDRO
GUZMAN
SANCHIO

GENTLEMEN
SERVANTS
FIRST CONSTANTIA
SECOND CONSTANTIA
LANDLADY
NURSE

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter PETER and ANTHONY.

Peter. 'Would we were remov'd from this town,
Anthony,

That we may taste some quiet! for mine own part,
I'm almost melted with continual trotting
After inquiries, dreams, and revelations,
Of who knows whom, or where? Serve wenching
soldiers!

I'll serve a priest in Lent first, and eat bell-ropes.
Anth. Thou art the forwardest fool!—

Peter. Why, good, tame Anthony,
Tell me but this: to what end came we hither?

Anth. To wait upon our masters.

Peter. But how, Anthony?

Answer me that; resolve me there, good Anthony.

Anth. To serve their uses.

Peter. Shew your use, Anthony.

Anth. To be employ'd in anything.

Peter. No, Anthony;

Not anything, I take it, nor that thing
We have to discover, like a new island;
I'll give 'em warning.

Anth. Come, come, all will be mended: this in-
visible woman,

Of infinite report for shape and beauty,

That bred all trouble to no purpose,
They are determin'd now no more to think on.

Peter. Were there ever
Men known to run mad with report before?
Or wander after that, they knew not where
To find; or, if found, how to enjoy? Are men's
brains

Made, now-a-days, with malt, that their affections
Are never sober?

I do believe,

That men's love are ever drunk, as drunken men
Are ever loving.

Anth. Pr'ythee, be thou sober,
And know that they are none of those, not guilty
Of the vast vanity of love, only a doubt
Fame might too far report, or rather, flatter
The graces of this woman, made them curious
To find the truth; which, since they find so
Lock'd up from their searches, they are now re-
solv'd

To give the wonder over.

Peter. 'Would they were resolv'd
To give me some new shoes, too! for I'll be
sworn,

These are e'en worn out to the reasonable soles,
In their good worship's business: and some sleep
Would not do much amiss, unless they mean
To make a watchman of me.—Here they come!

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter DON JOHN and DON FREDERICK.

Don J. I would we could have seen her though:
for, sure,

She must be some rare creature, or report lies:
All men's reports, too.

Don F. I could well wish I had seen Constantia:
But since she is so conceal'd, plac'd where
No knowledge can come near her, so guarded!
As 'twere impossible, though known, to reach her,
I have made up my belief.

Don J. Hang me, from this hour,
If I more think upon her!
But as she came a strange report unto me,
So the next beautiful fame shall lose her.

Don F. 'Tis the next way:—
But whither are you walking?

Don J. My old round,
After my supper, and then to bed.

Don F. Your servant, then.

Don J. Will not you stir?

Don F. I have a little business.

Don J. I'd lay my life, this lady still—

Don F. Then you would lose it.

Don J. Pray, let's walk together.

Don F. Now I cannot.

Don J. I have something to impart.

Don F. An hour hence,
I will not miss to meet you.

Don J. Where?

Don F. I' th' High-street;
For, not to lie, I have a few devotions
To do first, and then I am your's, Don John.

Don J. Devotions, Frederick! Well, I leave
you to them:

Speed you well: but remember—

Don F. I will not fail. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A Street.

Enter PETRUCHIO, ANTONIO, SANCHIO, and
BAPTISTA.

Anto. Cut his windpipe, I say.

San. Fie, Antonio!

Anto. Or knock his brains out first, and then
forgive him.

If you do thrust, be sure it be to th' hilts,
A surgeon may see through him.

San. You are too violent.

Bapt. Too open; indiscreet.

Petr. Am I not ruin'd? [son'd?
The honour of my house crack'd? my blood poi-
My credit and my name?

Bapt. Be sure it be so,
Before you use this violence. Let not doubt,
And a suspecting anger, so much sway you:
Your wisdom may be question'd.

Anto. I say, kill him,
And then dispute the cause.

Bapt. Hang up a true man,
Because 'tis possible he may be thievish?
Is this good justice?

Petr. I know, as certain
As day must come again, as clear as truth,
And open as belief can say it to me,
That I am basely wrong'd, wrong'd above recom-
pense,

Maliciously abus'd, blasted for ever
In name and honour, lost to all remembrance,
But what is smear'd and shameful: I must kill him;
Necessity compels me.

San. But think better.

Petr. There's no other cure left; yet, witness
with me,
All that is fair in man, all that is noble,
I am not greedy of his life I seek for,
Nor thirst to shed man's blood; and 'would 'twere
possible,
I wish it from my soul,

My sword should only kill his crimes: no, 'tis
Honour—honour, my noble friends, that idol,
honour,

That all the world now worships, not Petruchio,
Must do this justice!

Anto. Let it once be done,
And 'tis no matter whether you, or honour,
Or both, be accessory.

Bapt. Do you weigh, Petruchio,
The value of the person, power, and greatness,
And what this spark may kindle?

Petr. To perform it,
So much I am tied to reputation,
And credit of my house, let it raise wild-fires,
And storms that toss me into everlasting ruin,
Yet I must through; if you dare side me.

Anto. Dare!
Say we were all sure to die in this venture,
As I am confident against it, is there any
Amongst us of so fat a sense, so pamper'd,
Would choose luxuriously to lie a-bed,
And purge away his spirit? send his soul out
In sugar sops, and syrups? Give me dying.
As dying ought to be, upon my enemy:
Let them be all the world, and bring along
Cain's envy with them, I will on.

San. We'll follow.

Petr. You're friends, indeed!

Anto. Here is none will fly from you;
Do it in what design you please, we'll back you.

Petr. That's spoken heartily.

Ant. And he that flinches,

May he die, lousy, in a ditch!

San. Is the cause so mortal? nothing but his life?

Petr. Believe me,
A less offence has been the desolation
Of a whole name.

San. No other way to purge it?

Petr. There is, but never to be hop'd for.

Bapt. Think an hour more,
And if, then, you find no safer road to guide you,
We'll set our rest, too.

Anto. Mine's up already,
And hang him, for my part, goes less than life.

[Exeunt.]

Enter DON JOHN.

Don J. The civil order of this city, Naples,
Makes it belov'd and honour'd of all travellers,
As a most safe retirement in all troubles,
Beside the wholesome seat, and noble temper
Of those minds that inhabit it, safely wise,
And to all strangers courteous. But I see
My admiration has drawn night upon me,
And longer to expect my friend, may pull me
Into suspicion of too late a stirrer,
Which all good governments are jealous of.
I'll home, and think at liberty: yet, certain,
'Tis not so far night as I thought; for see,
A fair house yet stands open; yet all about it
Are close, and no lights stirring: there may be
foul play:

I'll venture to look in. If there be knaves,
I may do a good office.

Nurse. (Within.) Signior!

Don J. What? how is this?

Nurse. (Within.) Signior Fabritio!

Don J. This is a woman's tongue; here may be
good done.

Nurse. (Within.) Who's there? Fabritio?

Don J. Ay.

Nurse. (Within.) Where are you?

Don J. Here.

Nurse. (Within.) Oh! come, for heaven's sake!

Don J. I must see what this means.

Enter Nurse with a Child.

Nurse. I have stay'd this long hour for you;
make no noise;

Raub. What is your name?

Fritz. Fritz.

Raub. Now, look me in the face—look me in the face, boy; no evasion; will you swear your name is Fritz?

Fritz. Swear! Yes, to be sure I will.

Raub. Then shew me the way to the stable, Fritz.

[*Exit with Fritz.*]

Ernest. So! here I am in my own mansion; the proprietor of this fine estate, and a Baron to boot; and, what is more delightful still, the accepted lover of the beautiful Victorine de Lisberg. How fortunate, that business should call me from Philadelphia to Bordeaux; that there I should become acquainted with my lovely Victorine; and that, just as I was in despair at hearing she was affianced to my uncle, a bullet should remove the obstacle, and make me a rich nobleman into the bargain. Hold, hold! Ernest Von Lindorf; are you not ashamed to speak thus lightly of the death of a relation, to whom, though personally unknown, you have been indebted for so many kind offices? It was only last year, that, oh my simple application, he sent me a handsome sum of money to pay off an importunate creditor, accompanying it by a letter as long as the bill, upon prudence and economy, and which, to my shame be it spoken, I never could get to the bottom of. I little thought, when I was deciphering the poor old gentleman's pot-hooks and hangers, that in a few months I should be master of this mansion, and the privileges and immunities thereto belonging, as my friend, Raubvogel, has it. Poor Major! (*Dunks.*) what devilish fine wine the old boy kept though!

[*Enter MAJOR LINDORF.*]

Major. (*Aside.*) So, now for a snack. Eh? who's that young fellow stuffling away there?

Ernest. (*Perceiving the Major.*) Oh! the steward, I suppose. Good morning, friend; good morning. Here I am, you see.

Major. Yes, I do see you are here; but I really don't understand why. Pray, sir, who may you be?

Ernest. Who may I be? Come, that's pretty well, too; why, your lad said you expected me.

Major. Not I: who are you, sir? who are you?

Ernest. (*Haughtily.*) Your master, sir; and if you behave yourself properly, I have no wish to discharge you.

Major. Discharge me! Zounds and fury! what is your name, sir?

Ernest. What is the meaning of your impertinence, sir? What should the name of Baron Von Lindorf's nephew, and his heir-at-law, be, pray? More civility, if you wish to keep your situation, I beg.

Major. (*Aside.*) Death and the devil! Ernest in Prussia, and in my house! here's an awkward business!

Ernest. Now, sir, I hope you're satisfied.

Major. (*Aside.*) Quite the contrary. Now shall I be dead or not? I'll hear a little more before I decide.

Ernest. Go, and tell my lawyer I want to speak to him; and bid the boy, Fritz, run to the top of the hill, and look if the ladies are in sight.

Major. Lawyer, and ladies! (*Aside.*) Ladies, did you say, sir?

Ernest. Yes, ladies; and see you shew them every respect, as the young Miss Victorine Lisberg will shortly be your mistress.

Major. Miss Victorine Lisberg! What do I hear? (*Aside.*) I—I beg pardon; but, pray, was there not some talk of that young lady's marriage with the Baron?

Ernest. Yes; I believe he was to have married her, if he had lived; and, of course, as his heir, I feel bound to marry her for him.

Major. The devil you do!

Ernest. What's the matter? You look ill.

Major. Ill! Enough to make me, I think. Seize my property, and marry my intended wife!

Ernest. Your property! your wife! Is the man mad?

Major. Yes, I am; stark staring mad! I can hold no longer. Harkye, sir! ah! your uncle is not dead: I am your uncle, sir.

Ernest. Eh? what? You? Can it be possible?—Oh! pho, pho! nonsense; you are either insane, or you would impose upon me.

Major. I say I am Baron Lindorf.

Ernest. 'Tis false, sir. Baron Lindorf, were he living, would be at the head of his regiment.

Major. But I am going to explain.

Ernest. I'll not hear a word. You have not studied your part, sir; you know not the character of the man you would personate. My uncle quit the army while there was a foe in the field? No: did I need a proof of his death, it is that he is no longer carrying fire and sword into the camp of the Hungarians.

Major. He's a noble fellow! he knows his old uncle, the dog! It does look very suspicious. (*Aside.*) That's very true; my dear nephew, you are quite right; but if you will only hear—

Ernest. No more, sir: you are an impostor, and you shall not quit this house, till you have answered for your impertinence before a magistrate.

Major. A magistrate! I shall be ruined! (*Aside.*) My dear boy—my good—

Ernest. Ah, ha! the mention of a magistrate alarms you, does it? My suspicions are confirmed. Into that room, sir; go in directly.

Major. But, Ernest—

Ernest. Go in, or I'll kick you in.

Major. 'Sdeath and fury!

[*Re-enter JOSEPH.*]

Joseph. Heyday! what's all this about?

Major. Joseph! that's lucky. Now, my fine spark, I'll let you know what it is to use me in this manner. Joseph, am I your master, or am I not? Speak the truth, you rascal! am I the Baron Von Lindorf?

Joseph. Oh! I must remember my orders. (*Aside.*) No, certainly; who says you are?

Major. Confusion!

Ernest. There, there; a plain case. You, sir, (*to Joseph*) if you belong to this house, go for a magistrate.

Major. (*To Joseph.*) Rascal! how dare you deny me! I'll be the death of you.

Joseph. (*Aside to Major.*) Why, didn't you insist upon it?

Major. Oh! go to the devil. Sir, (*to Ernest*) my papers shall prove to you—they are in my portmanteau—where is it, you old numskull!

Joseph. I've put it in your room up stairs.

Major. I'll go and fetch them.

Ernest. No, you don't: you shan't leave this room till the mystery is cleared up. You have all the appearance of a downright swindler.

Major. Murder and fire! Joseph, do you go and bring the portmanteau down stairs.

Ernest. No, he shan't go either; there's some collusion in this business, and I'll sift it to the bottom. Here, you Raubvogel! Fritz! (*Calling.*)

Major. Let me be cool. Harkye, sir! do you remember writing a letter to me about ten months ago, something in this style: "My dear, though unknown uncle"—

Ernest. Eh? what's that?

Major. "The most pressing necessity obliges me to appeal once more to your good nature; unless you send me one thousand dollars by the next vessel that sails for America, I've nothing left but to hang myself."

Ernest. The words of the letter, sure enough.

(*Aside.*) I am afraid I have been too hasty; my

dear sir, forgive me. I can no longer doubt; you are, indeed, my kind, my generous uncle.

Major. Oh! I am now, am I? Come, that's some comfort; and will you pretend to tell me you didn't know so all along?

Ernest. My dear sir, how could I possibly be prepared for so strange a circumstance? was not your death in the papers?

Major. What then, sir? what then? Suppose your death had been in them, would you have believed that? Didn't you get a letter from me, sir, to tell you the contrary, six weeks ago, sir?

Ernest. I have left Philadelphia these three months.

Major. Very well, sir, very well; you know it now: I am alive; alive and hearty, sir; and am not going to lose either my property or my wife, I assure you. But, at your peril, disclose to any person that I am living, without my permission. Joseph, follow me.

Joseph. Yes, sir.

Major. You'd be master of this house, would you? and marry the lady I've picked out for myself? We'll see that, young gentleman; we'll see that.

Ernest. But, my dear uncle—

Major. I'll not hear a word, sir; 'tis my turn to be deaf now: Follow me, Joseph.

Enter RAUBVOGEL, hastily.

Raub. (To *Ernest*.) The ladies are come, Baron; the carriage is driving up the avenue.

Major. Indeed! then I shall be just in time to receive them. Baron, (to *Ernest*) you'll oblige me by remaining in the house with your friend there, and remember what I said about silence, Baron. Follow me, Joseph; follow me. [*Exit with Joseph.*]

Raub. Pray; who is that queer old gentleman, Baron?

Ernest. Oh! don't ask me. I'm in a pretty situation.

Raub. A lovely situation, on the brow of a hill, commanding—

Ernest. (Not attending to him.) A miserable prospect.

Raub. Miserable prospect! The finest in all Prussia: a magnificent mansion.

Ernest. Ruined, ruined!

Raub. Not in the least; in the most perfect repair, I give you my honour.

Ernest. Not worth a farthing!

Raub. Sir—Baron Lindorf, let me tell you, my reputation is—

Ernest. Lost, lost for ever!

[*Exit.*]

Raub. He's non compos: the sight of his property has turned his brain; there'll be an application to chancery, in re Lindorf, a lunatic. Sir, sir! [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—The Garden.

Enter VICTORINE and ERNEST LINDORF.

Vict. Oh! my dear Ernest, what will become of us? My mother insists upon everything being at an end between us, and on the immediate fulfilment of her promise to your uncle.

Ernest. As I expected, and I have, unfortunately, so incensed the Baron, that he will now rejoice in the frustration of my hopes; but what did you say on the subject?

Vict. Nothing. I was so petrified by the suddenness of the occurrence, I had not power to open my lips. He informed us who he was as he opened the carriage door; told us he had particular reasons for concealing the fact of his existence, as he handed us out of it; claimed the fulfilment of my mother's promise, as we walked up to the house; and settled everything with her before we crossed the threshold.

Ernest. What must be done?

Vict. I'm sure I don't know. It appears he had written to inform us of the circumstance, but our

visit to Bordeaux prevented our receiving the letter.

Ernest. Here comes your mother; let us appeal to her affection.

Enter MADAME LISBERG.

Madame! Madame Lisberg!

Mad. Mr. Lindorf, this is a most singular affair.

Vict. My dear mother, let me claim your attention for one moment.

Mad. Speak, my love; why this agitation?

Vict. This very morning, upon the road hither, you were kind enough to say, that in consenting to my marriage with Ernest, my happiness was your chief aim.

Mad. To be sure. Mr. Lindorf was then supposed to be the proprietor of this estate; and a baron to boot. He is no longer so; and no one, I think, will doubt my solicitude for your happiness, when I desire you to become the wife of a nobleman, with forty thousand crowns a year. Besides, my word is past, and I request I may hear no further objections. My nerves will really not support a scene of this description.

Ernest. But, madam, when you are aware of our mutual affection, will you coolly sacrifice your daughter?

Mad. Sacrifice, sacrifice, Mr. Lindorf! You've chosen a happy word, sir. Sacrifice, indeed! when I propose to make her a baroness, with a fine fortune, a magnificent mansion, a noble estate, and a corresponding establishment. Sacrifice, indeed! Would to heaven my parents had so sacrificed me! Victorine, go before me, if you please, madam. Sacrifice, indeed! Mr. Lindorf, your very humble servant. [*Exit with Victorine.*]

Ernest. Distraction! there is no hope. Victorine and I are both too much dependent on the bounty of the Baron to dispute his will; are already too much indebted to him, indeed, to encourage such an idea. I am not so ungrateful as to regret my uncle's preservation; but why, why couldn't he have remained dead a little longer?

Enter RAUBVOGEL.

Raub. Bless my soul! Baron Lindorf—I beg pardon, Mr. Lindorf, I should say now—what is the meaning of all this? That queer old gentleman turns out to be the defunct Baron; and has ordered me to draw up a contract between him and Made-moiselle Victorine Lisberg. Excessively sorry, quite hurt upon my honour; sure it must be infinitely painful to you, but what's to be done, my dear sir?

Ernest. Nay, let me rather ask you that question. Is there no obstacle that can be thrown in the way, nothing to be hit upon, that may delay the signature for a few days only?

Raub. Nothing. As far as I am concerned, the course is quite plain. I am desired to draw up a contract; my instructions are given me; I have nothing to do but to fulfil them.

Ernest. And have you the heart to become accessory to an act which will render me miserable for ever?

Raub. The heart! Sir, I am an attorney at law, and have nothing to do with hearts. I would draw a contract for my own rival, if he paid me well for it. Particularly sorry in the present instance, certainly; but I accompanied you hither, Mr. Lindorf, in expectation of a good job. An estate to convey, leases to draw out, and a marriage contract into the bargain. Nothing now left but the contract. Can't enter into private feelings; must attend public duties; pity you exceedingly, as aforesaid.

Ernest. Oh! sir, you are too kind.

Raub. What can be the Baron's reason, pray, for keeping his existence a secret?

[*Money?*]

Ernest. (Sneeringly.) Has he not told his mother?

Raub. Not his object; merely requested silence on that head till further orders.

Ernest. (*Aside.*) What if he should be an impostor after all! He might have become acquainted with the contents of the letter I wrote to my uncle through many circumstances. Where are the papers he spoke of? What other proofs can he give of his identity? The old steward denied him at first. His terror of a magistrate—his haste to complete this contract—the general air of mystery added to the singularity of the circumstance—Raubvogel, I am not satisfied that this man is really what he represents himself to be.

Raub. No?

Ernest. No. Now think what you will lose, should it turn out as I have reason to expect; and tell me whether it be not your interest to aid me in the investigation of the affair, before you commit yourself by acting on the instructions of an adventurer.

Raub. Why, certainly, if there be any doubt as to the identity of the prisoner—I would say, of the person.

Ernest. In my mind there are very strong doubts. Harkye! can you not request a sight of his commission, or any other paper or document, of equal importance, under the pretence that it is necessary for the drawing up of the contract? He knows nothing of the law, and will immediately satisfy you, if he be really the Major.

Raub. Good! a capital idea. Nay, a sight of his papers will be really necessary, if he wishes to introduce all his titles, &c. in the contract.

Ernest. Here he comes; to him directly. I'll wait for you at the end of the walk there. [*Exit.*]

Enter MAJOR LINDORF, with some papers.

Raub. Baron Lindorf, I was on the point of seeking you. Beg pardon, Baron, but if you would oblige me by a sight of your commission, or any other official document, in which I can find your titles properly written: in the contract, you see, I shall need—

Major. Yes, so I supposed: and have just been getting my commission out of my portmanteau for that very purpose. There it is, sir; and with it some other papers, which I will trouble you to look over, and give me your opinion upon.

Raub. (*Aside, after glancing at the papers.*) Hum! Very correct—can be no longer a doubt.—Shall attend to them instantly. Baron.—Verdict confirmed—plaintiff consulted. The most extraordinary case I ever met with, in the whole course of my practice! [*Aside and exit.*]

Major. 'Gad! that little girl will make the best wife in the world. I've been chatting with her this last half hour, and she has told me, with the greatest possible simplicity, all her faults; as she calls them. Faults, forsooth! I shall love her the better for them. I hate your faultless ladies—things without souls—who make it a point to have no tastes, no opinions, but those of their husbands. Zounds! I should be as tired as the devil of standing at ease all my life. A little skirmish now and then is the finest thing in the world for the constitution; and an old fellow, who has been fighting all his days, would—(*Drums without.*) Eh! what the deuce! Soldiers coming this way! An officer, too! What shall I do? He has seen me: to run would look suspicious. Mortars and howitzers! if he knows me, I'm lost; if he find I'm alive, I'm a dead man.

Brum. (*Without.*) Hui!

Enter BRUMENFELD.

Have the kindness, sir, to look at this paper.

Major. (*Reading it.*) Zounds! A whole detachment quartered on the mansion?

Brum. Such are my orders, sir. I am sorry you should find it inconvenient, but—

Major. (*Recovering himself.*) Inconvenient! not in the least; oh dear! no.

Brum. His majesty's information appears to be perfectly correct.

Major. Information! What information, may I ask?

Brum. Several strong bodies of the enemy have been seen in this neighbourhood; and as it is his majesty's intention to march immediately upon this position, it appears to me that this mansion is admirably adapted for head-quarters.

Major. (*Aside.*) Head-quarters! Confusion!

Brum. You are the proprietor, I presume of this estate?

Major. Me?—Ah! no. The proprietor is—What shall I say? Egad! there's no choice. (*Aside.*) The proprietor is a nephew of the late Baron Lindorf.

Brum. The late Baron Lindorf! What, he who fell in the last action?

Major. Exactly. Did you know him?

Brum. Only by reputation.

Major. Ah!

Brum. He was imprudent enough to charge without orders, I believe. He was a fine officer though, by all accounts, and a great favourite with the King; but it was a fortunate thing for him that he was killed in the action.

Major. Indeed! Why so?

Brum. You must know very little of Frederick, as you ask that question. I should be sorry to stand in the Baron's shoes, were he living. But where is the present proprietor? Can I see him?

Major. Is that absolutely necessary?

Brum. Most assuredly. I have several questions I would put to him: besides—

Major. I'll just step and—How to make Ernest understand—(*Aside.*)

Re-enter RAUBVOGEL, with papers.

Raub. 'Baron, Baron!

Brum. Baron!

Major. Silence, you rascal, or I'll throttle you! Didn't I tell you that before strangers I—(*Aside to Raub.*) I'm going to look for the Baron; he'll be here presently, and—

Enter ERNEST LINDORF and VICTORINE.

Ernest. too! and before I can hint to him. (*Aside.*)

Ernest. We come, sir, for the last time, to—

Major. (*Aside to him.*) Not a word, you dog! not a word.

Ernest. How!

Brum. (*To the Major.*) Is that the young Baron? **Major.** Yes, yes. This is the Baron Ernest Von Lindorf! (*Very loud and looking at Ernest.*) The Baron Ernest Von Lindorf!

Ernest. I!

Major. (*Aside to him.*) To be sure, you are; I'm dead.

Brum. Allow me, Baron, to congratulate you. The Baroness, I presume! (*Looking at Victorine.*)

Ernest. The Baroness! Why—(*Looking at the Major.*)

Major. No—ye—that is, she will be the Ba-

Brum. Ha, ha! I understand. Baron Lindorf, you are a happy man.

Ernest. Ah! sir, would I could say—

Major. Say it directly, sir. (*Aside.*) You are a happy man, you know you are.

Ernest. Can it be possible? Do you, then, consent to—

Vict. What do I hear?

Major. (*Aside.*) No, no, I don't mean that. I—they'll drive me mad. Ruin me, murder me!

Enter MADAME DE LISBERG and JOSEPH.

Mad. Major Lindorf, I have just come to say—

Major. (*Aside.*) She, too! I'm not 'he Major. Don't you see an officer! Joseph, it's all over with me.

Brum. Major Lindorf! I beg your pardon, but did I hear rightly?

Joseph. No, no, he is not Major Lindorf, must speak the truth, he is not.

All. How!

Joseph. (Falling on his knees to Ernest.) Pardon, pardon!

Ernest. Pardon, for what? Speak!

Joseph. Swear you'll forgive me, if I tell you everything.

Ernest. I will forgive you. Rise, go on.

Joseph. Well, then, this man is—

Ernest. Who? what?

Joseph. I don't know.

Ernest. Don't know?

Joseph. All that I know is, he is not your uncle.

Ernest. Then how dared you, this morning, say he was? Raubvogel, my suspicions, you find, were correct. Tell me, sir, (to *Joseph*) for what reason did you—

Joseph. The most simple in the world, sir.—Invention! Assist me. (*Aside.*) This man, sir, presented himself before me, early this morning, and in the most gentlemanly manner, took out a pistol, and—

All. A pistol!

Major. (Aside.) What do you mean, rascal?

Raub. Stay, stay! Let me take down his deposition. A pistol! this becomes serious. Putting any of his majesty's subjects in bodily fear, is—

Joseph. No, no; it wasn't a pistol. Did I say a pistol? A Bless you! no such thing. You flurried me so: I meant a purse—a purse.

Raub. Oh! a purse! That alters the case. But one moment: if he be not the Major, pray how did he become possessed of this commission? (*shows it*) and these papers, incontestibly the property of the Baron Von Lindorf!

Joseph. Those papers? Oh! they were given him by the Baron, in his last moments. He died in your arms, didn't he? and desired you to—

Ernest. (To Major.) How, sir! and had you the audacity, then, to convert this sacred deposit into an instrument for forwarding your nefarious designs? Pass yourself for my uncle!

Mad. Insist on marrying my daughter?

Vict. Separate me from Ernest!

Raub. Why, you old scoundrel!

Major. Scoundrel! Fine and faggots!

Joseph. (Holding him back.) Hold, hold!

Ernest. I've a great mind to fling you into the fire.

Raub. Take him before a magistrate, he'll fling him into a gaol.

All. (*But Joseph and Vict.*) Ay, ay; to a magistrate with him.

Vict. Nay, nay, forgive him, dear Ernest: he is sufficiently punished by this disclosure. I cannot bear to see a man of his age, and apparent respectability, dragged to a dungeon. Let me entreat you—there, there; go away, go away directly, and be more honest in future. (*Pushing the Major away.*)

Major. But still, you—

Joseph. It's the best thing you can do. (*Aside.*) Go, go. (*Pushing him.*)

Ernest. Begone, sir; and thank that young lady for your life. (*Pushes the Major.*)

Mad. It's a shame such a villain should not be brought to justice.

Raub. Wrong, very wrong, indeed!

Vict. and Joseph. (To the Major.) Go, go, go!

(*Exit the Major with Joseph.*)

Raub. (To Ernest.) Then you are a Baron, after all?

Mad. A Baron! (*Approaching Ernest, and curt-sewing.*) My dear son-in-law, how delighted I am that there is no longer an obstacle to the happiness of my darling, Victorine.

Ernest. (Sneeringly.) Oh, madam! Raubvogel, come this way. Sir, (*to Brum.*) if you have any business with me, be kind enough to enter the saloon, and I will speak with you directly.

(*Exit all but Brum.*)

Brum. I have very strong doubts. It is the Major himself, I would wager my commission; and his fear of the King's displeasure compels him to submit to these indignities. Sergeant Milligan!

Enter SERGEANT MILLIGAN.

Mill. Here!

Brum. See that a strong guard be set upon this mansion, and the grounds about it; and suffer no one to leave them until my return. Let the rest of the men take up their quarters in the building, according to this order, which you will present to the young Baron, at the same time apologising for my absence, as I have a communication of much importance to make to the King. (*Gives Milligan the billet.*)

(*Exit.*)

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Part of the pleasure-grounds of the Baron's mansion; a small pavilion or summer-house on one side; garden chair and table.*

Enter MAJOR LINDORF and JOSEPH.

Major. But, 'sdeath! Joseph, to be driven like an impostor out of my own house!

Joseph. You may think yourself very well off to escape so easily.

Major. That confounded story you trumped up—*Joseph.* Confounded story! A capital story, considering the little time I had to tell it in; and the manner in which I turned it off.

Major. Ah! there, I allow, you shone exceedingly, for at one time, as you were proceeding, there was every chance of my being turned off, instead of the story.

Joseph. Oh! that was a mere slip.

Major. Yes, but a slip that might have broken my neck.

Joseph. Very well, sir; very well. I had better have remained silent, perhaps, or acknowledged you at once, and then you would have been shot, and as that would have been more military, I suppose it would have been more agreeable—but there's time enough yet, if you are bent upon it. I'll go directly and—

Major. No, no; zounds! no.

Joseph. Just as you please: but if ever I trouble myself to make out a good story again—

Major. Confound you! have done, do; and tell me what's to become of me now: you've made the house too hot to hold me. Where can I go to be cool and comfortable?

Joseph. Nay, my inventions are not to your taste; besides, it is no such easy matter to settle that point: the neighbourhood is swarming with Prussian soldiery, and they avoided, there is every chance of your falling into the hands of the Hungarians. Yet, stay in the house you can't, for more reasons than one.

Major. And if I leave it, that rascally nephew of mine will marry Victorine, that's certain. I can't suffer it; I won't suffer it. The dog! to take advantage of my situation!

Joseph. But he does it quite innocently.

Major. Oh! curse his innocence! What does that signify? No, no, I'm determined. I'll seek him out immediately, and tell him everything—my reasons for remaining unknown. If he hadn't put me in such a passion, I should have done it at first, and all this perplexity might have been spared. Yes, yes; I'll go and—

Mill. (Without.) Right face! March!

Joseph. Oh lord! there's that cursed Irish sergeant, with a file of soldiers, coming this way: some of them may recognise you, sir. Here, here; you had better step in here, till they've passed.

Major. Yes, egad! that'll be the safest plan. Don't let them stop here if you can help it.

Joseph. No, no. In, in.

(*Exit Major into summer-house.*)

Enter SERGEANT MILLIGAN, with two Soldiers, and a Corporal.

Mill. Halt! front! Good morrow, to you, comrade. (To *Joseph*.)

Joseph. Good day, Sergeant.

Mill. Is there any other outlet from the grounds, besides the one yonder, on this side the house?

Joseph. No. What does he mean by that question? (*Aside*.)

Mill. A sentinel there, then, and the business is done entirely.

Joseph. A sentinel! What's that for?

Mill. To see that nobody passes out that way: the other avenues are taken care of already.

Joseph. What, are we all prisoners, then?

Mill. Every mother's son, till further orders. (*Places a sentinel at the gate*.)

Joseph. (*Aside*.) Murder, murder! Here's a pretty business! The Baron cannot fly now, if he would; and if this should be on account of some suspicions!—Oh dear, oh dear! My poor old master! I'm afraid it's all over with him. Let me try to sound this Sergeant.

Mill. This place belonged to Major Lindorf, of the hussars, did it not, my old lad?

Joseph. Yes, it did.

Mill. Ah! and he was killed charging them thieves, the Hungarians, in the last affair?

Joseph. To be sure he was. Who doubts it?

Mill. Who doubts it? Sir, if it would be any satisfaction for you to know, it's my self that doubts.

Joseph. You! The devil! (*Aside*.)

Mill. No, not the devil, but myself—Corny Milligan, Sergeant of the first Prussian Light Infantry. That staggers him I'm right. I'll give him another. (*Aside*.) Hark! my old friend, from several circumstances that have come under my observation, during the short time I've been on this spot, I'm not only convinced that the Major is living, but what's more, that he never was dead, but is concealed somewhere about this place; and I'm likewise very much mistaken if yourself don't know where he is.

Joseph. I—I—how should I know?

Mill. Oh! if you say you don't know, it would be mighty ungentle of me not to believe you, of course.—How he keeps looking towards that pavilion! I shouldn't wonder if the Major were there. (*Aside*.)—That's a pretty pepper custard of a building yonder; a pleasant retreat, I'm after thinking, when a man wishes to be quiet and snug, and easy, with his mug of punch and his pipe, and to avoid unwelcome visitors. If you will permit me, I'll take a peep at the inside of the interior.

Joseph. Stay, say; you can't go there. You—

Mill. Indeed! and why not? May be, I'd be after disturbing somebody's contemplations.

Joseph. Yes, there—there is a gentleman there.

Mill. Oh, ho! a gentleman, eh? And who may he be?

Joseph. A friend of the young Baron's: a legal friend, come down upon business—a notary.

Mill. Ay, ay, I see; 'tis a pity anybody should interrupt him, business must be attended to. I'll just turn the key in the door, and take care he has nobody to bother him but himself, or to make him forget his studies. (*Locks the door*.)

Joseph. Take care what you do; lawyers are edged tools to play with. He'll bring an action for false imprisonment.

Mill. The devil a ha'p'orth! His actions are more likely to turn upon assault and battery, or I've mistaken my prisoner. I'd not wish to be ill-mannered, but I must trouble you to get out: left shoulders forward, and enter the house.

Joseph. I shall inform the Baron how you have treated his friend, depend upon it.—He is lost! Let me hasten and explain everything to his nephew and Miss Victorine. (*Aside, and exit*.)

Mill. I have him, as fixed as a pig in a potatoe-garden. Bravo! Corney, your fortune's made. Captain Brumenfeld is off to tell the King he suspects the Major to be alive, and here; but I—I can produce him. The poor devil is sure to be taken and shot, one of these days; more's the pity; and, therefore, it's a kind action in me to put him clean out of his misery. Promotion stares me plump in the face. The King himself must see me, and speak to me. Oh! then, leave me alone to give him a bit of the blarney. I'll get a commission—a company! Who knows? "Captain Milligan! Captain!" how well that sounds! I'll be nodded to by the other officers: "How d'ye do, Captain? Are you going to the levee to-day?" And then, the women! Oh! the dear creatures! I was always a favourite with them. Now it'll be, "Och! had you the luck to see the Captain? How illegant he looks in his full uniform! What a leg of his own the devil has got for a silk stocking!" Oh! beautiful, delightful! It's myself that will play the very devil with them!

Enter VICTORINE, cautiously, and unseen by Milligan.

Vict. Joseph has explained everything. My kind-hearted benefactor, how can I save you! That ugly soldier still there! If I could but wheedle him away. (*Aside*.) Sir! Captain?

Mill. Eh! didn't somebody say Captain? Am I promoted already, and I not know it? (*Looking round*.) A pretty girl, too! Pretty! egad! she's an angel in a blue petticoat; and she called me captain.

Vict. May I speak a word with you, sir?

Mill. A thousand, and welcome, a cushion.

Vict. You must needs be fatigued with your march, we are just going to sit down to dinner, if you would favour us with your company.

Mill. Oh! madam, you overwhelm me with politeness entirely. Permit me to—(*Goes to take her hand*.) Eh! no, stop: I had nearly forgotten my prisoner though. How unfortunate! I should be mighty happy, madam, but I must know that particular circumstances—that is, that the—that—I'm bothered. The fact is, madam, if I give you my company, I shall lose one that the King-likes to give me.

Vict. Provoking! (*Aside*.) But, surely, sir—Ah! Raubvogel coming this way! A thought strikes me. I'll try, at my rate. (*Aside*.)

Mill. She seems bothered, herself. Attention, Corney, some manoeuvre of the enemy, perhaps. Stand to your arms. (*Returns a little*.)

Enter RAUBVOGEL, with papers.

Raub. (*Reading*.) "These are to certify, that Ernest Von Lindorf, late of Philadelphia, in North America, and now of"—um—um—um!

Vict. (*Half aside*.) Heavens! the Major! How unfortunate!

Mill. How! what? Major! What did you say, jewel!

Vict. (*Feigning embarrassment*.) Sir! nothing, sir! I didn't speak, sir.

Mill. If you didn't speak, you said the Major: I heard you plain enough. Is this the Major? (*Going up to Raubvogel*.)

Raub. Who, I? I a Major? Ha, ha, ha! That's a good joke.

Vict. Oh! what have I done? My agitation has betrayed him.

Mill. Then I'm particularly obliged to your agitation.—Egad! I was near making an awkward mistake here. I see it plainly, now; they've hid the real lawyer there, in order to pass off the Baron here, as the pettifogging big wig. (*Aside*.) Major Lindorf, you are my prisoner.

Raub. What do you mean by Major Lindorf? My name is Raubvogel; I'm an attorney. Touch me at your peril.

Vict. Oh! sir, forgive me.

Raub. Forgive you!

Vict. My imprudence has discovered you.

Raub. Discovered me! What do you mean?

Allow me to say—

Mill. It's of no use at all, at all. It was an unlucky exclamation of the young lady's, certainly, but the cat's out of the bag, and I've caught it; and, by my soul, I'll keep it. *Herr, guard!*

Raub. But let me tell you—(*Soldiers advance.*)

Mill. No resistance! You are under arrest.

Raub. For what?

Mill. Oh! a trifle; a mere trifle. Only charging without orders.

Raub. I shall charge what I please; if you don't like it, tax my costs.

Mill. Come, come, sir; that balderdash won't impose upon an old soldier, and you are too well acquainted with military law not to know—

Raub. Military law! not at all; know nothing about it; studied nothing but civil law all my life.

Mill. Come, come, it won't do, Major; you can't help the old soldier peeping out, for all you've made such a Guy of yourself, with that rogue's coat and that cynical jazy: the disguise is not so bad, but it won't do.

Raub. Harkye! you confounded Sergeant! can you read? Here, here are the papers I am employed on; here are leases I am making out, and a contract of marriage between young Baron Lindorf and this young lady, who, as I hope to be saved, has gone out of her mind, I think. Look at 'em: will they convince you of your mistake?

Vict. (*Aside.*) I fear they will.

Mill. (*Taking and looking at them.*) Oh! evidently a mistake. Why, here is your own Major's commission. By my soul, now, if I'd done this, they'd have called it a blunder. Letters addressed to the Baron Von Lindorf, &c. &c. &c.

Raub. Eh! how? Oh! I recollect; they were given me by that old rascal who was here this morning, I can assure you.

Mill. A plain proof. March!

Vict. (*Aside.*) All's safe again.—(*Aloud.*) Ah! my poor dear Major! my noble benefactor! what have I done? what have I done?

Raub. Miss Lisberg, are you mad? or would you drive me so?

Vict. You, to whom I am under such manifold obligations—

Raub. Obligations be—

Vict. To repay them by delivering you into the hands of the executioner!

Raub. Executioner!

Vict. Hark! already do I hear the muffled drum.

Raub. Muffled devil! oh dear! oh dear!

Vict. Methinks, I see them bind your eyes, those eyes that have often beamed so tenderly on me: the dreadful word is given! they fire! you fall! Ah, ah, ah! (*Pretends to faint.*)

Mill. (*Supporting her.*) Poor thing! don't give way so; it can't be helped, you know; it's the fortune of war, and they'll shoot him easy, jewel. There, there! Forward! with the prisoner!

Raub. But, upon my soul—

Mill. March! I say.

Raub. I can't march! I won't march! I wish I may be hanged if—

Mill. You'll be shot, and that's sooner over. Forward!

Raub. Help! murder! help!

[*Soldiers hurry out Raubvogel.*]

Vict. (*To Milligan.*) Have mercy! Keep his secret—release him, and any sum—

Mill. I'm impenetrable.

Vict. All my jewels.

Mill. Incorruptible: you might as well try to wheedle a bird out of a bush. Stay; I'd nearly forgotten the real attorney though. (*Unlocks the door.*)

I beg your pardon, Mr. Lawyer; I took you for a gentleman; excuse my blunder. I wish you an elegant good-day. By the powers, but I'd like to shoot the attorney instead of the Major. [*Exit.*]

Enter the MAJOR from the Pavilion.

Vict. They are gone. You are saved!

Major. Miss Lisberg, what do I not owe you!

Vict. No words, dear sir; the time is too precious. This fortunate occurrence has withdrawn the sentinels from that gate. Lose not an instant, but fly!

Enter ERNEST.

Ernest. My dear uncle, this way; Joseph is in waiting with two horses. I will accompany you to some place of safety, and endeavour to atone, by my present exertions, for my late unintentional disrespect.

Vict. Oh, heavens! what do I see? Raubvogel is at liberty, and coming this way: some one has acknowledged him, and proved to the Sergeant his mistake.

Ernest. No matter; we have still time to fly.—This way, this way!

Major. I follow you. (*Drums beat without, to arms. All pause.*)

All. Hark!

Ernest. They beat to arms. (*Cries without, "the Hungarians! the Hungarians!" and drums beating to arms.*)

Major. The Hungarians!

Enter MILLIGAN, hastily, followed by Soldiers.

Mill. Fly, fly! the enemy are upon us!

Major. (*Darting forward.*) The enemy!

Mill. Yes, a strong corps of the Hungarians are within pistol shot of the place. Run, run!

Major. Run! never. Such another word, you scoundrel! and I'll knock the teeth down your cowardly throat. Prussians, to the field! the Hungarians and I have an account to settle. *Ernest,* my brave boy, follow your uncle; you shall see how I'll tickle the rascals. Soldiers, I am Major Lindorf! March!

Raub. There, there! I told you so.

Mill. Major Lindorf! I beg your honour's pardon, but you are my prisoner.

Major. With all my heart, sir, after the battle. I give you my word, the word of an old soldier, I will surrender myself; but first, Sergeant, let us beat the Hungarians.

Mill. His majesty will take care to beat them blue, if they dare show their noses in this neighbourhood. But there are none likely to trouble us just now, Major; it was only a little *ruse de guerre* of your humble servant's, which has completely succeeded: and when next you fancy you see an Irishman turn his back on an enemy, depend upon it, he does it in order to meet him face to face. Major, you are out-generalled; taken by a *coup de main*.

Major. Humph! that's too bad; a d—d deal too bad: made prisoner, and no battle! a double misfortune!

Ernest. (*To Sergeant.*) A soldier should have been ashamed of so cowardly a surprise.

Mill. What's that you say?

Major. Hold, hold, Ernest! there's nothing to be done. Sergeant, I am your prisoner.

Ernest. But stay, stay! By what authority, sir, do you act? where are your orders for this arrest?

Mill. Is it my orders?

Raub. Ay, that's very true. Take care what you do, soldier. You and I have an account to settle already, take my word for it.

Ernest. Say that the Major has been guilty of a breach of discipline: no commands have been issued for his apprehension. You cannot detain him without proper authority: as yet, he is free. (*To*

the Major.) Away, sir! mount the horse that awaits you, and remain in concealment till his majesty's pleasure shall be made known.

Mill. Oh! that would be all mighty well; but I have orders, which will prevent his escape, at any rate. To your posts again, comrades! (*To Soldiers, who exeunt all but two, who mount guard again at the gates.*) I have my Captain's orders not to suffer any person to leave this house, or the ground belonging to it, till his return: so, you are all my prisoners, every mother's son, man, woman, and child. It's quite enough for me to know my man; and as I suppose his majesty knows the Major is alive by this time, we shall not have long to wait for better authority.

Major. Yes, yes; resistance is idle. Let the king decide the fate of his old servant: if the worst come to the worst, I've stood to be fired at, before now, by his orders; and d—n it, Ernest, if I'm shot, it's for fighting, and not for running away; that's one comfort, at any rate.

Raub. Beg pardon, Major; but, in case you are to be shot, you'll have your worldly affairs to settle, and anything I can do in the will way—

Major. Psha! (*Raubvogel, bowing to the Major, as he retires, comes in contact with Sergeant Milligan, who thrusts him out.*) Victorine, my pretty, warm-hearted lass, no whimpering; you shall, at least, be a gainer in the business. Here, Ernest, take her, and make her a good husband: I believe I was an old fool for thinking of her myself. If I die, all I have in the world is yours, and if not, there's plenty for us three, and the young regiment we may hope for into the bargain.

[*Exeunt all but Milligan.*]

Mill. My regiment's not quite so certain, I'm afraid. Captain Brumenfeld will be back again directly, and I must be contented to share the glory of the capture with him; I'll be only Lieutenant Milligan after all. Zounds! here he is. Attention!

Enter BRUMENFELD, hastily.

Brum. Sergeant, is the king here?

Mill. Here? no, Captain.

Brum. He is out, reconnoitering, in this direction; but I have not been able to fall in with him.

Mill. Captain, I beg pardon, but I've made a great discovery, entirely—

Brum. What is it?

Mill. Major Lindorf, Captain, who was returned "killed" in the last gazette, has returned alive to this very place here.

Brum. Well, sir, what then?

Mill. What, then, Captain? Why, I've found him out, and in telling the matter to his majesty, you will remember not to forget me.

Brum. Humph! Well, since the Major is your prisoner, it is certainly your duty, as well as your right, to present him to the king, who will doubtlessly know how to appreciate and reward your zeal and activity. (*Drums and trumpets without.*) Hark! his majesty approaches; begone to your prisoner, and be in readiness to advance with him, when I give you the word.

Mill. Oh! surely, Captain. Faith! and it's a good day's work for both of us. You'll get a regiment; and, as for me, I'll be content with a company; or, if it be all the same to you, I'd prefer a troop of dragoons. *Exit.*

(*Drums and trumpets sound.*) *Enter FREDERICK and his staff.*

Fred. (*To an Officer.*) Let the order be read at the head of every regiment. The disappearance of the enemy is no apology for a neglect of discipline. (*Seeing Brumenfeld.*) Bad news, Captain Brumenfeld; the Hungarians have retired without giving us battle.

Brum. It is your fault, sire; you give them no encouragement. If your majesty would suffer yourself to be beaten once or so in a campaign, they might be induced to try conclusions with us more frequently.

Fred. Nay, it is rather the fault of such officers as Captain Brumenfeld, who would not let me be beaten, were I even so inclined.

Brum. With your majesty's permission, I have a boon to ask for an officer, to whom that censure will particularly apply.

Fred. Indeed! Speak.

Brum. The colonel of the royal guard died yesterday of his wounds received in the last affair.

Fred. Poor Schwartzheim? Well, sir?

Brum. If his successor be yet to be named, may I presume to mention a brave old soldier, who has ten strong claims upon your majesty's favour.

Fred. Ten claims! what are they?

Brum. Ten campaigns, sire.

Fred. His rank?

Brum. Major.

Fred. And his name is—

Brum. (*With hesitation.*) He is an ancient comrade of the late proprietor of this mansion.

Fred. You mean the Baron Von Lindorf.

Brum. Yes, sire.

Fred. Well, why do you hesitate to mention that name before me?

Brum. Your majesty may, perhaps, remember, that in the late action—

Fred. He covered himself with glory! To his gallant behaviour I was indebted for my victory, and were he now living.—

Brum. Nay, if it be your pleasure, sire, there is nothing that the Baron would not do to gratify your majesty. *Exit.*

Fred. What does he mean? Ha! I see. (*Beckons to an officer, who carries a small writing case, and gives him some directions.—The officer writes.*)

Re-enter BRUMENFELD with the MAJOR followed by the Sergeant and Guard, ERNEST, VICTORINE, and MADAME LISBERG.

Major. Pardon, sire, pardon! (*Kneeling.*)

Fred. (*Raising him.*) Pardon: for whom? Major Von Lindorf, of the hussars, who, in contempt of my positive instructions, charged the Hungarians in the late action, fell at the head of his regiment, and was returned "killed" in the gazette? Frederick does not carry his resentment beyond the grave. This, gentlemen, is Colonel Von Lindorf, of the royal guards, and I present him to you as a brave officer, to whom Prussia is much indebted. Here is your commission, Colonel. (*Goes up to the table, and signs the commission.*)

Mill. His commission! And what's to be my commission, I'd like to know: nothing but a dirty ensigny, after all. Ensign Milligan! Sure, Captain, you'll just drop a word to his majesty, and—

Brum. Get you degraded to the ranks, sir?

Mill. To the ranks! Ods bother! not a word. Sure, and it wouldn't be even Sergeant Milligan, then!

Mad. Then Victorine will be the wife of a colonel?

Col. No, madam; she will be the wife of a colonel's nephew. The foolish old major, you've heard his majesty say is no more; and the young lady is now perfectly at liberty to follow her own inclinations.

Vict. Ever my benefactor!

Fred. (*Presenting the commission.*) Colonel Lindorf, the war is ended; you will join your regiment at Berlin; and should Prussia hereafter need your services in the field, I trust you will take warning from the fate of your namesake, and not fight without orders. *Exit.*

THE TURNPIKE GATE;

A FARCE, IN TWO ACTS.—BY T. KNIGHT.



Act I.—Scene 2

CHARACTERS.

SIR EDWARD DASHAWAY
HENRY BLUNT
CRACK

JOE STANDFAST
SMART
OLD MAYTHORN

ROBERT MAYTHORN
STEWARD
SERVANTS

PEGGY
MARY
LANDLADY

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Public-house, sign of 'The Admiral,' and a Turnpike and House.

SMART discovered, preparing guns for shooting.

Sir E. (*Within.*) Smart, get the guns ready. Is my new keeper come from the lodge?

Smart. No, Sir Edward. [PEGGY crosses.] Servant, Miss Peggy. Ugh! A kiss from my master has raised your nose an inch higher, I see.

Peggy. Joke with your equals, man; don't talk to me. [*Exit.*]

Smart. I shall make you remember this. My master is grand Turk here; he monopolizes all the wenches.—[*Enter HENRY BLUNT.*] [*ring?*]

Henry. Morrow, fellow-servant. Sir Edward stir-

Smart. Yes; just asked for you. Mind your hits to-day, Mr. Henry: you shot for your place, and won it; but you'd better not outshoot Sir Edward.

Henry. Oh! vain of his abilities that way, eh?

Smart. That way! yes, and every other. I've dropped being his rival some time. [*here?*]

Henry. Sir Edward seems to have a fine estate

Smart. Yes, that belonging to the lodge is eight hundred a-year; the Upland farm three; and his estate in Norfolk as much as both.

Henry. The lodge being but at the head of the village, why does he prefer a bed at this public-house?

Smart. Pleasure, sir, pleasure. But here comes one answer to your two questions. Step this way, and I'll give you another. [*They retire.*]

Enter PEGGY, followed by ROBERT.

Rob. If that be your mind, Peggy, it can't be helped; if you can't love me, you can't. [*fast.*]

Sir E. (*Within.*) Peggy, my dear, bring my break-

Peggy. Coming, Sir Edward; I've only been to fetch the cream.—You hear, Robert?

Rob. Yes, I do hear and zee, too: I be neither deaf nor blind.

Peggy. The young baronet expects me above.

Rob. 'Tis well if old Belzebub don't expect thee below; zo, there's an end of that: however, dang it! let's shake hands.

Peggy. Paws off! your hands are rough, man; and I can't bear anything dirty or sun-burnt.

AIR.—PEGGY.

Pray, young man, your suit give over,
Heav'n design'd you not for me,
Cease to be a whining lover,
Sour and sweet can ne'er agree.
Clownish in each limb and feature,
You've no skill to dance or sing;
At best, you're but an awkward creature,
I, you know, am quite the thing:
As I soon may roll in pleasure,
Bumpkins I must bid adieu;
Can you think that such a treasure
E'er was destin'd, man, for you?
No; mayhap, when I am carry'd,
'Mongst the great to dance and sing,
To some great lord I may be marry'd:
All allow I'm quite the thing. [*Exeunt.*]

Smart. (*Coming forward with Henry.*) Ha, ha! Oh! you bumpkin, I was romping with his sweetheart last night, and he was at me like a bull-dog: the mastiff would bite, sir, but we have muzzled Henry. As how? [*him.*]

Smart. Management, sir: his father lives at that turnpike-house, which, with a small dairy and farm, he holds of Sir Edward. The old fellow has seen better days. The admiral, who died a twelvemonth since, and to whom Sir Edward is heir-at-law, was very partial to him and his daughter; for, during his life, they needed nothing; but, being in arrears for rent, they are all at Sir Edward's mercy. Young Sully, therefore, must lose his sweetheart; add as to the turnpike beauty, his sister, we've offered her

a curricie, and if she do not sport it in Bond-street in less than a month, we don't understand trap.

Henry. What, she encourages him?

Smart. A little coy or so. She's in the dumps, too, for the loss of her 'true lover,' a booby sailor; but, I'll bet fifty she's easier had than little Forward here, with all her avarice and vanity.

Henry. And these are the reasons for Sir Edward's lodging here?—[*Enter ROBERT.*—That's the lad who tried his skill with me for the gamekeeper's place. Morrow, brother sportsman: you shoot well.

Rob. Yes, sir; and you better. However, 'twas all fair, and I do wish you joy of the place.

Henry. Nay, this place may be yours yet: I am elected only to trial, and self-recommenced; my character may not please Sir Edward.

Rob. Mayhap, you'd please him best with no character at all. You be much in favour, Mr. Smart.

Smart. Eh! Oh! [*Makes signs of boxing, and exits.* *Henry.* Things are a little changed since Sir Edward came among you, eh! Robert?

Rob. Yes, sir; another lawyer would ha' done less mischief in the parish; but, it is not the first time the devil got into paradise. [*Exit.*

Enter JOE STANDFAST, singing, his knee bounn.

Joe. So, Master Blunt, prepared, I see, to give the birds a broadside. [*Looking at sign.* Ah! there's the old boy who has given our enemies many a broadside. Bless your old phiz! [*Bowes to him.*]

Henry. You're very polite.

Joe. To be sure I am. I strike my main-top 'o him by way of salute, every morning before I stow my locker. That's the face of an honest heart, Master Blunt: 'tis not, to be sure, don't to the life: but what the painter ha'n't made out, a grateful mind can. I fought under him when he was captain, and twice after his wth vice. He made no master after our first brush; and, but for this splintered timber of mine, I'd ha' been by his side in the West Indies, when the brave old boy died. Died! I lie, he didn't die; for he made himself immortal! His goodness laid me up in a snug cabin here; made me a freeholder with thirty pounds a year; and when your master, his honour's cousin and heir, steers by the compass of true glory, he shall have my vote for sailing into the port of parliament; if he get it before, d—o!

AIR.—JOE STANDFAST.

Britannia's sons at sea, in battle always brave,
Strike to no power, d'y e see, that ever plough'd the wave.

Fal la! la.
But when we're not afloat, 'tis quite another thing;
We strike to petticoat, get groggy, dance, and sing.

Fal la! la.
With Nancy deep in love, I once to sea did go,
Return'd, she cried, "By Jove! I'm married, dearest Joe."

Fal la! la.
Great guns I scarce could hold, to find that I was flung;
But Nancy prov'd a scold, then I got drunk and sung.

Fal la! la.
At length, I did comply, and made a rib of Sue;
What, though she'd but 'e eye, it pierc'd my heart like two.

Fal la! la.
And now I take my glass, drink England and my king;
Content with my old lass, get groggy, dance, and sing.

Fal la! la.
Enter MARY, with a newspaper in her hand.

Yes, yes; the old boy loved the sex, I grant; but, he never hung out false colours to deceive the innocent; and if, in the heat of action, his passions gave a wound, he never rested till he found a balm to heal it again. [*Looking with kindness at Mary.* Ah! bless thy little tender heart, I wish for thy sake he had lived to come home again.

Henry. Does she grieve for the admiral, who died more than a year since?

Joe. Why, no; but she's the child of ill luck. Her sweetheart, you see, about four years since, was down at the lodge, when their hearts were secretly grappled to each other. The lad was a favourite of the admiral, and went out to the Indies with him; there he got promotion; and when death struck the old boy's flag, and no will left, this lad, d'y e see, was their sheet anchor; but, returning

home, in the very chops of the channel, they engaged an enemy; and, after three hours hard fighting, the mounser struck; but her poor lad, Lieutenant Travers, was among the brave boys that fell. Had he lived, he had now been promoted. The newspaper she holds in her hand brought the account but two days since.

Henry. Then you seem to think, spite of your experience, she is sincere.

Joe. Why, if death and disappointment don't make folk sincere, what should? But a braver lad, they say, never kept the mid-watch. [*Mary weeps, and retires.*] Poor wench! no wonder it makes her weep; tough as my heart is, but it almost sets my pumps a-going. But, he died as a British seaman should, in the lap of victory; and his death was glorious! and I dare say he did not fight the worse for loving a pretty girl. [*Tom Starboard.*

Henry. If you doubt that, hear the story of poor

AIR.—HENRY.

Tom Starboard was a lover true,

As brave a tar as ever sail'd,

The duties ablist seamen do,

Tom did, and never yet hau fail'd.

But, wreck'd as he was homeward bound,

Within a league of England's coast,

Love sav'd him, sure, from being drown'd,

For more than half the crew were lost.

In fight, 'tom Starboard kne no fear,

Nay, when he lost an arm—reign'd;

Said, "love for Nan, his only dear,

Had sav'd his life, and fate was kind."

And now, though wreck'd, yet Tom return'd;

Of all just hardships made a joke;

For still his manly bosom burn'd

With love—his heart was heart of oak.

Return'd again, Tom nimbly ran

To cheer his love, his destin'd bride;

But false reports had brought to Nan

Six months before, her Tom had died.

With grief she daily pin'd away,

No remedy her life could save.

And Tom arriv'd the very day

They laid his Nancy in the grave

[*Exeunt.*

Enter OLD MAYTHORN and ROBERT.

May. Nay, nay, boy, bridle thy temper. Sir Edward is licentious, hot-brained, and giddy; but so he don't dishonour us—

Rob. Ay, to be sure; let the yo devour the lamb, and zay nothing. Peg, at "The Admiral," is marked for an already; and he must have Mary, too, or you'll no longer have the turnpike, farm, or dairy.

May. I don't fear Sir Edward, boy, more than thy temper. I always understood from the good admiral that I was rent-free; yet, Sir Edward claims arrears for years past; and as I have no acquittal to shew, we must take care what we do. Thou shouldst not have beaten his servant last night.

Rob. The rogue's no better than a pimp; and if't wer n't for bringing you and zister to poverty—

May. There again! I was going to tell thee, boy, that Mary is not thy sister.

Rob. No!

May. No; she's a natural daughter of the late admiral. At three months old, her mother dying, he placed her under my care, to be brought up as my own child; but, as she, poor innocent! must now share our lot, I charge thee, boy, not even to hint it to her; 'twould break her heart.—Hush! [*MARY advances. Robert retires.*] Don't weep, my dearest lamb! heaven's will be done! It is, I saw, a woful change!

Mary. Ah! sir, the admiral, whose goodness gave us abundance; whose parental kindness (for such it was) kept me at school, and bred me as his daughter; his loss was heavy to us all; and now my dearest William, too; our only hope; after five years' absence—[*Weeps.*] Oh! had he but survived—

May. Ay, child, had he and the good admiral returned, your union would have been blessed with abundance. Ah! well, we have seen better days! but we must now submit. [*Exeunt.*

Enter SIR EDWARD, with gun, &c.

Sir E. Take out the greyhounds, and give them a

course; and let the groom exercise the curriole-horses.—[CRACK *ships from behind the public-house.*]

Crack. Sir, I'll exercise the curriole and horses, and I'll give the dogs a course.

Sir E. Are you there, my impudent friend?

Crack. That epithet does not suit me, sir; I'm remarkably modest. Many pretend to do what he can't; such, I allow, are impudent. Now, I can do every thing, and don't pretend at all.

Sir E. And, pray, who are you that are so very officious?

Crack. If you wish to make me your hospitable friend, don't puzzle me: but, sir, I believe I am the overseer of the parish; for I visit all the ale-houses every sabbath-day. [drunk last night.]

Sir E. Yes, and most other days. I saw you

Crack. Purely out of respect to sobriety: I told you I was the overseer. My neighbours have weak heads; and as their wives and families depend upon the labour of their hands, rather than they should neglect their duty, I sometimes drink their share and my ~~own~~ too. I saved five from being drunk last night, and that's hard work: however, good deeds reward themselves.

Sir E. Upon my honour I was not acquainted with your virtues. [Bowing.]

Crack. [Bowing] No, sir, few are; or I should not blush so often as I do, by blowing the trumpet of my own praise.

Sir E. Pray, sir, how do you get your living?

Crack. Sometimes one way, sometimes another. I am first ringer of the bells, and second huntsman to old Tantivy; and though it's not in my power to improve the weak heads of my neighbours, yet I oft mend their understandings. [Points to his shoes.] Ecce signum! [Shewing his apron.]

Sir E. Anything rather than work, eh?

Crack. Any work, sir, to get an honest penny. Twice a-week I turn pack-horse; I fetch and carry all the letters, packets, and parcels, to and from the next market-town: and t'other day, I stood candidate for clerk of the parish;—but—

Sir E. The badness of your character prevented your election?

Crack. No, sir, it was the goodness of my voice: you hear how musical it is, when I only speak; what would it have been at an 'amen'?—[Whispers] The parson didn't like to be outdone. Envy often deprives a good man of a place as well as perquisites. [A pause. Crack laughs, and then nods.]

Sir E. What's that familiar nod for?

Crack. It's a way I have when I give consent.

Sir E. Consent! to what?

Crack. That you may give me what you please above half-a-crown. [They laugh.] Oh! I'm a man of my word; I'll take care to exercise the curriole and horses.

Sir E. You will! You had better take my box coat, and whip, too, and go in style. [Ironically.]

Crack. Had I, sir? Well, I'm going to market, and can bring back your honour's letters and parcels, at the same time; and, in the evening, we'll all be jolly.—[Enter SMART.]

Sir E. Who is this familiar gentleman, Smart?

Smart. He's a sort of jack-of-all-trades; but, chiefly a cobbler.

Crack. Well, don't sneer at the cobbler: many of your betters have made their fortunes by cobbling. Sir, I thank you; I'm glad to find you more of a gentleman than your servant. I'll look to your curriole and horses, sir, before I drink your health. I love business, and I hate a gazzler. [Exit.]

Sir E. Give this letter to my steward, and tell him, if Old Maythorn can't pay his arrears, he must arrest him. [Exit SMART.] The old fellow in confinement, his daughter Mary will gladly pay the price of his release.—[Enter HENRY BLUNT.]—Have you your character yet from your last place?

Henry. No, Sir Edward; I expect it to-day.

Sir E. Very well. Go to the hill opposite the lodge; should you spring any birds, don't shoot, but mark them. And, d'ye hear? I have a little love affair upon my hands. Keep at a distance. I shall be near the copse; when I need you, I'll fire.

Henry. Oh! sir, I know my duty. [Exit.]

Enter ROBERT.

Sir E. You, sir, direct my keeper to Barrow-hill; and don't let me hear of your firing a gun again upon my manors, or you'll visit the county gaol.

Rob. Shall I? No, but I don't think I shall visit the gaol. [Exit, sulkily.]

Enter PEGGY in a bonnet, with a little basket.

Sir E. Ah! my bonny lass in a bonnet! What, you're going a-putting, I see. The clusters hang remarkably thick in Lower By-field, beneath the copse, in the hedge joining the cut hay-stack.

Peggy. Ah! that's the way you're going to shoot; if I had known that, now, I'd have chosen another place.—[MARY appears.]—Hush! Where's Miss Maythorn? she's all ays on the watch.—How do, Miss Mary? I'm sorry to see you distressed.—[Aside.] Conceited moppet! [Exit.]

Sir E. My dear Mary, you seem dejected!

Mary. Misfortune, Sir Edward, has pressed hard upon us, of late.

Sir E. The fault, my love, is yours. I wish to be more the friend of you and your family, than ever the late admiral was.

Mary. Do you, Sir Edward?

Sir E. Certainly. I wish your father to be rent free. I long to give you an annuity and a coach; take you to town, and make you happy.

Mary. I doubt, sir, if that would make me so; and if there be fathers whose necessities press them to seek subsistence by the sale of a daughter's virtue, how noble were it in the wealthy to pity and relieve them! [Exit.]

Sir E. Stubborn and proud still; but resistance makes victory glorious. Since soothing won't do, we'll try a little severity. She's a sweet girl, and I must have her.

AIR.—SIR EDWARD.

Lovely woman, 'tis thou to whose virtue I bow;
Thy charms to sweet rapture give birth—
Thine electrical soul lends life to the whole,
And a blank, without thee, were this earth.
Oh! let me thy soft power, ev'ry day, ev'ry hour,
With my heart honour, worship, adore.
Thou present, 'tis May, winter, when thou'rt away.
(Can a man,) I would ask, wish for more?
In a dream oft I've seen fancy's perfect-made queen,
Which, waking, in vain have I sought;
But, sweet Mary, 'twas you rich fancy then drew.
Thou'rt the vision which sleeping she wrought.
Lovely woman's soft power, ev'ry day, ev'ry hour,
Let my heart honour, worship, adore:
Thou present, &c. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—A Room in the Public-house.

Enter CRACK, with Sir Edward's box coat, whip, and hat; and the Landlady following.

Land. Don't tell me; I'll believe Sir Edward ordered any such thing.

Crack. I say he did. "My dear Crack," says he, shaking my hand, "you had better take my riding coat and whip, and go in style." And let me see the man or woman who dare dispute it! Now I'm a kind of Bond-street man of fashion.

Land. You a Bond-street man of fashion!

Crack. Yes, I am—I'm all outside. Where are those idle scoundrels? Oh! I see; they are getting the curriole and horses ready.

Land. By my faith, and so they are! Well, 'tis in vain for me to talk, so I'll have you. *Peggy!* [Calling.] Where can this girl of mine be? Why, *Peggy!* [Exit.]

Crack. I have often wondered why they drive two big horses in so small a carriage; now, I find, one's to draw the gentleman, and t'other his great coat.—[Enter JOE STANDFAST.]

Joe. They tell me, Crack, that you are under-sailing orders for town, I'm bound so far, d'ye see, on

business for Master Blunt, the new keeper; mayhap, you'll give 'bbody a berth on board the curricie!

Crack. Yes, I'll give your body a birth on board; (*aside*) and heaven send it a safe deliverance!

Joe. Are you steady at the helm?

Crack. Unless your treat should make me tipsy; in that case, you must steer.

Joe. Me! d—e, I'd rather weather the Cape in a cook-boat, than drive such a gingerbread jincumbob three miles; but for this stiff knee of mine, I'd rather walk. Oh! I see they're weighing anchor yonder. (*Pointing to the stable.*) But what need of this, friend? (*taking his coat*) the sun shines, and no fear of a squall.

Crack. Lord help your head! we drivers of curricies wear these to keep off the wind, the sun, and the dust.

Joe. D—e, but I think your main-sheet is more for show than service.

Crack. Oh, fie! we could not bear the inclemencies of the sun. If we weren't well clothed. But come, let's mount; and if we don't ride in our own carriage, we're better off than many who do: we pay no tax, and the coach-maker can't arrest us.

DUETT.

Crack....When off in curricie we go,
Mind, I'm a dashing buck, friend Joe,
My wit match'd nags, both black and roan—

Joe....Take most bucks' nags, are not your own.

Crack....Paid for, I vow.

Joe....Avast! pr'ythee, how?

Crack....In paper at six months' credit, or nearly.

Joe....No cash?

Crack....Oh! that's mal-a-propos. OM

Joe....We bucks pay in paper, and that's merely—

Both....Fal la la, &c.

Crack....When mounted I, in style to be,

Should sport behind in livery

Two footmen in fine cloths array'd,

Joe....For why?—the tailor never was paid.

Crack....We men of ton—

Joe....Have ways of our own

Crack....I plead privilege to lead our tradesmen a dance, sir.

Joe....John, when they call—(murmurs)—let 'em wait 'till

And two hours a'ter send them for answer—(halls)

Both....Fal la la, &c.

Joe....It is he ton, friend Crack, d'y see,

We're better from such lumber free.

No debts for coaches we can owe—

Crack....Because no one will trust us, Joe.

Joe....Then I say still, that no man has bill—

Crack....To us for a carriage, with justice, can bring in

Joe....Then mount, never mind,

Crack....Leave old crabs behind,

Both....Or, should he overtake us, we'll fall a singing—

Fal la la, &c. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A romantic rural Prospect; on one side, a hay-stack.

Enter HENRY BLUNT and ROBERT.

Henry. Honest Robert, I thought I had lost you.

Rob. No; I was but just by here, vastning a bundle to keep the sheep from breaking out.

Henry. And Sir Edward, you say, solicits your sister Mary's affection?

Rob. As *his* affection, he don't care much for that; I believe, so how could get her good will.

Henry. Do you think him likely to obtain it?

Rob. She shall tie first.

Henry. And who is Sir Edward's appointment with, here, think you?

Rob. Why, I be inclined to think (but I be n't sure) it is w' Miss Changeabout, at "The Admiral"—Speak o' th' devil, and behold his horns! This way. (*They retire.*)

Enter PEGGY.

Peggy. I heard a rustling, as I passed the copse. I began to think 'twas old Nick. That fellow, Robert, does love me a little, to be sure; but the young baronet, he should make me Lady Sir Edward Dashaway. (*Robert advances.*)

Rob. (*Aloud.*) Hfm! a little patience, and, mayhap, he will. (*She retires.*)

Peggy. How could you frighten a body so?

Rob. Frighten thee, Peggy! it mustn't be a trifle to de that. Have you set all shame at defiance? I do wonder old Nick didn't appear to thee in thy road thither.

Peggy. Don't you go to terrify me; now don't; if you do, you'll repent it.

Rob. No, Peggy; 'tis you that'll repent. However, I do hope some warning voice, some invincible spirit, will appear to thee yet, bevore it be late.

Peggy. You had better not terrify me now, I tell you—you'd be late—not.

Rob. Take care where thee dost tread, Peggy. (*She trembles.*) I would not swear there is not a well under thy feet. (*She starts.*) D—n un, here he is, zure enow!—(*Aside.*) One word more, an' I ha' done. (*Very solemn.*) If in this lonesome place Belzebub should appear to thee, in the likeness of a gentleman w' a gun in his hand, look for his cloven foot; repent thy perjurage; and, w' tears in thy eyes, go whoom again, and make thy mother happy. (*Retires behind the hay-stack.*)

Peggy. Dear heart! dear heart! I wish I hadn't come. I'm afraid to stir out o' my room. Oh, lud! I wish I were at home ag'n.

SIR EDWARD, having pointed his gun against the rails of the hay-stack, stoops behind, and taps her on her shoulder.

Peggy. Mercy upon 'er! Sir Edward, I took you for old Nick.

Sir E. You did me great honour.

Peggy. (*Looking*) Are you sure you have not a cloven foot? I was cautioned to beware of you.

Sir E. By young Maythorn, I suppose! I saw the impudent rascal. Upon my soul, you look divinely! (*takes her aside.* Robert shows signs of displeasure.) Is not that a sweet cottage in the valley? Shall I make you a present of it, Peggy?

Peggy. Why, Sir Edward, though I don't think Robert Maythorn is a fit match for me; yet, you know, in losing him—

Sir E. You have found a better match.

Peggy. Oh! (I) your honour mean it to be a match.—(*Sir Edward turns*)—that is, a lawful match—

Sir E. To be sure I do, you little rogue! (*She repulses him.*) Nay, one kiss of your pretty pouting lips.

Peggy. Why, as to a kiss, to be sure.—(*wipes her lips*)—I hope no one sees. (*She holds up her face; and, as he approaches, Robert reaches out his hand, fires the gun, and conceals himself again.* Sir Edward and Peggy start.)

Henry. (*Without.*) Mark, mark!

Peggy....Good heaven, protect me! 'twas old Nick!

Sir E.... 'Tis odd! 'twas, sir, my gun;

Rob....Or, Robert's play'd some devilish trick—

Peggy....Ah, me! I am undone!

Rob.... 'Twas, sure, a warning voice that spoke!

Sir E....A warning voice! oh, no! [*Robert steals off*]

Peggy....Believe me, sir, it was no joke.

Sir E.... One kiss before we go.

Peggy....Nay, cease your fooling, pray, awhile,

Your keeps a coming now;

And mother's hobbling o'er the style,

She is, I swear and vow.

Enter HENRY BLUNT.

Sir E....Eh! what the devil brought you here?

Henry....I pr'ythee, maud, retire

Henry....I thought you told me to appear,

When I should hear you here.

Enter Landlady, with ROBERT.

Land....Where is this plagy maid of mine?

Rob....A'n't you a pretty jade!

Land.... 'Tis no, 's'th' hour, that we should dine,

And eat! (*cupplings male.*)

Peggy....To gather nuts 'tween you I've been,

And cramm'd my basket tight;

But moother, I did Nick have seen,

So, dropp'd I knif with the fright.

Rob....With fancy's tale, her mother's ear

She knows how to betray

For staying out so long, she'll swear

The devil stopp'd her way.

Sir E....Come, come, let's home with merry glee,

On dinner to regale;

And, hostess, let our welcome be

A jug of nut-brown ale. [*Exeunt.*]

THE TURNPIKE GATE.

[Act III.]

SCENE II.—Another rural Prospect.

Enter MARY.

Mary. The bright morning sun dispels the farmer's fears, and makes his face, with a smile, anticipate the business of to-morrow. How different our future day looks dark and stormy, as hope (the sun which gladdens all beside) shines not for us a single ray.

AIR.

One sorrow taught my tears to flow,
They call'd me happy Mary;
In rural cot, my humble lot,
I play'd like any fairy.
And when the sun, with golden ray,
Burst down the western sky,
Upon the green to dance or play,
The first was happy I.
Fond as the dove was my true love,
Oh! he was kind to me,
And what was still my greater pride,
I thought I should be William's bride,
When he return'd from sea.
Ah! what avails remembrance now?
It lends a dart to sorrow.
My once-lov'd cot, and happy lot,
But loads with grief to-morrow.
Ah! I am sope apprised,
New all the day, I sit and weep,
At night I know no rest.
I dream of waters, an' sailors' graves,
In horrid prospects I see,
And when I hear the wind,
All comfort flies from my mind,
For William's lost rat.

[Exit.]

SCENE III.—The Turnpike, &c. &c. before. Sir Edward's groom calls "Gate!" ROBERT opens it, and the groom crosses the stage with a bay of oats. Enter JOE STANDFAST and CRACK, with a trunk; Crack a little tipsy, and singing.

Joe. D—e, shipmate, but you are the worst steersman I ever met with.

Crack. Don't say so, if the horses had not run so fast, we should not have upset.

Joe. Well, be it as it may, we brought home one of the nags safe.

Crack. There you mistake, it was the nag brought us home safe, we three rode upon his Joe. We three! [back.]

Crack. Yes; you, I, and the trunk.

Joe. I'm sorry t'other poor devil is left behind.

Crack. You're out again, for, when he broke, he left us behind, and if he continued to gallop, as he began, he's a long way before.

Joe. My head! here comes the groom; get out of it how you can. There's the trunk. [Lays it on the table.] And now for a peep at the paper. I'll not be overhauled, d'ye see; and so, friend Crack, I advise you to prepare a good answer. [Exit.]

Crack. I never was without one in my life. If the groom won't stand quizzing, I'll be impudent.

Enter Groom.

Groom. Why, that trunk, you, and the sailor, for a light carriage, were a little too weighty, I think, friend.

Crack. Not weighty enough, friend: but, it seems you and your horses' wits jump: they, like you, voted us too weighty, and so unloaded us.

Groom. Unloaded you!

Crack. Yes; if you won't believe me, ask your master's great coat. [Gives it.] Brush it, d'ye hear? it has been rubbed already. [back.]

Groom. And haven't you brought the black horse Crack. Why, how you talk! the black horse wouldn't bring us back.

Groom. And where is he?

Crack. He's gone.

Groom. Gone! Where?
Crack. He did not tell me where he was going; I was not in his confidence: when you catch him, teach him better manners.

Groom. D—e, if ever I heard the like before!

Crack. No, nor saw the like behind. He winced like a devil! the worst bred horse I ever saw.

Groom. What do you talk of? Not a better bred horse in the kingdom.

Crack. Then the manners of horses are not more refined than their masters: he kicked up, as much as to say, that for you. [Kicks up.]

Groom. D—e, you seem to have made a very nice job of it.

Crack. If you datter at hearing half, what will you say when you know the whole? The carriage, you see,—

Groom. Is that run away, too?

Crack. No; but it might, if I hadn't taken good Groom. By driving over posts, I suppose?

Crack. No; by driving against posts—(oh! you'll find me correct)—by which I took off one wheel, and broke the other.

Groom. And haven't you brought it with you?

Crack. Without wheels! how could I? I would have broken my back.

Groom. I wish you mayn't get your head broken.

Crack. So far from that, I expect to be complimented for my judgment; for, if I had not, like a skilful whip, whipped the wheels, I might have lost the carriage, and all its valuable contents. By being expert, I have saved both.

Groom. Well, friend, you seem very merry under misfortune, and I wish you luck. It was Sir Edward's own doing he can't blame me. [Exit.]

Crack. If he should, I'll make a neat defence, for the sake of your nice feeling: d—d hard, if at a battle of brains I could not out-gossip a grumbling groom. Whenever I'm puzzled, I always hum folk: humming's art the fashion.

AIR.—CRACK.

With merry tale, sergeants beat the drum;
It's full of ale, village lads they hum.
Soldiers out go all, famous get in story.
If they chance to lie, don't they sleep in glory?
Towdy rowdy dow, &c.
Lawyers try, when fee'd, jurors to make pliant,
If they can't succeed, then they hum their client.
To perfection come, humming all the trade is,
Ladies lovers hum, lovers hum the ladies.
Towdy rowdy dow, &c.
Ha'n't Britannia's sons often humm'd morn'g w'ch
Ha'n't they humm'd the Dons? let their
Strike they must, though loth, (ships with dollars humm'd)
If they re not humm'd both, then will I be...
Towdy rowdy dow, &c.

OLD MAYTHORN crosses to his own house, very disconsolate.

Crack. There goes a man of sorrow. I remember him a jester. It may be my turn next. I'll never joke again till I see a—[Enter the Steward and a Butliif.]—lawyer and butliif!—Gentlemen, your humble servant. I reverence your callings, and I respect your power; for you two are a match—Butliif. For what?

Crack. The devil!—[Sings.] Towdy rowdy, &c. [Exit.]

Enter two Sailors.

1 Sail. I believe, messmate, we have saved him to his moorings.

2 Sail. You're right; for, my re, you see, is the port admiral. [Points to the sign.]

1 Sail. House! bring us a mug of beer. [They sit at the table.—Enter PEGGY, with beer.]—A pretty, little, tight wench, faith!

Peggy. Yes; pretty—but the grapes are sour. [Exit with great conceit.]

1 Sail. The folk here will hardly guess our errand.

Enter JOE, in rapture, with a newspaper.

Joe. Here it is! on board the Turnpike, a-hoy D—e! here it is! he's alive! the boy's alive! and—but hold, avast! the last paper said he was dead; this says it's a lie: which shall I believe? [Sees Sailors.] What cheer, brother sailors? rowdy what port?

1 Sail. Portsmouth.

Joe. Whither bound?

1 Sail. Can't you see wench's cast a shore?

Joe. I say, Bob! this Mary!—but avast! mayhap they can inform me. You have had a severe engagement in the chops of the Channel, I hear?

1 Sail. Yes, we have.

Joe. And just as the Frenchman struck, she went

For things are in strange trouble. Here; be secret;
'Tis worth your care: begone now; more eyes
watch us,

Than may be for our safeties.

Don J. Harkye—

Nurse. Peace; good night!

Don J. She's gone, and I am laden. Fortune
for me!

It weighs well, and it feels well; it may chance
To be some pack of worth: by th' mass, 'tis heavy!
If it be coin or jewels, it is worth welcome.
I'll ne'er refuse a fortune: I am confident.
'Tis of no common price. Now to my lodging:
If it be right, I'll bless this night.

SCENE III.—*Another Street.*

Enter DUKE, GUZMAN, PEDRO, and PEREZ.

Duke. Welcome to town. Are ye all fit?

Guz. To point, sir.

Duke. Where are the horses?

Pedro. Where they were appointed.

Duke. Be private all, and whatsoever fortune
Offer itself, let us stand sure.

Perez. Fear not;

Ere you shall be endanger'd, or deluded,
We'll make a black night on't.

Duke. No more, I know it;

You know your quarters.

Guz. Will you go alone, sir?

Duke. Ye shall not be far from me, the least
noise

Shall bring you to my rescue.

Pedro. We are counsell'd

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter DON JOHN, with a Child, crying.

Don J. Was ever man so paid for being curious;
Ever so hobb'd for searching out adventures,
As I am! Did the devil lead me? Must I needs
be peeping

Into men's houses, where I had no business,

And make myself a mischief?

What have I got by this now?

A piece of pap and candle-work—a child:

This comes of peeping!

What a figure do I make now! good white bread,

Let's have no bawling wi' ye. 'Sdeath! have I

Known wenches thus long, all the ways of wenches,

Their snares and subtleties,

And am I now humbiddled with a bastard?

Well, Don John,

You'll be wiser one day, when you have paid dearly

For a collection of these butter prints.

'Twould not grieve me to keep this gingerbread,

Were it of my own baking; but to beggar

Myself in caudles, nurses, coral, bells, and babies,

For other men's iniquities!

What shall I do with it now?

Should I be caught here dandling this pap-spoon,

I shall be sung in ballads;

No eyes are near—I'll drop it,

For the next curious coxcomb. How it smiles

upon me!

Ha! my little sugar-kop! 'tis a sweet baby;

'Twere barbarous to leave it: ten to one 'twould

kill it;

Worse sin than his who got it. Well, I'll take it,

And keep it as they keep death's-head, in rings,

To cry memento to us, "No more peeping!"

Now all the danger is to qualify

The good old gentlewoman, at whose house we

lodge;

For she will fall upon me with a catechism

Of four hours long. Come, good wonder,

Let you and I be jogging; your starv'd treble

Will waken the rude watch elae. All that be

Curious night-walkers, may they find my fee!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Street.*

Enter DON FREDERICK.

Don F. Sure, he's gone home. I have beaten all
the purlieus,
But cannot bolt him: if he be a bobbing—What's
here?

Enter First CONSTANTIA.

I Con. I am ready,
And through a world of dangers am flown to you;
Be full of haste and care, we are undone else.
Where are your people? Which way must we
travel?

For heaven's sake, stay not here, sir!

Don F. What may this prove?

I Con. Alas! I am mistaken, lost, undone,
For ever perish'd! Sir, for heaven's sake tell me,
Are you a gentleman?

Don F. I am.

I Con. Of this place?

Don F. No; born in Spain.

I Con. As ever you lov'd honour,
As ever your desires may gain their ends,
Do a poor wretched woman but this benefit,
For I am forc'd to trust you.

Don F. You have charm'd me:
Humanity and honour bid me help you;
And I'll tail your trust—

I Con. The time's too dangerous
To stay your protestations. I believe you,
Alas! I must believe you. From this place,
Good, noble sir, remove me instantly,
And, for a time, where nothing but yourself,
And honest conversation, may come near me;
In some secure place settle me. What I am,
And why thus boldly I commit my credit
Into a stranger's hand, the fear and dangers
That force me to this wild course, at more leisure,
I shall reveal unto you.

Don F. Come, be hearty;
He must strike through my life that takes you from
me.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

*Enter PETRUCHIO, ANTONIO, SANCHIO, and
BAPTISTA.*

Petr. He will sure come: are ye all well arm'd?

Anto. Never fear us:

Here's that will make them dance without a fiddle.

Petr. We are to look for no weak foes, my friends,
Nor unadvise'd ones.

Anto. Best gamesters make the best play;
We shall fight close, and home, too.

San. Antonio,

You are a thought too bloody.

Anto. Why, all physicians

And penny almanacks allow the opening

Of veins this month. Why do you talk of bloody?

What come we for, to fall to cuffs for apples?

What, would you make the cause a cudgel-quarrel?

On what terms stands this man? Is not his honour

Open'd in this hand, and pick'd out like an oyster?

His credit like a quart-pot knock'd together,

Able to hold no liquor? Clear out this point.

Petr. Speak soft, gentle cousin.

Anto. I'll speak truly.

What should man do, allied to these disgraces,

Lick o'er his enemy, sit down, and dance him?

Cry, "That's my fine boy, thou shalt do so no

more, child!"

Petr. Here are no such cold pities.

Anto. By St. Jaques,

They shall not find me one! Here's old tough

Andrew,

A special friend of mine, and he but hold,

I'll strike them such a hornpipe! Knocks I come

for.

And the best blood I'll light on: I profess it
Not to scare costermongers. If I lose my own,
My audit's cast, and farewell live-and-fifty.

Petr. Let's talk no longer, place yourself with
silence,

As I direct you; and when time calls us,
As ye are friends, so shew yourselves.

Auto. So be it.

Oh! how my fingers tingle to be at them!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Chamber.*

Enter DON JOHN and his Landlady.

Land. Nay, son, if this be your regard—

Don J. Good moth'r—

Land. Good me no goods. Your cousin and
yourself

Are welcome to me whilst you bear yourselves
Like honest and true gentlemen. Bring hither,
To my house, that have ever been reputed
A gentlewoman of a decent and fair carriage,
And so behav'd myself—

Don J. I know you have.

Land. Bring hither, as I say, to make my name
Stink in my neighbours' nostrils, your devices,
Your brats, got out of allicant and broken oaths;
Your linsy-wolsey work, your filch'd iniquities!
You're deceiv'd in me, sir, I am none
Of those receivers.

Don J. Have I not sworn unto you,
'Tis none of mine, and shew'd you how I found it?

Land. You found an easy fool, that let you get it.

Don J. Will you hear me?

Land. Oaths! what cure you for oaths, to gain
your ends,
When you are high and pamper'd? What saint
knows you?

Or what religion, but your wicked passions?

I'm sick to see this dealing.

Don J. Heaven forbid, mother!

Land. Nay, I am very sick.

Don J. Who waits there?

Peter. (*Within.*) Sir?

Don J. Bring a bottle of canary wine.

Land. Exceeding sick, heaven help me!

Don J. Haste you, sirrah!

I must e'en make her drunk. (*Aside.*) Nay, gentle
mother—

Land. Now lie upon you! was it for this purpose
You fetch'd, your evening walks for your devotions,
For this pretended holiness? No weather,
Not before day, could hold you from the matins.
Were these your bow-peep prayers?
Still sicker, sicker!

Enter PETER, with a bottle of wine.

Don J. There is no talking to her till I have
drench'd her: (*Aside.*)

Give me: here, mother, take a good round draught.
It will purge spleen from your spirits: deeper,
mother.

Land. Ay, ay, son, you imagine this w^{ill} mend
all.

Don J. All, i'faith! mother,

Land. I confess, the wine

Will do its part.

Don J. I'll pledge you.

Land. But, son John—

Don J. I know your meaning, mother; touch it
once more.

Alas! you look not well. Take a round draught,

And then we'll talk at large.

Land. A civil gentleman!

A stranger; one the town holds a good regard of.

(*Aside.*)

Don J. Now we grow kind and maudlin. (*Aside.*)

Land. One that should weigh his fair name!

(*Aside.*) Oh! a stitch!

Don J. There's nothing better for a stitch, good
mother:

Make no spare of it as you love your health;
Mince not the matter.

Land. As I said, a gentleman lodge in my house!
Now heaven's my comfort, signior!—

Don J. And the wine, good mother.

I look'd for this.

(*Aside.*)

Land. I did not think you would have us'd me
thus;

A woman of credit; one, heaven knows!

That loves you but too tenderly.

Don J. The thunder ceases, and the rain de-
scends.

Land. What do you say, son?

Don J. I say, mother,

That I ever found your kindness, and acknowledge it.

Land. No, no; I am a fool to counsel you.

Where's the infant?

Come, let's see your workmanship.

Don J. It is none of mine, mother, but I'll fetch
it.

Here it is, and a lusty one.

Land. Oh! heaven bless thee! As I live,
Your own eyes, signior; and the nether lip
As like you as you had spit it.

Don J. I am glad on't.

Land. Bless me! what things are these?

Don J. I thought my labour

Was not all lost; 'tis gold; and these are jewels,

Both rich and right. I hope.

Land. Well, well, son John,

Here I am with you now, when, as they say,

Your pleasure comes with profit.

Don J. All this time, good mother,

The child wants looking to, wants meat and nurses.

Land. Now blessing o' thy heart! it shall have all,

And instantly: I'll seek a nurse myself, son.

'Tis a sweet child! Ah! my young Spaniard!

Take you no further care, sir.

Don J. Yes, of these jewels,

I must, by your good leave, mother; these are

mine;

The gold for bringing up o't, I freely render

To your charge: for the rest, I'll find a master.

But where's Don Fredrick, mother?

Land. Ten to one,

About the like adventure; he told me

He was to find you out.

Don J. Why should he stay thus?

There may be some ill chance in't; sleep I will not,

Before I have found him.

Well, my dear mother, let the child be look'd to;

And look you to be rewarded. About it

Straight, good mother.

Land. No more words, nor no more children,

Good son, as you love me: this may do well:

This shall do well: eh! you little, sweet cherub!

[*Exit, with the Child.*]

Don J. Away! So, so; I thought the wine

would do its duty:

She'll kill the child with kindness: t'other glass,

And she had ravish'd me. There is no way

Of bringing women of her age to reason,

But by this: girls of fifteen are caught

Fifty ways; they bite as fast as you throw in;

But with the old cold 'tis a different dealing,

'Tis wine must warm them to their sense of feeling.

[*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber.*

*Enter DON FREDERICK, and ANTHONY with a
candle.*

Don F. Give me the candle; so, go you out that
way.

Anth. What have we now to do? (*Aside.*)
Don F. And, on your life, sirrah!
 Let none come near the door, without my knowledge;
 No, not my landlady, nor my friend.
Anth. 'Tis done, sir.
Don F. Nor any serious business that concerns me.
Anth. Is the wind there again? (*Aside.*)
Don F. Begone!
Anth. I am, sir.
Fred. Now enter without fear.

Enter First CONSTANTIA.

And, noble lady,
 That safety and civility you wish for,
 Shall truly here attend you:
 No wishes,
 Beyond the moderation of a man,
 Dare enter here. Your own desires and innocence,
 Join'd to my vow'd obedience, shall protect you.
I Con. You are truly noble,
 And worth a woman's trust: let it become me,
 (I do beseech you, sir,) for all your kindness,
 To render, with my thanks, this worthless trifle: (*Offers a ring.*)
 I may be longer troublesome.

Don F. Fair offices
 Are still their own rewards: heaven bless me,
 lady,
 From selling civil courtesies. May it please you,
 If you will force a favour, to oblige me,
 Draw but that cloud aside, to satisfy me
 For what good angel I am engag'd.

I Con. It shall be:
 For I am truly confident you are honest
 The piece is scarce worth looking on.

Don F. Trust me,
 The abstract of all beauty, soul of sweetness!
 What eyes are there!

Noble lady,
 If there be any further service to cast on me,
 Let it be worth my life, so much I honour you—
I Con. Your service is too liberal, worthy sir.

Thus far I shall entreat—
Don F. Command me, lady:
 You make your power too poor.

I Con. That presently,
 With all convenient haste, you will retire
 Unto the street you found me in:
 There, if you find a gentleman oppress'd
 With force and violence, do a man's office,
 And draw your sword, to rescue him.

Don F. He's safe,
 Be what he will: and let his foes be devils,
 Arm'd with your beauty, I shall conjure them.
 Retire; this key will guide you: all things necessary
 Are there before you.

I Con. All my prayers go with you! (*Exit.*)

Don F. Men say, gold
 Does all, engages all, works through all dangers:
 Now, I say, beauty can do more. The king's exchequer,
 Nor all his wealthy Indies, could not draw me
 Through half those miseries this piece of pleasure
 Might make me leap into:
 Yet, I vow,
 My hopes shall die, and my tongue rot within me,
 Ere I infringe my faith. Now to my rescue. (*Exit.*)

SCENE II.—A Street.

Enter the DUKE, pursued by PETRUCHIO, ANTONIO, and that party.

Duke. You will not all oppress me?
Anto. Kill him! 'th' wanton eye.
 Let me come to him.

Duke. Then you shall buy me dearly.
 (*They fight; the Duke fights and retreats.*)

Enter DON JOHN.

Don J. Sure, 'tis fighting!
 My friend may be engag'd. Fie! gentlemen,
 This is unmanly odds. (*Duke falls.*) Press upon
 A fall'n enemy; it is cowardly:
 Thus will I protect him. (*Bestrides the Duke.*)
Anto. I'll stop your mouth, sir.
Don J. Nay, then, have at thee freely.
 There's a plum to satisfy your longing.
Petr. He's fallen; I hope I have sped him.
 Where's Antonio?

Anto. I must have one thrust more, sir.

Don J. Come up to me.

Anto. A mischief confound your fingers!

He's given me my quietus est; I felt him

In my small guts, I'm sure he's feez'd me:

This comes of siding with you.

Petr. I hear more rescue coming.

(*Trampling within.*)

Anto. Let's turn back, then;

My skull's uncloven yet, let me but kill somebody.

Petr. Away, for heaven's sake, with him!

[*They hurry Antonio off.*]

Enter the Duke's Party.

Don J. Help, gentlemen! How is it?

Duke. Well, sir,

Only a little stagger'd.

Duke's Party. Let's pursue them.

Duke. No; not a man, I charge you.

My thanks to you, brave sir, whose timely valour
 And manly courtesy came to my rescue.

Don J. You had foul play offer'd you, and shame
 befall him

That can pass by oppression.

Duke. May I crave, sir,

But this much honour more, to know your name,

And him I am so bound to!

Don J. For the bond, sir,

'Tis every good man's tie, to know me further,

Will little profit you; I am a stranger,

My country, Spain; my name, Don John; a gentleman

That came abroad to travel.

Duke. I have heard, sir,

Much worthy mention of you, yet I find
 Fame short of what you are.

Don J. You are pleas'd, sir,

To express your courtesy, nay, I demand
 As freely what you are, and what mischance
 Cast you into this danger?

Duke. For this present

I must desire your pardon; you shall know me

Ere it be long, sir, and nobler thanks

Than now my will can render.

Don J. Your will's your own, sir.

(*Looking about.*)

Duke. What is't you look for, sir! Have you
 lost anything?

Don J. Only my hat i' th' scuffle; sure, these
 fellows

Were night-snaps!

Duke. No, believe me, sir; pray, use mine,
 For 'twill be hard to find your own now.

Don J. Indeed, I cannot.

Duke. Indeed, you shall: I can command another.
 I do beseech you, honour me.

Don J. Well, sir, then I will;

And so I'll take my leave.

Duke. Within these few days

I hope I shall be happy in your knowledge,

Till when, you live in my remembrance.

[*Exit with his party.*]

Don J. And you in mine.

This is some noble fellow!

1 Con. With much joy may he wear it! 'Tis a right one,
I can assure you, gentlemen; and right happy
May he be in all fights for that noble service.

Don F. Why do you blush?

1 Con. It had almost cozen'd me.
For, not to lie, when I saw that, I look'd for
Another owner of it. But 'tis well.

Don F. Who's there? (Knocking.)
Pray you, retire, madam. [Exit 1 Con.] Come in,
sir.

Enter ANTHONY.

Now, what's the news with you?

Anth. There is a gentleman without
Would speak with Don John.

Don F. (To Don J. who is peeping after Con.)

Don John!

Don J. (Still peeping.) What's the matter?

Don F. Leave peeping, John; you are wanted.

Don J. Who is it?

Anth. I do not know, sir; but he shews a man
Of no mean reckoning.

Don J. Let him shew his name,
And you return a little wiser. [Exit Anthony.]

Don F. How do you like her, John?

Don J. As well as you, Frederick,
For all I am honest; you shall find it, too.

Don F. Art thou not honest?

Don J. Art thou an ass?

"And modest as her blushes!" What a block-
head

Would e'er have popp'd out such a dry apology
For his dear friend? And to a gentlewoman,
A woman of her youth and delicacy!
They are arguments to draw them to abhor us.
An honest, moral man! 'tis for a constable.
A handsome man, a wholesome man,
A liberal man, a likely man,
Stout, strong, and valiant—
These had been things to hearken to; things
catching;

But you have such a spic'd consideration,
Such qualms upon your worship's conscience,
Such chilblains in your blood, that all things pinch
you,

Which nature and the liberal world make custom;
And nothing but fair honour! dear honour! sweet
honour!

Oh! damn your water-gruel honour!

Don F. I am sorry, John—

Don J. And so am I, Frederick; but what of
that?

Fie upon thee! a man of thy discretion!
That I was trusty and valiant, were things well
put in;

But, modest! a modest gentleman!

Oh! wit, wit! where wast thou?

Don F. It shall be mended;

And henceforth you shall have your due.

Re-enter ANTHONY.

Don J. I look for't.—How now, who is't?

Anth. A gentleman of this city,

And calls himself Petruccio.

Don J. Petruccio! I'll attend him. [Exit Anth.]

Enter First CONSTANTIA.

1 Con. How did he call himself?

Don F. Petruccio:

Does it concern you aught?

1 Con. Oh! gentlemen,

The hour of my destruction is come on me;
I am discover'd, lost, left to my ruin:

As ever you had pity—

Don J. Do not fear;

Let the great devil come, he shall come through
me first.

Lost here, and we about you!

1 Con. To you, and your humanity, a hapless
Helpless creature, begs for safety. Oh! grant
Me your protection; to your honours, sirs,
I fly, as to the altar, for a refuge:

Be your nobleness

My sanctuary, and shield a woe-sick heart

From all its terrors and afflictions. (Kneeling.)

Don J. Pray, rise. (Kneels.) I can't bear it.

1 Con. Fall before us!

1 Con. Oh! my unfortunate estate! all anger

Compar'd to his, to his—

Don F. Let his and all men's,

Whilst we have power and life; bear up, for hea-
ven's sake!

Don J. And for my sake, be comforted.

1 Con. I have offended heaven, too; yet heaven
knows—

Don J. Ay, heaven knows, that we are all
evil;

Yet heaven forbid we should have our deserts.

What is he?

1 Con. Too, too near to my offence, sir.

Oh! he will cut me piece-meal!

Don F. 'Tis no treason!

Don J. Let it be what it will, if he cut here.

I'll find him cut-work.

Don F. He must buy you dear;

With more than common lives.

Don J. Fear not, nor weep not;

By heaven, I'll fire the town before you perish!

And then the more the merrier; we'll jog with
you.

Don F. Come, in, and dry your eyes.

Don J. Pray, no more weeping.

Spoil a sweet face for nothing! My return

Shall end all this, I warrant you.

1 Con. Heaven grant it!

[Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.—An Apartment in Don Frederick's
 Lodgings.

Enter PETRUCHIO, with a letter.

Petr. This man should be of quality and worth,
By Don Alvaro's letter; for he gives
No slight recommendation of him:
I'll e'en make use of him.

Enter DON JOHN.

Don J. Save you, sir; I am sorry
My business was so unmannerly, to make you
Wait thus long here.

Petr. Occasions must be serv'd, sir.

But is your name Don John!

Don J. It is, sir.

Petr. Then,

First, for your own brave sake, I must embrace
you:

Next, for the credit of your noble friend,

Hernanda de Alvaro, make you mine:

Who lays his charge upon me, in this letter,

To look you out; and for the virtue in you,

Whilst your occasions make you resident

In this place, to supply you, love and honour
you;

Which had I known sooner—

Don J. Noble sir,

You'll make my thanks too poor. I wear a sword,
sir;

And have a service to be still dispos'd of,
As you shall please command it.

Petr. That manly courtesy is half my business,
sir;

And, to be short, to make you know I honour you,

And in all points believe your worth-like oracle;
This day, Petruchio,
One that may command the strength of this place,
Hazard the boldest spirits, hath made choice
Only of you, and in a noble office.

Don J. Forward, I am free to entertain it.

Petr. Thus, then;

I do beseech you, mark me.

Don J. I shall, sir.

Petr. Ferrara's duke—Would I might call him worthy!

But that he has razed out from his family,
As he has mine, with infamy—This man,
Rather, this powerful monster, we being left
But two, of all our house, to stock our memories,
My sister Constantia and myself; with arts and
witchcrafts,

Vows, and such oaths heaven has no mercy for,
Drew to dishonour this weak maid by stealth,
And secret passages, I knew not of.
Oft he obtain'd his wishes, oft abus'd her,
I am ashamed to say the rest. This purchas'd,
And his hot blood allay'd, he left her,
And all our name to ruin.

Don J. This was foul play,
And ought to be rewarded so.

Petr. I hope so:

He 'scap'd me yesternight; which, if he dare
Again adventure for, I will pardon him.

Don J. Sir, what commands have you to lay on me?

Petr. Only thus: by word of mouth to carry him
A challenge from me, that so (if he have honour in him)

We may decide all difference betwixt us.

Don J. Fair and noble;

And I will do it home. When shall I visit you?

Petr. Please you, this afternoon, I will ride with you.

For, at the castle, six miles hence, we are sure
To find him.

Don J. I'll be ready.

Petr. My man shall wait here,

And conduct you to my house.

Don J. I shall not fail you. [Exit Petruchio.

Enter DON FREDERICK.

Don F. How now?

Don J. All's well, and better than thou couldst
expect, for this wench is certainly no vestal. But
who do you think that she is? guess, an' thou canst.

Don F. I cannot.

Don J. Be it known, then, to all men, by these
presents, this is she, she, and only she, our curious
coxcombs have been so long hunting after.

Don F. Who, Constantia? Thou talk'st of cocks
and bulls, John.

Don J. I talk of wenches, Frederick. This is
the pullet we two have been crowing after.

Don F. It cannot be.

Don J. It can be, it shall be, and must be—sister
to Don Petruchio; her name, Constantia, I know
all, man.

Don F. Now I believe—

Don J. I both believe and hope it.

Don F. Why do you hope it?

Don J. First, because she is handsome; and
next, because she is kind: there are two reasons
for you. Now do you find out a third, a better, if
you can: for take this, Frederick, for a certain rule,
since she has once begun, she'll never give it over:
ergo, if we have good luck, in time she may fall to
our share.

Don F. I can't believe her dishonest for all this.
She has not one loose thought about her.

Don J. No matter for that, she's no saint. There
has been fine work, dainty doings, Frederick!

Don F. How can you talk so?

Don J. Because I think so. Now you think so,
and talk otherwise; therefore, I am the honestest,
though you may be the modestest man.

Don F. Well, well; there may have been a slip.

Don J. Ay, and a tumble, too, poor creature! I
think the boy will prove her's, I took up last night.

Don F. The devil!

Don J. Ay, ay, he has been at work. Let us go
in, and comfort her: that she is here, is nothing yet
suspected. Anon I'll tell you why her brother came,
(who, by this light, is a brave fellow,) and what
honour he has done me, in calling me to serve
him.

Don F. There be irons heating for some, Don
John.

Don J. Then we must take care not to burn our
fingers, Frederick. [Exeunt.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter Landlady and ANTHONY.

Land. Come, sir, who is it that keeps your master
company?

Anth. I say to you, Don John.

Land. I say, what woman?

Anth. I say so, too.

Land. I say again, I will know

Anth. I say, 'tis the you should.

Land. And I tell thee, he has a woman here.

Anth. I tell thee, 'tis, then, the better for him.

Land. Was ever gentlewoman

So frump'd up with a fool! Well, saucy sirrah,
I will know who it is, and to what purpose.

I pay the rent, and I will know how my house
Comes by these inflammations.

Anth. 'Twould be a great ease to your age.

Enter DON FREDERICK.

Don F. How now?

Why, what's the matter, Landlady?

Land. What's the matter!

You use me decently among you, gentlemen.

Don F. Who has abus'd her? you, sir?

Land. Od's my witness!

I will not be thus treated, that I will not.

Anth. I gave her no ill language.

Land. Thou liest, sirrah!

Thou took'st me up at every word I spoke,

As I had been a maikin, a flirt gillian:

And thou think'st, because thou canst write and
read,

Our noses must be under thee.

Don F. Dare you, sirrah?

Anth. Let but the truth be known, sir, I beseech
you:

She raves of wenches, and I know not what, sir.

Land. Go to, thou know'st too well, thou wicked
varlet!

Thou instrument of evil!

Anth. As I live, sir, she's ever thus, till dinner.

Don F. Get you in, sir; I'll answer you anon.

[Exit Anthony.

Now to your grief: what is't? for I can guess—

Land. You may, with shame enough, Don Fre-
derick,

If there were shame amongst you: nothing thought
on,

But how you may abuse my house.

Don F. No more of these words;

No! no more murmurings, woman.

I did suspect your anger;
But turn it presently and handsomely,
And bear yourself discreetly to this lady;
For such a one there is, indeed.

Land. 'Tis well, sir!

Don F. Leave off your devil's matins, and your melancholies,
Or we shall leave our lodgings.

Land. But, mine honour—
And 'twere not for mine honour—

Don F. Come, your honour,
Your house, and you, too, if you dare believe me,
Are well enough. Sleep up yourself, leave crying;
For I must have you entertain this lady
With all civility. When you know her,
You'll find your own fault; no more words, but do it.

Land. You know, you may command me.

Enter DON JOHN.

Don J. Worshipful landlady,
How does thy swanskin petticoat? By heav'n,
Thou look'st most amiable!

Land. You'll leave this roguery,
When you come to my years.

Don J. By this light,
Thou art not above fifteen yet; a mere girl!
Thou hast not half thy teeth! (*Knocking.*)

Don F. Somebody knocks;
See who it is; and do not mind this fellow.

Land. I beg, sir, that you'll use me with decorum.

Don J. Ay, ay, I'll promise you; with nothing else. [*Exit Landlady.*]

Was there ever such a piece of touchwood?

Don F. Pr'ythee, John, let her alone; she has been

Well vex'd already. She'll grow stark mad, man.

Don J. I would fain see her mad. An old mad woman—

Don F. Don't be a fool.

Don J. Is like a miller's mare troubled with the tooth-ache,
She makes the rarest faces—

Don F. Pr'ythee, be sober.

Re-enter Landlady.

Don J. What, again!
Nay, then, it is decreed, though hills were set on hills,

And seas met seas to guard thee, I would through!
Land. Od's my witness! if you ruffle me, I'll spoil your sweet face for you.

Don J. Oh! raptures, raptures!
(*Kissing her. She runs after him.*)

What, will you hurt your own son?
Land. Well, well; go, go to the door, there's a gentleman there would speak with you.

Don J. Upon my life! Petruccio. Good, dear landlady, carry him into the dining-room, and I'll wait upon him presently.

Land. Well, Don John, the time will come that I shall be even with you. [*Exit.*]

Don J. I must begone about this business.
Won't you go too, Frederick?

Don F. I am not requested, you know; besides, the lady will want advice and consolation.

Don J. Yes; and I know, too, with all your modesty, that you will be ready to give it her.

Don F. For shame, John; how can you ramble so?

You know you may trust me.

Don J. I had rather trust a cat with sweet milk, Frederick.

Don F. I'll but speak to her, and follow you.

Don J. Indeed?

Don F. Indeed.

Don J. Upon your honour?

Don F. Upon my honour.

Don J. And your modesty?

Don F. Phoo, phoo! don't be a fool.

Don J. Well, well, I shall trust you,—now I'm easy. [*Exit.*]

Enter First CONSTANTIA.

I Con. What, no way to divert this certain danger?

Don F. Impossible! their honours are engag'd.

I Con. Then there must be murder, and I the cause!

Which, gen'rous sir, I shall no sooner hear of, Than make one in't. You may, if you please, sir,

Make all go less. Do, sir, for heaven's sake, Let me request one favour.

Don F. It is granted.

I Con. Your friend, sir, is, I find, too resolute, Too hot and fiery for the cause: as ever You did a virtuous deed, for honour's sake, Go with him, and allay him: your fair temper, And noble disposition, like wish'd showers, May quench those eating fires, that would spoil all else.

I see in him destruction.

Don F. I will do it: and it is a wise consideration.

I'll after him, lady.

The old gentlewoman

Shall wait upon you; she is discreet and secret,

And you may trust her in all points.

I Con. You are noble.

Don F. And so I take my leave.

I hope, lady, a happy issue for all this.

I Con. All heaven's care upon you, and my prayers! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Antonio's House.

Enter Surgeon and a Gentleman.

Gent. What symptoms do you find in him?

Surg. None, sir, dangerous, if he'd be ruled.

Gent. Why, what does he do?

Surg. Nothing that he should. First, he will let no liquor down but wine; and then, he has a fancy that he must be dressed always to the tune of John Dory.

Gent. How to the tune of John Dory?

Surg. Why, he will have fiddlers, and make them play and sing it to him all the while.

Gent. An odd fancy, indeed!

Enter ANTONIO.

Anto. Give me some wine.

Surg. I told you so—'Tis death, sir.

Anto. 'Tis a horse, sir. Dost thou think I shall recover with the help of barley water only?

Gent. Fie, Antonio, you must be governed.

Anto. Why, sir, he feeds me with nothing but rotten roots, and drowned chickens, stewed pericraniums and pia-maters; and when I go to bed, (by heaven 'tis true, sir) he rolls me up in lints, with labels at them, 'that I am just the man in the almanack, my head and face is in Ariens' place.

Surg. Will it please you to let your friends see you opened?

Anto. Will it please you, sir, to give me a brimmer? I feel my body open enough for that. Give it me, or I'll die upon thy hand, and spoil thy custom.

Surg. How, a brimmer?

Anto. Why, look you, sir, thus I am used still;

I can get nothing that I want. In how long a time canst thou cure me?

Surg. In forty days.

Anto. I'll have a dog shall lick me whole in twenty. In how long a time canst thou kill me?

Surg. Presently.

Anto. Do it; that's the shorter, and there's more delight in it.

Gent. You must have patience.

Anto. Man, I must have business; this foolish fellow hinders himself; I have a dozen rascals to hurt within these five days. Good man-menders stop me up with parsley like stuffed beef, and let me walk abroad, and let me be dressed to that warlike tune, John Dory.

Surg. You shall walk shortly.

Anto. I will walk presently, sir, and leave your salads there, your green salves and your oils; I'll to my old diet again, strong food and rich wine, and see what that will do.

Surg. Well, go thy ways, thou art the maddest old fellow I ever met with! [*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE III.—*Don Frederick's lodging.*

Enter First CONSTANTIA and Landlady.

1 Con. I have told all I can, and more than yet These gentlemen know of me, ever trusting Your concealment—but are they such strange creatures?

Land. There's the younger, ay, and the wildest, Don John, the arrant st Jack in all this city: Has been a dragon in his days! the truth is, Whose chastity he chops upon he cares not; He flies at all; bastards, upon my conscience, He has now a hundred of 'em. The last night He brought home one; I pity her that bore it. Some rich woman (For wise I dare not call her) was the mother, For it was hung with jewels; the bearing cloth No less than crimson velvet.

1 Con. How?

Land. 'Tis true, lady.

1 Con. Was it a boy, too?

Land. A brave boy!

1 Con. May I see it?

For there is a neighbour of mine, a gentleman, Has had a late mischance, which willingly I would know further of; now if you please To be so courteous to me.

Land. You shall see it.

But what do you think of these men, now you know 'em?

Be wise, or you may repent too late. I tell you But for your own good, and as you will find it.

1 Con. I am advised.

Land. No more words then; do that,

And instantly, I told you of; be ready:

(*Don John, I'll fit you for your frumps.* [*Aside.*])

1 Con. I will, dame:

But shall I see this, child?

Land. Within this half hour.

Let's in, and then think better.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*Near the Castle of the Duke.*

Enter PETRUCHIO, DON JOHN, and FREDERICK.

Don J. Sir, he is worth your knowledge, and a gentleman

(If I that so much love him, may commend him) That's full of honour: and one, if foul play Should fall on us, will not fly back for fillips.

Petr. You much honour me, And once more I pronounce you both mine.

Don F. Stay;

What troop is that below i' th' valley there?

Don J. Hawking, I take it.

Petr. They are so; 'tis the Duke, 'tis even he, gentlemen;

I know him by his company.

Don F. I think too,

He bends up this way.

Petr. So he does.

Don J. Stand you still,

Within that covert, till I call: You, Frederick,

By no means be not seen, unless they offer

To bring on odds upon us: He comes forward;

Here will I wait him fairly: To your places.

Petr. I need no more instruct you.

Don J. Fear me not.

(*Petruchio and Frederick retire.*)

Enter DUKE and his Party.

Duke. Feed the hawks up, We'll fly no more to-day. Oh, my blest fortune, Have I so fairly met the man!

Don J. You have, sir;

And him you know by this. (*Showing his hat.*)

Duke. Sir, all the honour,

And love—

Don J. I do beseech your grace stay there.

Dismiss your train a little.

Duke. Walk aside,

And out of hearing, I command ye. Now, sir,

Be plain.

Don J. I will, and short;

You have wronged a gentleman beyond all justice, Beyond the mediation of all friends.

Duke. The man, and manner of wrong?

Don J. Petruchio is the man;

The wrong is, you have dishonour'd his sister.

Duke. Now, stay you, sir,

And hear me a little. This gentleman's

Sister, that you have named, 'tis true I have long loved;

As true, I have possess'd her: No less truth,

I have a child by her. But that she, or he,

Or any of that family, are tainted.

Suffer disgrace or ruin by my pleasures,

I wear a sword to satisfy the world, no,

And him in this case when pleases: for know, sir,

She is my wife, contracted before heaven;

(A witness I owe more tie to than her brother)

Nor will I fly from that name, which long since

Had had the church's seal and approbation,

But for his jealous nature.

Don J. Sir, your pardon;

And all that was my anger, now my service.

Duke. Fair sir, I knew I should convert you; had we

But that rough man here now too—

Don J. You shall, sir.

What, ho, ho!

Duke. I hope you have laid no ambush?

Enter PETRUCHIO.

Don J. Only friends.

Duke. My noble brother, welcome.

Come, put your anger off, we'll have no fighting.

Unless you will maintain I am unworthy

To bear that name.

Petr. Do you speak this heartily?

Duke. Upon my soul, and truly: The first priest Shall put you out of these doubts.

Petr. Now I love you,

And beseech you, pardon my suspicious;

You are now more than a brother, a brave friend too.

Don J. The good man's overjoy'd. What, ho, Mr. Modesty, you may come forth now—

Enter DON FREDERICK.

Don F. How goes it?

Don J. Why, the man has his mare again, and all's well.

The Duke professes freely he's her husband.

Don F. 'Tis a good hearing.

Don J. Yes, for modest gentlemen;

I must present you—May it please your grace,
To number this brave gentleman, my friend,
And noble kinsman, among these your servants.
He is truly valiant, and modest to converse with.

Duke. Oh, my brave friend! you shower your
bounties on me.

Amongst thy best thoughts, signior, in which
number

You being worthily disposed already,

May freely place your friend.

Don F. Your grace honours me.

Petr. Why, this is wondrous happy. But now,
brother,

Now comes the bitter to our sweet: Constantia!

Duke. Why, what of her?

Petr. Nor what, nor where do I know:

Wing'd with her fears, last night, beyond my
knowledge.

She quit my house, but whither—

Don F. Let not that—

Duke. No more, good sir, I have heard too
much.

Petr. Nay, sink not,
She cannot be so lost.

Don J. Nor shall not, gentlemen;

Be free again, the lady's found: That smile, sir,
Shows you distrust your servant.

Duke. I do beseech you.

Don J. You shall believe me; by my soul, she's
safe.

Duke. Heaven knows I would believe, sir.

Don F. You may safely.

Don J. And under noble usage: This modest
gentleman—

Speak, Frederick.—

Don F. I met her in all her doubts last night, and
to my guard

(Her fears being strong upon her) she gave her
person;

I waited on her to our lodging; where all re-
spect,

Civil and honest service, now attend her.

Petr. You may believe now.

Duke. Yes, I do, and strongly:

Well, my good friends, or rather my good an-
gels,

For you have both preserved me; when these
virtues

Die in your friend's remembrance—

Don J. Good, your grace,

Lose no more time in compliments, 'tis too pre-
cious;

I know it by myself, there can be no hell
To his that hangs upon his hopes.

Petr. He has hit it.

Don F. To horse again then, for this night I'll
crown you

With all the joys you wish for.

Petr. Happy gentlemen!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*The Suburbs.*

Enter FRANCISCO and a Man.

Fran. This is the maddest mischief: never fool
was so fobbed off as I am, made ridiculous, and to
myself mine own ass; trust a woman! I'll trust the
devil first, for he dares be better than his word
sometimes. Pray tell me, in what observance have
I ever failed her?

Man. Nay, you can tell that best yourself.

Fran. Let us consider.

Enter DON FREDERICK and DON JOHN.

Don F. Let them talk, we'll go on before.

Fran. Where didst thou meet Constantia, and
this woman?

Don F. Constantia! what are these fellows?
Stay by all means. (*They listen.*)

Man. Why, sir, I met her in that great street
that comes from the market-place, just at the turn-
ing by a goldsmith's shop.

Don F. Stand still, John.

Fran. Well, Constantia has upon herself a fine
thread, now; what will her best friend think of
this?

Don F. John, I smell some juggling, John.

Don J. Yes, Frederick, I fear it will be proved
so.

Fran. But what should the reason be, dost think,
of this so sudden change in her?

Don F. 'Tis she.

Man. Why, truly I suspect she has been enticed
to it by a stranger.

Don J. Did you mark that, Frederick?

Fran. Stranger! who?

M. n. A wild gentleman, that's newly come to
town.

Don F. Mark that, to.

Don J. Yes, sir.

Don F. Why do you think so?

Man. I heard her grave conductress twattle
something as they went along, that makes me
guess it.

Don J. 'Tis she, Frederick.

Don F. But who that he is, John?

Fran. I do not doubt to bolt them out, for they
must certainly be about the town. Ha! no more
words. Come, let's be gone. (*Francisco and Man
seeing Don J. and F. they retire.*)

Don F. Well.

Don J. Very well.

Don F. Discreetly.

Don J. Finely carried.

Don F. You have no more of these tricks?

Don J. Ten to one, sir.

I shall meet with them if you have.

Don F. Is this fair?

Don J. Was it in you a friend's part to deal
double?

I am no ass, Don Frederick.

Don F. And, Don John,

It shall appear I am no fool. disgrace me,
To make yourself thus every woman's courtesy?
'Tis boyish, 'tis base.

Don J. 'Tis false; I privity to this dog-trick!
Clear yourself, for I know where the wind sits:

Or, as I have a life— (*Trampling within.*)

Don F. No more, they are coming: show no
discontent, let's quickly away. If she be at home;
our jealousies are over; if not, you and I must
have a farther parley, John.

Don J. Yes, Don Frederick, you may be sure
we shall. But, where are these fellows? Plague on
them, we have lost them too in our spleens, like
fools.

Enter DUKE and PETRUCHIO.

Duke. Come, gentlemen, let's go a little faster:
Suppose you have all mistresses, and mend
Your pace accordingly.

Don J. Sir, I should be as glad of a mistress as
another man.

Don F. Yes, on my conscience wouldst thou,
and of any other man's mistress too, that I'll an-
swer for.

Don J. You'll answer!—Oh! You're a good
one! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—*Antonio's House.**Enter ANTONIO and his Man.**Anto.* With all my gold?*Man.* The trunk broken open, and all gone!*Anto.* And the mother in the plot?*Man.* And the mother and all.*Anto.* And the devil and all; and all his imps go with them. Belike they thought I was no more of this world, and those trifles would but disturb my conscience.*Man.* Sure, they thought, sir, you would not live to disturb them.*Anto.* Well, my sweet mistress, I'll try how handsomely your ladyship can caper in the air; there's your master-piece. No imaginations where they should be?*Man.* None, sir; yet we have searched all places we suspected; I believe they have taken towards the port.*Anto.* Give me then a water-conjurer, one that can raise water-devils! I'll part them—play, at duck and drake with my money! Get me a conjurer, I say; inquire out a man that lets out devils.*Man.* I don't know where.*Anto.* In every street, Tom Fool; any blear-eyed people with red heads and flat noses can perform it. Thou shalt know them by their half gowns and no breeches. Find me out a conjurer, I say, and learn his price, how he will let his devils out by the day. I'll have them again, if they be above ground. [*Exeunt.*]SCENE VII.—*Street before Don Frederick's Lodging.**Enter DUKE, PETRUCHIO, DON FREDERICK, and DON JOHN.**Petr.* Your grace is welcome now to Naples; so you are all, gentlemen.*Don J.* Don Frederick, will you step in, and give the lady notice who comes to visit her?*Petr.* Bid her make haste, we come to see no stranger—a night gown will serve her turn.*Don F.* I'll tell her what you say, sir. [*Exit.*]*Petr.* Now will the sport be to observe her alterations, how, betwixt fear and joy, she will behave herself.*Duke.* Dear brother, I must entreat you—*Petr.* I conceive your mind, sir; I will not offend her, but like a summer's evening against heat—*Enter DON FREDERICK and PETER.**Don J.* How now?*Don F.* Not to abuse your patience longer, nor hold you off with tedious circumstances; for you must know—*Don J.* What I knew before.*Petr.* What?*Duke.* Where is she?*Don F.* Gone, sir.*Duke.* How!*Petr.* What did you say, sir?*Don F.* Gone; by heaven removed. The woman of the house, too.*Petr.* What, that reverend old woman, that tired me with compliments?*Don F.* The very same.*Don J.* Well, Don Frederick.*Don F.* Don John, it is not well: but—*Don J.* But what?*Petr.* Come!*Don F.* This fellow can satisfy I lie not.*Petr.* A little after my master was departed, sir, with this gentleman, my fellow and myself being sent on business, as we must think, on purpose—*Don J.* Yes, yes, on purpose.*Petr.* Hang these circumstances, they always serve to usher in ill ends.*Don J.* Gone! now could I eat that rogue, I am so angry. Gone?*Petr.* Gone?*Don F.* Directly gone, fled, shifted; what would you have me say?*Duke.* Well, gentlemen, wrong not my good opinion.*Don F.* For your dukedom, sir, I would not be a knave.*Don J.* He that is, a rot run in his blood.*Petr.* But barmy, gentlemen, are ye sure you had her here? Did you not dream this?*Don J.* Have you your nose, sir?*Petr.* Yes, sir.*Don J.* Then we had her.*Petr.* Since you are so short, believe your having her shall suffer more construction.*Don J.* Well, sir, let it suffer. (*Turns off peevishly.*)*Don F.* How to convince you, sir, I can't imagine; but my life shall justify my innocence, or fall with it.*Duke.* Thus, then—for we may be all abused.*Petr.* 'Tis possible.*Duke.* Here let's part until to-morrow this time; we to our way to clear this doubt, and you to yours. Pawning our honours then to meet again, when, if she be not found—*Don F.* We stand engaged to answer any worthy way we are called to.*Duke.* We ask no more.*Petr.* To-morrow, certain.*Don J.* If we out-live this night, sir.[*Exeunt Duke and Petruchio.*]*Don F.* Very well, Don John!*Don J.* Very ill, Don Frederick!*Don F.* We have somewhat now to do.*Don J.* With all my heart, I love to be doing.*Don F.* If she be not found we must fight.*Don J.* I am glad on't; I have not fought a great while.*Don F.* I am glad you are so merry, sir.*Don J.* I am sorry you are so dull, sir.*Don F.* Here let us part; and if the lady be Not forthcoming,

'Tis this, Don John, shall damp your levity!

(*Clapping his hand upon his sword.*)*Don J.* Or this shall tickle up your modesty![*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Tavern.**Enter Second CONSTANTIA and her MOTHER.**Mother.* Hold, Cons, hold, for goodness, hold! I am in that desertion of spirit, for want of breath, that I am almost reduced to the necessity of not being able to defend myself against the inconvenience of a fall.*2 Con.* Dear mother, let us go a little faster, to secure ourselves from Antonio: for my part, I am in that terrible fright, that I can neither think, speak, nor stand still, till we are safe a ship-board, and out of sight of the shore.*Mother.* Out of sight of the shore! why, do you think I'll depatriate?*2 Con.* Depatriate? what's that?*Mother.* Why, you fool, you, leave my country:

what, will you never learn to speak out of the vulgar road?

2 Con. Oh lord! this hard word will undo us.

Mother. As I am a Christian, if it were to save my honour (which is ten thousand times dearer to me than life) I would not be guilty of so odious a thought.

2 Con. Pray, mother, since your honour is so dear to you, consider that if we are taken, both it and we should depatriate?

2 Con. Ay, there's it; the world! why, mother, the world does not care a pin, if both you and I were hanged; and that we shall be certainly, if Antonio takes us, for you have run away with his gold.

Mother. Did he not tell you that he kept it in his trunk for us? and had not I a right to take it whenever I pleased: you have lost your reasoning faculty, Cons!

2 Con. Yes, mother, but you was to have it upon a certain condition, which condition I would sooner starve than agree to. I can't help my poverty, but I can keep my honour, and the richest old fellow in the kingdom sha'n't buy it. I'll sooner give it away than sell it; that's my spirit, mother.

Mother. But what will become of me, Cons? I have so indelible an idea of my dignity, that I must have the means to support it; these I have got, and I will ne'er depart from the demarches of a person of quality; and let come what will, I shall rather chuse to submit myself to my fate, than strive to prevent it, by any deportment that is not congruous in every degree to the steps and measures of a strict practitioner of honour.

2 Con. Would not this make one stark mad? your style is no more out of the way, than your manner of reasoning; you first sell me to an ugly old fellow, then you run away with me and all his gold; and now, like a strict practitioner of honour, resolve to be taken, rather than depatriate, as you call it.

Mother. As I am a Christian, Cons, a tavern, and a very decent sign; I'll in, I am resolved, though by it I should run a risk of never so stupendous a nature!

2 Con. There's no stopping her. What shall I do? (*Aside.*)

Mother. I'll send for my kinswoman and some music, to revive me a little. For really, Cons, I am reduced to that sad imbecility, by the injury I have done my poor feet, that I am in a great incertitude, whether they will have liveliness sufficient to support me up to the top of the stairs or no.

[*Exit Mother.*]

2 Con. I have a great mind to leave this fantastical mother-in-law of mine, with her stolen goods, take to my heels and seek my fortune; but to whom shall I apply? Generosity and humanity are not to be met with at every corner of the street. If any young fellow would but take a liking to me, and make an honest woman of me, I would make him the best wife in the world: but what a fool am I to talk thus? Young men think of young women now-a-days, as they do of their clothes: it is genteel to have them, to be vain of them, to show them to everybody, and to change them often; when their novelty and fashion is over, they are turned out of doors, to be purchased and worn by the first buyer. A wife, indeed, is not so easily got rid of: it is a suit of mourning, that lies neglected at the bottom of the chest, and only shows itself now and then, upon melancholy occasions. What a terrible prospect! However, I do here swear and vow to live for ever chaste, till I find a young fellow who will take me for better and for worse. La, what a desperate oath have I taken!

Mother. (*Looking out of the window.*) Come up, Cons, the fiddles are here.

2 Con. I come—(*Mother goes from the window.*) I must begone, though whither I cannot tell; these fiddles, and her discreet companions, will quickly make an end of all she has stolen; and then for five hundred new pieces will she sell me to another old fellow, whom I will serve in the same manner. She has taken care not to leave me a farthing; yet I am so, better than under her conduct, 'twill be at worst but begging for my life:

*And starving were to me an easier fate,
Than to be forc'd to live with one I hate.*

Mother. Come, Cons, make haste. (*Goes up to her mother.*)

Enter DON JOHN.

Don J. It will not out of my head, but that Don Frederick has sent away this wench, for all he carries it so quietly; yet methinks he should be honestest than so; but these grave men are never touched upon such occasions. (*Music above.*) What's here, music and women? the best mixture in the world!—would I were among them. (*Music again, and a woman appears in the balcony.*) That's a right one, I know it by her smile. I have an eye that never fails me. (*Another lady appears.*) Ah, rogue! she's right, too; I'm sure on't; here's a brave parcel of them! (*Music still, and dancing.*)

Mother. Come, come, let's dance in t'other room; 'tis a great deal better.

Don J. Say you so? what, now, if I should go up and dance too? It is a tavern—not this business! why should a man be hunting upon a cold scent, when there is so much better sport near at hand? I'll in, I am resolved, and try my own fortune; 'tis hard luck if I don't get one of them. (*As he goes to the door.*)

Enter Second CONSTANTIA.

See, here's one bolted already! fair lady, whither so fast?

2 Con. I don't know, sir.

Don J. May I have the honour to wait upon you?

2 Con. Yes, if you please, sir.

Don J. Whither?

2 Con. I tell you, I don't know.

Don J. She's very quick. Would I might be so happy as to know you, lady!

2 Con. I dare not let you see my face, sir.

Don J. Why?

2 Con. For fear you should not like it, and then leave me; for, to tell you true, I have, at this present, very great need of you.

Don J. Hast thou? Then I declare myself thy champion: and let me tell thee, there is not a better knight-errant in all Christendom than I am to succour distressed damsels.

2 Con. What a proper, handsome, spirited fellow this is! If he'd love me now as he ought, I would never seek out farther. Sir, I am young, and unexperienced in the world.

Don J. If thou art young, it's no great matter what thy face is.

2 Con. Perhaps this freedom in me may seem strange; but, sir, in short, I'm forced to fly from one I hate; will you protect me?

Don J. Yes, that I will, before I see your face; your shape has charmed me enough for that already.

2 Con. But if we should meet him, will you here promise me, he shall not take me from you?

Don J. If any one takes you from me, he shall take my life too; if I love one, I won't keep t'other; they shall go together.

2 *Con.* For heaven's sake, then, conduct me to some place where I may be secured a while from the sight of any one whatsoever.

Don J. By all the hopes I have to find thy face as lovely as thy shape, I will.

2 *Con.* Well, sir, I believe you; for you have an honest look.

Don J. An honest look! Zounds! I am afraid Don Frederick has been giving her a character of me too. Come, pray, unveil.

2 *Con.* Then turn away your face, for I'm resolved you shall not see a bit of mine, till I have set it in order, and then—

Don J. What then?

2 *Con.* I'll strike you dead.

Don J. A mettled wench, I warrant her! If she be young now, and have but a nose on her face, she'll be as good as her word. Come, my dear, I'm even panting with impatience! Are you ready? (*As he turns slowly round, she gets on the other side.*) 'Sdeath! where is she!

2 *Con.* Here! stand your ground, if you dare!

Don J. By this light, a rare creature! ten thousand times handsomer than her we seek for! this can be sure no common one: pray Heaven she be a kind one. (*Aside.*)

2 *Con.* Well, sir, what say you now?

Don J. Nothing: I'm so amazed, I'm not able to speak. Pr'ythee, my sweet creature, don't let us be talking in the street, but run home with me, that I may have a little private innocent conversation with you.

2 *Con.* No, sir, no private dealing, I beseech you.

Don J. 'Sheart, what shall I do? I'm out of my wits. Harkye, my dear soul, canst thou love me?

2 *Con.* If I could, what then?

Don J. Why, then I should be the happiest man alive! (*Kissing her hand.*)

2 *Con.* Nay, good sir, hold—remember the conditions.

Don J. Conditions! what conditions? I would not wrong thee for the universe!

2 *Con.* Then you'll promise?

Don J. What, what? I'll promise anything, everything, thou dear, sweet, bewitching, heavenly woman!

2 *Con.* To make me an honest woman?

Don J. How the devil, my angel, can I do that, if you are undone to my hands?

2 *Con.* Ay, but I am not: I am a poor innocent lamb, just escaped from the jaws of an old fox.

Don J. Art thou, my pretty lamb? then I'll be thy shepherd, and fold thee in these arms. (*Kisses her hand.*)

2 *Con.* Ay, but you must not eat the lamb yourself.

Don J. I like you so well, I will do anything for thee, my dear delightful incognita! I love you so much, it is impossible to say how much I love thee! My heart, my mind, and my soul, are transported to such a degree, that—that—that—d—n it, I can't talk; so let us run home, or the old fox, my lamb, will overtake us. (*Theg run out.*)

SCENE II.—The Street.

Enter DON FREDERICK and FRANCISCO.

Don F. And art thou sure it was Constantia, sayest thou, that he was leading?

Fran. Am I sure I live, sir? Why should I lead the house with her; how can I chuse but know her?

Don F. But didst thou see her

Fran. Lord, sir, I saw her face as plain as I see yours just now, not two streets off.

Don F. Yes, 'tis even so; I suspected it at first, but then he forswore it with that confidence—Well, Don John, if these be your practices, you shall have no more a friend of me, sir, I assure you. Perhaps, though, he met her by chance, and intends to carry her to her brother, and the duke.

Fran. A little time will show. Gadso, here he's!

Don F. I'll step behind the shop, and observe him.

Enter DON JOHN and Second CONSTANTIA.

Don J. Here, now go in, and let me see who will get you out again without my leave.

2 *Con.* Remember, you have given your honour.

Don J. And my love—and when they go together, you may always trust them.

Don F. Dear Don John! (*Don J. puts Con. in, and locks the door.*)

Don J. Oh! how do you do, Frederick? D—n him, now will he ask me forty foolish questions, and I have such a mind to talk to this wench, that I cannot think of one excuse for my life!

Don F. Your servant, sir: pray, who's that you locked in just now, at the door?

Don J. Why, a friend of mine, that's gone up to read a book.

Don F. A book! that's a quaint one, 'faith! pr'ythee, Don John, what library hast thou been buying this afternoon? for in the morning, to my knowledge, thou hadst never a book there, except it were an almanack, and that was none of thy own neither.

Don J. No, no, its a book of his own; he brought along with him: a scholar, that's given to reading.

Don F. And do scholars, Don John, wear petticoats now-a-days?

Don J. Plague on him, he has seen her! Well, Don Frederick, thou knowest I am not good at lying: tis a woman, I confess it, make your best on't: what then?

Don F. Why then, Don John, I desire you'll be pleased to let me see her.

Don J. Why, 'faith, Frederick, I should not be against the thing, but you know that a man must keep his word, and she has a mind to be private.

Don F. But, John, you may remember, when I met a lady so before, this very self-same lady too, that I got leave for you to see her, John.

Don J. Why, do you think then, that this here is Constantia?

Don F. I cannot properly say I think it, John, because I know it; this fellow, here, saw her, as you led her in the streets.

Don J. Well, and what then? Who does he say it is?

Don F. Ask him, sir, and he'll tell ye.

Don J. Harkye, friend, dost thou know this lady?

Fran. I think I should, sir; I have lived long enough in the house to know her, sure.

Don J. And how do they call her, pr'ythee!

Fran. Constantia,

Don J. How! Constantia!

Fran. Yes, sir; the woman's name is Constantia, that's flat.

Don J. It is so, sir? and so is this too. (*Strikes him.*)

Fran. Oh, oh! (*Runs out.*)

Don J. Now, sir, you have borne false witness for nothing.

Don F. Yes, Don John, why do you beat the poor fellow for doing

Accn. No.

Uttara para Tarku Dr. Public Library

Date 10.1.97

Don J. Telling truth! thou talkest as if thou hadst been hired to bear false witness too: you are a very fine gentleman!

Don F. What a strange confidence he has! but is there no shame in these? nor no consideration of what is just or honest, to keep a woman thus against her will, that thou knowest is in love with another man too? Dost think a judgment will not follow this?

Don J. Good, dear Frederick, do thou keep thy sentences and thy sentiments, which are now out of fashion, for some better opportunity; this here is not a fit subject for them: I tell thee, she is no more Constantia than thou art.

Don F. Why won't you let me see her then?

Don J. Because I can't: besides, she's not for thy taste.

Don F. How so?

Don J. Why, thy genius lies another way; thou art all for flames and darts, and those fine things! now I am for pure, plain, simple love, without any embroidery; I am not so curious, Frederick, as thou art.

Don F. Very well, sir; but is there no shame? but is this worthy in you to delude—

Don J. But is there no shame! but is this worthy! What a many buts are here! If I should tell thee now solemnly thou hast but one eye, and give thee reasons for it, wouldst thou believe me?

Don F. I think hardly, sir, against my own knowledge.

Don J. Then why dost thou, with that grave face, go about to persuade me against mine? You should do as you would be done by, Frederick.

Don F. And so I will, sir, in this very particular, since there's no other remedy; I shall do that for the duke and Petruchio, which I should expect from them upon the like occasion: in short, to let you see I am as sensible of my honour, as you can be careless of yours, I must tell you, sir, that I'm resolved to wait upon this lady to them.

Don J. Are you so, sir? Why, I must then, sweet sir, tell you again, I am resolved you sha'n't. Never stare nor wonder! I have promised to preserve her from the sight of any one whatsoever, and with the hazard of my life will make it good; but that you may not think I mean an injury to Petruchio, or the Duke, know, Don Frederick, that though I love a pretty girl perhaps a little better, I hate to do a thing that's base, as much as you do. Once more, upon my honour, this is not Constantia; let that satisfy you.

Don F. All that will not do. (*Goes to the door.*)

Don J. No! why, then this shall. (*Draws.*) Come not one step nearer, for if thou dost, by heaven, I'm through you!

Don F. This is an insolence beyond the temper of a man to suffer. Thus, I throw off thy friendship; and since thy folly has provoked my patience beyond its natural bounds, know it is not in thy power now to save thyself.

Don J. That's to be tried, sir, though by your favour. (*Looks up at the balcony.*) Mistress! What d'ye-call-'em, prythee look out now a little, and see how I'll fight for thee.

Don F. Come, sir, are you ready?

Don J. Oh lord, sir, your servant! (*Fight.*)

Enter DUKE and PETRUCHIO.

Petr. What's here? fighting! Let's part them. How! Don Frederick against Don John? How came you to fall out, gentlemen? What's the cause?

Don F. Why, sir, it is your quarrel, and not mine, that drew this on me: I saw him lock Con-

stantia up into that house, and I desired to wait upon her to you; that's the cause.

Duke. Oh! it may be, he designed to lay the obligation upon us himself. Sir, we are beholden to you for this favour beyond all possibility of— (*Approaching Don J.*)

Don J. Pray, your grace, keep back, and don't throw away your thanks, before you know whether I have deserved them or no. Oh, is that your design? Sir, you must not go in there. (*Petruchio is going to the door.*)

Petr. How, sir! not go in?

Don J. No, sir; most certainly not go in.

Petr. She's my sister, and I will speak to her.

Don J. If she were your mother, sir, you should not, though it were but to ask her blessing.

Petr. Since you are so positive, I'll try.

Don J. You shall find me a man of my word, sir.

Duke. Nay, pray, gentlemen, hold; let me compose this matter. Why do you make a scruple of letting us see Constantia?

Don J. Why, sir, 'twould turn a man's head round to hear these fellows talk so. there is not one word true of all that he has said.

Duke. Then you do not know where Constantia is?

Don J. Not I, by heavens!

Don F. Oh, monstrous impudence! Upon my life, sir, I saw him force her up into that house, lock her up, and the key is now in his pocket.

Don J. Now that is two lies; for, first, he did not see her: and next, all force is unnecessary, she is so very willing.

Duke. But lookye, sir, this doubt may easily be cleared. let either Petruchio or me but see her, and if she be not Constantia, we engage our honours (though we should know her) never to discover who she is.

Don J. Ay, but there's the point now, that I can never consent to.

Duke. Why?

Don J. Because I gave her my word to the contrary.

Petr. Pish! I won't be kept off thus any longer. Sir, either let me enter, or I'll force my way.

Don F. No, pray, sir, let that be my office: I will be revenged on him, for having betrayed me to his friendship. (*Petruchio and Don F. offer to fight with Don J.*)

Duke. Nay, you shall not offer him foul play, neither. Hold, brother, pray a word; and with you too, sir.

Don J. Harkye, gentlemen, I'll make ye a fair proposition; leave off this ceremony among yourselves, and those dismal threats against me. I'llip up, cross or pile, who shall begin first, and I'll do the best I can to entertain you all, one after another.

Enter ANTONIO.

Auto. Now do my fingers itch to be about somebody's ears, for the loss of my gold. Ha! what's here to do? swords drawn! I must make one, though it cost me the singing of ten John Dories more. Courage, brave boy! I'll stand by you as long as this tool here lasts: and it was once a good one.

Petr. Who's this? Antonio! Oh, sir! you are welcome! you shall be even judge between us.

Auto. No, no, no; not I, sir, I thank you: I'll make work for others to judge of, I'm resolved to fight.

Petr. But we won't fight with you.

Auto. Then put up your swords, or by this hand I'll lay about me! (*They put up their swords.*)

Don J. Well said, old Bilboa, i'faith!

Petr. Pray hear us, though. this gentleman saw

him lock up my sister into this house, and he refuses to let us see her.

Anto. How, friend, is this true? (*Going to him.*)

Don J. Not so hasty, I beseech you. Lookye, gentlemen, to show you that all are mistaken, and that my formal friend there is an ass—

Don F. I thank you, sir.

Don J. I'll give you my consent, that this gentleman here shall see her, if his information can satisfy you.

Duke. Yes, yes; he knows her very well.

Don J. Then, sir, go in here, if you please: I dare trust him with her, for he is too old to do any mischief. (*Antonio goes in.*)

Don F. I wonder how my gentleman will get off from all this?

Don J. I shall be even with you, Don Frederick, another time, for all your grinning. (*Noise within.*) How now! what noise is that?

• *Enter PETER.*

Peter. The gentleman!—

Don J. Where is he?

Peter. He's run out of the back door, sir.

Don J. How so?

Peter. Why, sir, he's run after the gentlewoman you brought in.

Don J. 'Sdeath! how durst you let her out?

Peter. Why, sir, I knew nothing.

Don J. No! thou ignorant rascal! and therefore I'll beat something into thee. (*Beats him.*) Run after her, you dog, and bring her back, or— (*Peter runs off.*)

Don F. What, you won't kill him?

Don J. Nay, come not near me, for if thou dost, by heavens, I'll give thee as much! and would do so however, but that I won't lose time from looking after my dear, sweet—a plague confound you all! (*Goes in, and shuts the door after him.*)

Duke. What, he has shut the door!

Don F. It's no matter. I'll lead you a private back way, by that corner, where we shall meet him. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter First CONSTANTIA.

I Con. Oh! whither shall I run to hide myself! the constable has seized the landlady, and, I am afraid, the poor child too. How to return to Don Frederick's house, I know not: and, if I knew, I durst not, after those things the landlady has told me of him. I am faulty, I confess, but greater faults have often met with lighter punishments.

• *Enter DON JOHN.*

Don J. I am almost dead with running, and will be so quite, but I will overtake her.

I Con. Hold, Don John, hold!

Don J. What's that? ha! is it you, my dear?

I Con. For heaven's sake, sir, carry me from hence, or I'm utterly undone.

Don J. Phoo, plague, this is the other! now could I almost beat her, for but making me the proposition. Madam, there are some a-coming, that will do it a great deal better: but I am in such haste, that, I vow to gad, madam—

I Con. Nay, pray, sir, stay; you are concerned in this as well as I; for your woman is taken.

Don J. Ha! my woman! (*Goes back to her.*) I vow to gad, madam, I do so highly honour your ladyship, that I would venture my life, a thousand times, to do you service. But, pray, where is she?

I Con. Why, sir, she is taken by the constable.

Don J. Constable! Which way went he?

I Con. I cannot tell; for I ran out into the streets, just as he had seized upon your landlady.

Don J. Plague o' my landlady! I mean the other woman.

I Con. Other woman, sir! I have seen no other woman, never since I left your house!

Don J. 'Sdeath! what have I been doing here, then, all this while! Madam, your most humble—

I Con. Good sir, be not so cruel as to leave me in this distress.

Don J. No, no, no; I'm only going a little way, and will be back again presently.

I Con. But, pray, sir, hear me; I'm in that danger—

Don J. No, no, no; I vow to gad, madam, no danger in the world. Let me alone, I warrant you. (*Hurries off.*)

I Con. He's gone! and I a lost, wretched, miserable creature, for ever.

Enter ANTONIO.

Anto. Oh! there she is.

I Con. Who's this? Antonio! the fiercest enemy I have. (*Runs away.*)

Anto. Are you so nimble-footed, gentlewoman? A plague confound all whores! [*Exit.*]

• ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter MOTHER and KINSWOMAN.

Kins. But, madam, be not so angry; perhaps she'll come again.

Mother. Oh! kinswoman, never speak of her more; for she's an odious creature to leave me thus in the lurch. I have given her all her breeding, and instructed her with my own principles of education.

Kins. I protest, madam, I think she's a person that knows as much of all that as—

Mother. Knows, kinswoman! there's ne'er a female in Italy, of thrice her years, knows so much the procedures of a true gallantry, and the infallible principles of an honourable friendship, as she does.

Kins. And, therefore, madam, you ought to love her.

Mother. No, fie upon her! nothing at all, as I am a Christian. When once a person fails in fundamentals, she's at a period with me. Besides, with all her wit, Constantia is but a fool; and calls all the minauderies of a *bonne mine*, affectation.

Kins. Bless me, sweet goodness! But, pray, madam, how came Constantia to fall out with your ladyship? Did she take anything ill of you?

Mother. As I am a Christian, I can't resolve you, unless it were that I led the dance first: but for that she must excuse me; I know she dances well, but there are others, who, perhaps, understand the right swim of it as well as she—

Enter DON FREDERICK.

And, though I love Constantia—

Don F. How's this? Constantia!

Mother. I know no reason why I should be debarred the privilege of showing my own good sometimes.

Don F. If I am not mistaken, that other woman is she Don John and I were directed to, when we came first to town, to bring us acquainted with Constantia. I'll try to get some intelligence from her. Pray, lady, have I never seen you before?

Kins. Yes, sir, I think you have, with another stranger, a friend of yours, one day, as I was coming out of the church.

Don F. I'm right then. And, pray, who were you talking of?

Mother. Why, sir, of an inconsiderate, inconsiderable person, that has at once both forfeited the honour of my concern, and the concern of her own honour.

Don F. Very fine, indeed! and is all this intended for the beautiful Constantia?

Mother. Oh! lie upon her, sir, an odious creature, as I'm a Christian, no beauty at all.

Don F. Why, does not your ladyship think her handsome?

Mother. Seriously, sir, I don't think she's ugly; but, as I am a Christian, my position is, that no true beauty can be lodged in that creature, who is not, in some measure, buoyed up with a just sense of what is incumbent to the devoir of a person of quality.

Don F. That position, madam, is a little severe; but however she has been incumbent formerly, as your ladyship is pleased to say, now that she's married, and her husband owns the child, she is sufficiently justified for what she has done.

Mother. Sir, I must, blushing, beg leave to say, you are in an error. I know there has been the passion of love between them, but with a temperament so innocent and so refined, as it did impose a negative upon the very possibility of her being with child. No, sir; I assure you my daughter Constantia has never had a child. A child! Ha, ha, ha! Oh, goodness, save us, a child!

Don F. Well, madam, I shall not dispute this with you any farther; but give me leave to wait upon your daughter; for her friend, I assure you, is in great impatience to see her.

Mother. Friend, sir! I know none she has. I'm sure she loaths the very sight of him.

Don F. Of whom?

Mother. Why, of Antonio, sir; he that you were pleased to say—ha, ha, ha!

Don F. I tell you I do not know Antonio, nor never named him to you. I told you, that the Duke has owned Constantia for his wife, and that her brother and he are friends, and are now both in search after her.

Mother. Then, as I'm a Christian, I suspect we have both been equally involved in the misfortune of a mistake! Sir, I am in the dernier confusion to avow, that, though my daughter, Constantia, has been liable to several addresses, yet she had never the honour to be produced to his grace.

Don F. So, now the thing is out, and I'm a d—d rogue for what I did to Don John; for, on my conscience, this is that Constantia the fellow told me of! I'll make him amends, whatever it cost me. Lady, you must give me leave not to part with you, till you meet with your daughter, for some reasons I shall tell you hereafter.

Mother. Sir, I am so highly your obligée for the manner of your enquiries, and you have grounded your determinations upon so just a Basis, that I shall not be ashamed to own myself a votary to all your commands. *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—A Street.

Enter Second CONSTANTIA,

2 Con. So, thanks to my youth and my heels, I am once more free from Antonio! What an escape! and yet, what a misfortune! I have no great reason to rejoice—for, though I have got clear from the old fellow, I have lost the young one too. I did not wish to out-run them both; but whither to go now? that's the question—I wish my spirited young Spaniard were here to answer it; but that this wild

spark, whom I liked so well, and who swore he liked me, should send that old piece of mischief to distress me, and drive me out of the house, puzzles me exceedingly! I wish I could see him once more, to explain this matter to me. May I never be married if he is not coming this way! Should he prove false, my poor heart will have a terrible time of it. Now for the proof— *(Walks aside.)*

Enter DON JOHN, holding Peter.

Don J. Did you run after her, as I ordered you, sirrah!

Peter. Like any greyhound, sir.

Don J. And have you found her, rascal?

Peter. Not quite, sir.

Don J. Not quite, sir! You are drunk, fellow!

Peter. A little, sir; I run the better for it.

Don J. Have you seen her? speak quickly, or speak no more. *(Shaking him.)*

Peter. Yes, yes, I have seen her.

Don J. Where? where?

Peter. There! there!

Don J. Where's there, sirrah?

Peter. There where I saw her—in the street!

Don J. Did you overtake her?

Peter. I was overtaken myself, and—hic—fell down.

Don J. Then she is gone! irrecoverably gone! and I shall run distracted! *(Second Constantia taps him on the shoulder; he turns, and they gaze on each other.)* Heigho!

Peter. Never was so near death in all my life! *[Exit.]*

Don J. Oh! my dear soul, take pity on me, and give me comfort; for I'm e'en dead for want of thee.

2 Con. Oh! you're a fine gentleman, indeed, to shut me up in your house, and send another man to me.

Don J. Pray, hear me.

2 Con. No, I will never hear you more, after such an injury; what would you have done, if I had been kind to you, that you could use me thus before?

Don J. By my troth, that's shrewdly urged.

2 Con. Besides, you basely broke your word.

Don J. But will you hear nothing? nor did you hear nothing? I had three men upon me at once, and had I not consented to let that old fellow up, who came to my rescue, they had all broken in whether I would or no.

2 Con. It may be so; for I remember I heard a noise; but suppose it was not so, what then? why, then, I'll love him, however. Harkye, sir, I ought now to use you very scurvily; but I can't find in my heart to do so.

Don J. Then heaven's blessing on thy heart for it!

2 Con. But a—

Don J. What?

2 Con. I would fain know—

Don J. What, what? I'll tell thee anything, everything.

2 Con. I would fain know, whether you can be kind to me.

Don J. Look in your glass, my charmer, and answer for me.

2 Con. You think me very vain.

Don J. I think you devilish handsome.

2 Con. I shall find you a rogue at last.

Don J. Then you shall hang me for a fool; take your garters, and do it now, if you will. *(Sighing.)*

2 Con. You are no fool.

Don J. Oh, yes, a loving fool.

2 Con. Will you love me for ever?

Don J. I'll be bound to you for ever; you can't desire better security.

2 Con. I have better security.

Don J. What's that, my angel?

2 Con. Th' tenderest affection for you now, and the kindest behaviour to you, for evermore.

Don J. And I, upon my knees, will swear, that, that—what shall I swear?

2 Con. Nay, use what words you please, so they be hot hearty.

Don J. I swear, then, by thy fair self, that looks so like a deity, and art the only thing I now can think of, that I'll adore you to my dying day.

2 Con. And here I vow, the minute thou dost leave me, I'll leave the world—that's, kill myself.

Don J. Oh! my dear heavenly creature, we'll love as long as we live, and then we'll die together; and there's an end of both of us. But who is this my old friend has got there?

Enter First CONSTANTIA and ANTONIO, who seizes her.

Anto. Oh! have I caught you, gentlewoman, at last? Come, give me my gold.

1 Con. I hope he takes me for another; I won't answer, for I had rather you should take me for any one, than who I am.

Don J. Pray, sir, who is that you have there by the hand?

Anto. A person of honour, that has broken open my trunks, and run away with all my gold; yet, I'll hold ten pounds I'll have it whipped out of her again.

2 Con. Done, I'll hold you ten pounds of that now.

Anto. Ha! by my troth, you have reason; and, lady, I ask your pardon; but I'll have it whipped out of you, then, gossip. (*Going to her.*)

Don J. Hold, sir; you must not meddle with my goods. (*Stopping him.*)

Anto. Your goods! how came she to be yours? I'm sure I bought her of her mother for five hundred good pieces in gold.

Don J. Ay, sir, but that bargain won't hold good in our court; besides, sir, as I told you before, she's mine, Don.

Anto. Yours, sir! by what right?

Don J. The right of possession, sir; the law of love, and consent of the parties.

Anto. And is this so, young lady?

2 Con. Yes, young gentleman, it is. You purchase me! And could you imagine, you of a fool you, that I would take up with you, while there was a young fellow to be had for love or money? Purchase yourself a little wit, and a great deal of flannel, against the cold weather, or, on my word, you'll make a melancholy figure. Ha, ha, ha!

Don J. He does make a melancholy figure! ha, ha! you had better let her alone, Don; why, she's too hard for me—

Anto. Indeed, I think so. But, pray, sir, by your leave, I hope you will allow me the speech of one word to your goods here, as you call her; 'tis but a small request.

Don J. Ay, sir, with all my heart—how, Constantia! Madam, now you have seen that lady, I hope you will pardon the haste you met me in a little while ago; if I committed a fault, you must thank her for it.

1 Con. Sir, I do know too well the power of love, by my own experience, not to pardon all the effects of it in another.

Anto. Well, then, I'll promise you, if you will but help me to recover my gold again, that I'll never trouble you more.

2 Con. A match; and 'tis the best that you and I could ever make.

Don J. Pray, madam, fear nothing; by my love,

I'll stand by you, and see that your brother shall do you no harm.

2 Con. Harkye, sir, a word; how dare you talk of love to any lady but me, sir?

Don J. By my troth, that was a fault, but I meant it only civilly.

2 Con. Ay, but if you are so very civil a gentleman, we shall not be long friends: I scorn to share your love with any one whatsoever; and, for my part, I'm resolved to have either all or none.

Don J. Well, well, my dear little covetous rogue, thou shalt have it all—thus I sign and seal—(*Kisses her hand.*) and transfer all my stock of love to thee, for ever and for ever.

2 Con. I accept it, in the warmest spirit of love and gratitude.

Enter DON FREDERICK and Mother.

Don F. Come, now, madam, let us not speak one word more, but go quietly about our business; not but that I think it the greatest pleasure in the world to hear you talk, but—

Mother. Do you, indeed, sir? I swear then, good wits jump, sir; for I have thought so myself a very great while.

Don F. You have all the reason imaginable. Oh, Don John, I ask thy pardon! but I hope I shall make thee amends, for I have found out the mother, and she has promised to help thee to thy mistress again.

Don J. Sir, you may save your labour; the business is done, and I am fully satisfied.

Don F. And dost thou know who she is?

Don J. No, 'faith, I never asked her name.

Don F. Why, then, I'll make thee more satisfied; this lady, here, is that very Constantia—

Don J. Ha! thou hast not a mind to be knocked o'er the pate too, hast thou?

Don F. No, sir; nor dare you do it neither; but, for certain, this is that very self same Constantia that thou and I so long looked after.

Don J. I thought she was something more than ordinary: but shall I tell thee now a stranger thing than all this?

Don F. What's that?

Don J. Why, I will never more think of any other woman, for her sake.

Don F. That, indeed, is strange; but you are much altered, John; it was but this morning that women were such hypocrites that you would not trust a single mother's daughter of them.

Don J. Ay, but when things are at the worst, they'll mend, example does everything, Frederick, and the fair sex will certainly grow better whenever the greatest is the best woman in the kingdom; that's what I trust to.

Don F. Well parried, John!

Don J. See here, Frederick! the lost jewel is found. (*Showing First Constantia.*)

Don F. Madam, I am heartily glad to meet your ladyship here; we have been in very great disorder since we saw you.

2 Con. Come, mother, deliver your purse; I have delivered myself up to this young fellow, and the bargain's made with that old fellow; so he may have his gold again, that all shall be well.

Mother. As I am a Christian, sir, I took it away, only to have the honour of restoring it again; for my hard fate having not bestowed upon me a fund which might capacitate me to make you presents, I had no way left for the exercise of my generosity but by putting myself into a condition of giving back what was yours.

Anto. A very generous design, indeed! So now I'll e'en turn a sober person, and leave off this wenching and this fighting, for I begin to find it does not agree with me.

Don J. What's here? Our landlady and the child again!

Enter PETRUCHIO and LANDLADY, with the Child.

Petr. Yes, we met her going to be whipped, in a drunken constable's hands that took her for another.

Don J. Why, then, pray let her e'en be taken, and whipped for herself, for, on my word, she deserves it.

Land. Yes, I'm sure of your good word at any time.

I Con. Harkye, dear landlady!

Land. Oh, sweet goodness! is it you? I have been in such a pñck of trouble since I saw you, they took me, and they tumbled me, and they hauled me, and they pulled me, and they called me painted Jezebel, and the poor little babe here did so take on!

Enter DUKE.

Come hither, my lord, come hither. here is Constantia!

I Con. Yonder's my brother!

Duke. No, madam, there is no danger.

I Con. Were there a thousand dangers in those arms, I would run thus to meet them.

Duke. Oh, my dear! it were not safe that any should be here at present; for now my heart is so overpressed with joy, that I should scarce be able to defend thee.

Petr. Sister, I'm so ashamed of all my faults which my mistake has made me guilty of, that I know not how to ask your pardon for them.

I Con. No, brother, the fault was mine, in mistaking you so much as not to impart the whole truth to you at first, but, having begun my love without your consent, I never durst acquaint you with the progress of it.

Duke. Come, let the consummation of our present joys blot out the memory of all these past mistakes.

Don J. And when shall we consummate our joys?

I Con. ———— Never:
We'll find out ways to make them last for ever.

Don J. A match, my girl!—Come, let us all
away,
And celebrate THE CHANCES of this day;
My former vanities are past and gone,
And now I fix to happiness and one,
Change the wild wanton, for the sober plan,
And, like my friend—become a modest man.

TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY JAMES THOMSON.



Act IV—Scene 1

CHARACTERS.

TANCRED
SIFFREDI

OSMOND
RODOLPHO

SIGISMUNDA
LAURA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The Palace.

Enter SIGISMUNDA and LAURA.

Sig. Ah! fatal day to Sicily! the king
Touches his last moments.

Lau. So 'tis fear'd.

[*charg'd*

Sig. Laura, 'tis said, the heart is sometimes
With a prophetic sadness: such, methinks,
Now hangs on mine. The king's approaching death
Suggests a thousand fears. What troubles thence
May throw the state once more into confusion;
What sudden changes in my father's house
May rise, and part me from my dearest Tancred,
Alarm my thoughts.

Lau. The fears of love-sick fancy!
Perversely busy to torment itself.

But he assur'd your father's steady friendship,
Join'd to a certain genius, that commands,
Not kneels to fortune, will support and cherish,
Here in the public eye of Sicily,
This, I may call him, his adopted son,
The noble Tancred, form'd to all his virtues.

Sig. Ah! form'd to charm his daughter. This
fair morn
Has tempted far the chase. Is he not yet
Return'd?

Lau. No. When your father to the king,
Who now expiring lies, was call'd in haste,
He sent each way his messengers to find him;
With such a look of ardour and impatience,
As if this near event was to Count Tancred
Of more importance than I comprehend. [birth,

Sig. There lies, my Laura, o'er my Tancred's
A cloud I cannot pierce. With princely accost,
Nay, with respect, which oft I have observ'd,
Stealing at times submissive o'er his features,
In Belmont's woods my father rear'd this youth.

Ah! woods, for ever dear! where first my artless
bosom learn'd

The sighs of love. He gives him out the son
Of an old friend, a baron of Apulia,

Who in the late crusado bravely fell;

But then, 'tis strange; is all his family,

As well as father, dead? and all their friends,

Except my sire, the gen'rous, good Siffredi?

Had he a mother, sister, brother left,

The last remain of kindred, with what pride,

What rapture, might they fly o'er earth and sea,

To claim this rising honour of their blood!

This bright unknown! this all-accomplish'd youth!

Who charms too much the heart of Sigismunda.

What says Rodolpho? Does he duly credit

The story of his birth?

Lau. He has sometimes,

Like you, his doubts; yet, when maturely weigh'd,

Believes it true. As for lord Tancred's self,

He never entertain'd the slightest thought

That verg'd to doubt; but oft laments his state,

By cruel fortune so ill pair'd to your's.

Sig. Merit like his, the fortune of the mind,
Beggars all wealth. Then, to your brother, Laura,
He talks of me!

Lau. Of nothing else. Howe'er

The talk begin, it ends with Sigismunda;

Their morning, noon-tide, and their ev'ning walks,

Are full of you; and all the woods of Belmont

Enamour'd with your name—

Sig. Away, my friend;

You flatter: yet the dear delusion charms.

Lau. No, Sigismunda; 'tis the strictest truth,

Nor half the truth, I tell you. Ev'n with fondness

My brother talks for ever of the passion [him

That fires young Tancred's breast. So much it strikes

He praises love as if he were a lover.

Heaven, he says,

In lavish bounty form'd the heart for love;
In love included all the finer seeds
Of honour, virtue, friendship, purest bliss—
Sig. Virtuous Rodolpho!

Lau. Then his pleasing theme

He varies to the praises of your lover.

Sig. And what, my Laura, says he on the subject?

Lau. He says that though he was not nobly born,
Nature has form'd him noble, gen'rous, brave.

Chiefly one charm

He in his graceful character observes;
That though his passions burn with high impatience,
And sometimes, from a noble heat of nature,
Are ready to fly off; yet the least check
Of ruling reason brings them back to temper,
And gentle softness.

Sig. True! oh! true, Rodolpho!

Blest be thy kindred worth for loving his!

He is all warmth, all amiable fire,

All quick, heroic ardour! temper'd soft

With gentleness of heart, and manly reason!

If virtue were to wear a human form,

To light it with her dignity and flame,

Then soft'ning mix her smiles and tender graces;

Oh! she would choose the person of my Tancred.

Go on, my friend; go on, and ever praise him;

The subject knows no bounds, nor can I tire,

While my breast trembles to that sweetest music.

The heart of woman tastes no truer joy,

Is never flatter'd with such dear enchantment,

As when she hears the praises of the man she loves.

Lau. Madam, your father comes.

Enter SIFFREDI.

Sif. (To an Attendant as he enters.) Lord Tancred is found?

Atten. My lord, he quickly will be here.

Sif. 'Tis well; retire. You, too, my daughter, leave me.

Sig. I go, my father. But how fares the king?

Sif. He is no more. Gone to that awful state,

Where kings the crown wear only of their virtues.

Sig. How bright must then be his. This stroke is sudden;

He was this morning well, when to the chase

Lord Tancred went.

Sif. 'Tis true. But at his years

Death gives short notice. Drooping nature then,

Without a gust of pain to shake it, falls.

His death, my daughter, was that happy period

Which few attain. The duties of his day

Were all discharge'd, culm as evening skies

Was his pure mind, and lighted up with hopes

That open heaven; when for his last long sleep

Timely prepar'd, a lassitude of life,

A pleasing weariness of mortal joy,

Fell on his soul, and down he sunk to rest.

Oh! may my death be such! He but one wish

Left unfulfill'd, which was to see Count Tancred.

Sig. To see Count Tancred! Pardon me, my lord—

Sif. For what, my daughter? But with such emotion,

Why did you start at mention of Count Tancred?

Sig. Nothing—I only hop'd the dying king

Might mean to make some generous, just provision

For this your worthy charge, this noble orphan.

Sif. And he has done it largely. Leave me now;

I want some private conference with Lord Tancred.

[*Exeunt Sigismunda and Laura.*]

My doubts are but too true. If these old eyes

Can trace the marks of love, a mutual passion

Has seiz'd, I fear, my daughter, and this prince,

My sovereign now. Should it be so? Ah! there,

There lurks a brooding tempest, that may shake

My long concerted scheme, to settle firm

The public peace and welfare, which the king

Has made the prudent basis of his will.

Away, unworthy views, you shall not tempt me!

Nor interest, nor ambition shall seduce

My fix'd resolve. Perish the selfish thought,

Which our own good prefers to that of millions!
He comes, my king, unconscious of his fortune.

Enter TANCRED.

Tan. My Lord Siffredi, in your looks I read,
Confirm'd, the mournful news that fly abroad
From tongue to tongue: we, then, at last, have lost
The good old king.

Sif. Yes, we have lost a father;

The greatest blessing heaven bestows on mortals

A good, a worthy king! Hear me; my Tancred,

And I will tell thee, in a few plain words,

How he deserv'd that best, that glorious title.

He lov'd his people, deem'd them all his children;

The good exalted, and depress'd the bad.

He sought alone the good of those for whom

He was entrusted with the sovereign power:

Well knowing that a people in their rights

And industry protected, living safe

Beneath the sacred shelter of the laws,

Are ne'er ungrateful. With unsparing hand

They will for him provide: their filial love

And confidence are his unfailing treasure,

And every honest man his faithful guard.

Tan. A general face of grief spreads the city.

I mark'd the people, as I hither came,

In crowds assembled, struck with silent sorrow,

And pouring forth the noblest praise of tears.

A mingled murmur ran

Along the streets; and from the lonely court

Of him who can no more assist their fortunes,

I saw the courtier-fry, with eager haste,

All hurrying to Constantia.

Sif. Noble youth!

I joy to hear from thee these just reflections,

Worthy of riper years. But if they seek

Constantia, trust me, they mistake their course.

Tan. How! Is she not, my lord, the late king's

sister?

Heir to the crown of Sicily? the last

Of our fam'd Norman line, and now our queen?

Sif. Tancred, 'tis true, she is the late king's sister,

The sole surviving offspring of that tyrant,

William the Bad; born some months

After the tyrant's death, but not next heir.

Tan. You much surprise me. May I, then, presume

To ask who is?

Sif. Come nearer, noble Tancred,

Son of my care. I must, on this occasion,

Consult thy generous heart, which, when conducted

By rectitude of mind and honest virtues,

Gives better counsel than the hoary head.

Then know, there lives a prince, here in Palermo,

The lineal offspring of our famous hero,

And rightful heir of Sicily.

Tan. Great heaven! How far remov'd

From that our mighty founder?

Sif. His great grandson:

Sprung from his eldest son, who died untimely,

Before his father.

Tan. Ha! the prince you mean,

Is he not Manfred's son? The generous, brave,

Unhappy Manfred! whom the tyrant William,

You just now mention'd, not content to spoil

Of his paternal crown, threw into fetters,

And infamous murder'd?

Sif. Yes, the same.

Tan. But this prince,

Where has he lain conceal'd?

Sif. The late good king,

By noble pity mov'd, contriv'd to save him

From his dire father's unrelenting rage,

And had him rear'd in private, as became

His birth and hopes, with high and princely nurture.

Till now, too young to rule a troubled state,

By civil broils most miserably torn,

He in his safe retreat has lain conceal'd,

His birth and fortune to himself unknown;

But when the dying king to me intrusted,

As to the chancellor of the realm, his will,
He nam'd him his successor.

Tan. Happy youth!

He then will triumph o'er his father's foes,
O'er haughty Osmond, and the tyrant's daughter.

Sif. Ay, that is what I dread—the heat of youth;
There lurks, I fear, perdition to the state;
I dread the horrors of rekindled war:
Though dead, the tyrant still is to be fear'd;
His daughter's party still is strong and numerous;
Her friend; earl Osmond, constable of Sicily,
Experienc'd, brave, high-born, of mighty interest.
Better the prince and princess should by marriage
Unite their friends, their interest, and their claims.
Then will the peace and welfare of the land
On a firm basis rise.

Tan. My lord Siffredi,
If by myself I of this prince may judge,
That scheme will scarce succeed. Your prudent age
In vain will counsel, if the heart forbid it.
But wherefore fear? The right is clearly his;
All Sicily will rouse, all faithful hearts,
Will range themselves around prince Manfred's son.
For me, I here devote me to the service
Of this young prince; I every drop of blood
Will lose with joy, with transport, in his cause—
Pardon my warmth—but that, my lord, will never
To this decision come. Then find the prince;
Lose not a moment to awake in him
The royal soul. Perhaps he, now desponding,
Pines in a corner, and laments his fortune
That in the narrow bounds of private life
He must confine his aims, those swelling virtues
Which, from his noble father, he inherits.

Sif. Perhaps, regardless, in the common bane
Of youth he melts, in vanity and love.
But if the seeds of virtue glow within him,
I will awake a higher sense, a love
That grasps the loves and happiness of millions.

Tan. Why that surmise? Or should he love,
Siffredi,

I doubt not, it is nobly, which will raise
And animate his virtues. Oh! permit me
To plead the cause of youth: their virtue oft,
In pleasure's soft enchantment lull'd awhile,
Forgets itself; it sleeps and gaily dreams,
Till great occasion rouse it, then, all flame,
It walks abroad, with heighten'd soul and vigour,
And by the change astonishes the world. [thers']

Sif. Hear him, immortal shades of his great fa-
ther! Forgive me, sir, this trial of your heart.

Thou, thou art he!

Tan. Siffredi!

Sif. Tancred, thou!
Thou art the man, of all the many thousands
That toil upon the bosom of this isle,
By heaven elect to command the rest,
To rule, protect them, and to make them happy.

Tan. Manfred, my father! I the last support
Of the fam'd Norman line, that awes the world!
I, who, this morning, wander'd forth an orphan,
Outcast of all but thee, my second father!

Thus call'd to glory! to the first great lot
Of humankind! Oh! wonder-working hand,
That in majestic silence aways at will
The mighty movements of unbounded nature!

Oh! grant me, heaven, the virtues to sustain
This awful burden of so many heroes!

Let me not be exalted into shame;
Set up the worthless pageant of vain grandeur.
Meantime, I thank the justice of the king,
Who has my right bequeath'd me. Thee, Siffredi,
I thank thee! Oh! I ne'er enough can thank thee.
Yes, thou hast been—thou art—shalt be my father!
Thou shalt direct my inexperience'd years;
Shalt be the ruling head, and I the hand.

Sif. It is enough for me to see my sov'reign
Assert his virtues, and maintain his honour.

Tan. I think, my lord, you said the king committed

To you his will? I hope it is not clogg'd
With any base conditions, any clause,
To tyrannise my heart, and to Constantia
Enslave my hand devoted to another.
The hint you just now gave of that alliance,
You must imagine, wakes my fear. But know,
In this alone I will not bear dispute,
Not ev'n from thee, Siffredi. Let the council
Be straight assembled, and the will there open'd:
Thence issue speedy orders to convene,
This day, ere noon, the senate, where those barons,
Who now are in Palermo, will attend,
To pay their ready homage to the king.

Sif. I go, my liege. But once again permit me
To tell you, now is the trying crisis
That must determine of your future reign.
Oh! with heroic rigour watch your heart;
And to the sovereign duties of the king,
Th' unequal'd pleasures of a god on earth,
Submit the common joys, the common passions,
Nay, even the virtues of the private man.

Tan. Of that no more. They not oppose, but aid,
Invigorate, cherish, and reward each other.

[Exit Sif.]

Now, generous Sigismunda, comes my turn,
To shew my love was not of thine unworthy.
When fortune bade me blush to look to thee.
But what is fortune to the wish of love?
A miserable bankrupt!
Quick, let me find her; taste that highest joy.
Th' exalted heart can know, the mix'd effusion
Of gratitude and love! Behold, she comes!

Re-enter SIGISMUNDA.

My fluttering soul was on the wing to find thee,
My love, my Sigismunda!

Sig. Oh! my Tancred,
Tell me what means this mystery and gloom,
That lowers around? Just now involv'd in thought,
My father shot athwart me—You, my lord,
Seem strangely mov'd—I fear, some dark event
From the king's death, to trouble our repose.
That tender calm we in the woods of Belmont
So happily enjoy'd. Explain this hurry.
What means it? say.

Tan. It means that we are happy!
Beyond our most romantic wishes happy!

Sig. You but perplex me more.

Tan. It means, my fairest,
That thou art queen of Sicily; and I
The happiest of mankind!

Because with thee, I can adorn my throne.
Manfred, who fell by tyrant William's rage,
Was my father. (Pausing.)

You droop, my love; dejected on a sudden,
You seem to mourn my fortune. The soft tear
Springs in thy eye: oh! let me kiss it off.
Why this, my Sigismunda?

Sig. Royal Tancred,
None at your glorious fortune can like me
Rejoice; yet me alone, of all Sicilians,
It makes unhappy.

Tan. I should hate it, then!
Should throw, with scorn, the splendid ruin from me.
No, Sigismunda, 'tis my hope with thee
To share it, whence it draws its richest value.

Sig. You are my sov'reign: I at humble distance—

Tan. Thou art my queen! the sovereign of my
soul!

The dear, the tender, gen'rous Sigismunda!
Sig. Your heart, I know, disdains the little thought
Of changing with the vain, external change
Of circumstance and fortune.

But, ah! the hearts of kings are not their own.
Some high descended princess, who will bring
New power and interest to your throne, demands
Your royal hand; perhaps, Constantia—

Tan. She!
Oh! name her not: were I this moment free
And disengag'd as he who never sigh'd

For matchless worth like thine, I should abhor
 All thoughts of that alliance. Her fell father
 Most basely murder'd mine;
 And canst thou deem me, then, so poorly tame,
 So cool a traitor to my father's blood,
 As from the prudent cowardice of state
 E'er to submit to such a base proposal;
 They whom just heaven has to a throne exalted,
 To guard the rights and liberties of others,
 What duty binds them to betray their own?
 Or if, indeed, my choice must be directed
 By views of public good, whom shall I choose
 So fit to grace, to dignify a crown,
 And beam sweet mercy on a happy people,
 As thee, my love? Whom place upon my throne
 But thee, descended from the good Siffredi?

Sig. Cease, cease to raise my hopes above my duty;

Charm me no more, my Tancred! Oh! that we
 In those blest woods, where first you won my soul,
 Had pass'd our gentle days: far from the toil
 And pomp of courts! Such is the wish of love:
 'Tis all in vain; you cannot hush a voice
 That murmurs here—I must not be persuaded.

Tan. (*Kneeling.*) Hear me, thou soul of all my hopes and wishes!

And witness, heaven, prime source of love and joy!
 Not a whole warring world combin'd against me,
 Shall ever shake my faith to Sigismunda!

(*Trumpets and acclamations heard.*)

But, hark! the public voice to duties call me,
 Which with unwearied zeal I will discharge;
 And thou, yes, thou shalt be my bright reward.
 Yet, ere I go, to hush thy lovely fears, [blank,
 Thy delicate objections, (*writes his name*) take this
 Sign'd with my name, and give it to thy father:
 Tell him 'tis my command it be fill'd up
 With a most strict and solemn marriage contract.
 How dear each tie! how charming to my soul!
 That more unites me to my Sigismunda.
 For thee, and for my people's good to live,
 Is all the bliss which sov'reign power can give.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A grand Saloon.

Enter SIFFREDI.

Sif. So far 'tis well. The late king's will proceeds
 Upon the plan I counsel'd; that prince Tancred
 Shall make Constantia partner of his throne.
 Oh! great; oh! wish'd event!
 But how this mighty obstacle surmount,
 Which love has thrown betwixt? My daughter owns
 Her passion for the king; she trembling own'd it,
 With prayers, and tears, and tender supplications,
 That almost shook my firmness. And this blank,
 Which his rash fondness gave her, shews how much,
 To what a wild extravagance he loves.
 I see no means—it foils my deepest thought
 How to controul this madness of the king,
 That wears the face of virtue, and will thence
 Disdain restraint. The crowding barons
 Here summon'd to the palace, meet already,
 To pay their homage, and confirm the will.
 On a few moments hangs the public fate,
 On a few hasty moments—Ha! there shone
 A gleam of hope. Yes, with this very paper
 I yet will save him. Here is the royal hand;
 I will beneath it write a perfect, full,
 And absolute agreement to the will;
 Which read before the nobles of the realm
 Assembled, in the sacred face of Sicily,
 Constantia present, every heart and eye
 Fix'd on their monarch, every tongue applauding,
 He must submit; his dream of love must vanish.
 It shall be done. To me, I know, 'tis ruin;
 But safety to the public, to the king.
 I will not reason more. No; 'tis fix'd!
 I here devote me for my prince and country;

Let them be safe, and let me nobly perish!
 Behold, earl Osmond comes, without whose aid
 My schemes are all in vain.

Enter OSMOND.

Os. My lord Siffredi,

I from the council hasten'd to Constantia,
 And have accomplish'd what we there propos'd.
 The princess to the will submits her claims.
 She with her presence means to grace the senate,
 And of your royal charge, young Tancred's hand,
 Accept. Methought, besides,
 I could discern, that not from prudence merely
 She to his choice submitted.

Sif. Noble Osmond,

You have in this done to the public great
 And signal service. Yes, I must avow it;
 This frank and ready instance of your zeal,
 In such a trying crisis of the state,
 Upholds the rashness of my former judgment.

Os. Siffredi, no. To you belongs the praise,
 'Tis you, my lord, to whom the many thousands,
 That by the barbarous sword of civil war
 Had fallen inglorious, owe their lives.
 I blush to think

I have so long oppos'd the best good man
 In Sicily:

To your's I join my hand; with you will own
 No interst and no pa'ty but my country.
 Nor is your friendship only my ambition:
 There is a dearer name, the name of father,
 By which I should rejoice to call Siffredi.
 Your daughter's hand would to the public weal
 Unite my private happiness.

Sif. My lord,

You have my glad consent. To be allied
 To your distinguish'd family and merit,
 I shall esteem an honour. From my soul
 I here embrace earl Osmond as my friend
 And son.

Os. You make him happy.

I from this moment vow myself the friend
 And zealous servant of Siffredi's house.

Enter an Officer belonging to the Court.

Off. (*To Siffredi.*) The king, my lord, demands
 your speedy presence.

Sif. I will attend him straight. Farewell, my lord;
 The senate meets: there, a few moments hence,
 I will rejoin you.

Os. There, my noble lord,

We will complete this salutary work;
 Will there begin a new, auspicious era.

[*Exeunt Siffredi and Officer.*]

Siffredi gives his daughter to my wishes,
 But does she give herself? Gay, young, and flat-
 ter'd,

Perhaps, engag'd, will she her youthful heart
 Yield to my harsher, uncomplying years?

I am not form'd, by flattery and praise,
 By sighs and tears, and all the whining trade
 Of love, to feed a fair one's vanity;
 To charm at once and spoil her. These soft arts
 Nor suit my years nor temper; these be left
 To boys and dotting age. A prudent father,
 By nature charg'd to guide and rule her choice,
 Resigns his daughter to a husband's power,
 Who with superior dignity, with reason,
 And manly tenderness will ever love her;
 Not first a kneeling slave, and then a tyrant. [*Exit.*]

Enter RODOLPHO from the Senate.

Rod. This will perplexes all. No, Tancred never
 Can stoop to these conditions, which at once
 Attack his rights, his honour, and his love.
 Th' unjust, the base conditions of the will!
 Uncertain, toss'd in cruel agitation,
 He oft, methought, address'd himself to speak,
 And interrupt Siffredi, who appear'd,
 With conscious haste to dread that interruption,

And hurry'd on—But, hark! I hear a noise,
As if the assembly rose.

[*Sigismunda and Attendants pass through the back scene.*

Enter LAURA.

Lau. Your high prais'd friend, the king,
Is false, most vilely false. The meanest slave
Had shewn a nobler heart.
He Manfred's son! away! it cannot be!
The son of that brave prince could never sacrifice
All faith, all honour, gratitude, and love,
All in a moment. And for what? why, truly,
For kind permission, gracious leave, to sit
On his own throne with tyrant William's daughter!

Rod. I stand amaz'd. You surely wrong him,
Laura;

There must be some mistake.

Lau. There can be none:

Siffredi read his full and free consent
Before th' applauding senate. True, indeed,
A small remain of shame, a timorous weakness,
Even dastardly in falsehood, made him blush
To act this scene in Sigismunda's eye,
Who sunk beneath his perfidy and baseness.
Hence, till to-morrow he adjourn'd the senate;
To-morrow fix'd, with infancy to crown him;
Then, leading off his gay, triumphant princess,
He left the poor unhappy Sigismunda
To bend her trembling steps to that sad home
His faithless vows will render hateful to her.
He comes. Farewell! I cannot bear his presence.

[*Exit.*

Enter TANCRED and SIFFREDI.

Tan. Avoid me, hoary traitor! Go, Rodolpho,
Give orders that all passages this way
Be shut. Defend me from the hateful world,
The hane of peace and honour; then return.

[*Exit Rodolpho.*

What! dost thou haunt me still? Oh! monstrous
insult!

Unparallel'd indignity! Just heaven!
Was ever king, was ever man so treated?
So trampled into baseness?

Sif. Here, my liege,
Here strike! I nor deserve, nor ask for mercy.

Tan. All, all but this I could have borne: but
this!

This daring insolence beyond example!
This murderous stroke, that stabs my peace for ever!
That wounds me there—there, where the human
heart

Most exquisitely feels—

Sif. Oh! bear it not,
My royal lord; appease on me your vengeance!

Tan. Did ever tyrant image aught so cruel?
The lowest slave that crawls upon the earth,
Robb'd of each comfort heav'n bestows on mortals,
On the bare ground has still his virtue left,
The sacred treasure of an honest heart,
Which thou hast dar'd, with rash, audacious hand,
And impious fraud, in me to violate—

Sif. Behold, my lord, that rash, audacious hand,
Which not repents its crime. Oh! glorious, happy!
If by my ruin I can save your honour.

Tan. Such honour I renounce; with sovereign
Greatly detest it, and its mean adviser!

Hast thou not dar'd beneath my name to shelter,
Beneath thy sovereign's name, basely presum'd
To shield a lie—a lie, in public utter'd,
To all deluded Sicily? But know,
This poor contrivance is as weak as base.

What, marry her! Constantia! her! the daughter
Of the fell tyrant who destroy'd my father!

The very thought is madness! Ere thou seest
The torch of Hymen light these hated nuptials,
Thou shalt behold Sicilia wrapp'd in flames,
Her cities raz'd, her valleys drench'd with slaughter.
Love set aside, my pride assumes the quarrel;
My honour now is up; in spite of thee,

A world combin'd against me, I will give
This scatter'd will in fragments to the winds,
Assert my rights, the freedom of my heart,
Crush all who dare oppose me to the dust,
And heap perdition on thee!

Sif. Sir, 'tis just.

Exhaust on me thy rage; I claim it all.
But for these public threats thy passion utters,
'Tis what thou canst not do.

Tan. I cannot! ha!

Who shall arrest my vengeance? Who?

Sif. Thyself.

Tan. Away! Dare not to justify thy crime:

That, that alone can aggravate its horror;

Add insolence to insolence—perhaps,

May make my rage forget—

Sif. Oh! let it burst

On this grey head, devoted to thy service!

But when the storm has vented all its fury,

Thou then must hear; nay, more, I know thou wilt;

Wilt hear the calm, yet stronger voice of reason.

Thou must reflect that there are other duties;

Yes, thou must,

In calmer hours, divest thee of thy love,

These common passions of the vulgar breast,

This boiling heat of youth, and be a king,

The lover of thy people!

Tan. Yes, I will be a king, but not a slave;

In this will be a king; in this my people

Shall learn to judge how I will guard their rights,

When they behold me vindicate my own.

But have I, say, been treated like a king?

Heav'n! could I stoop to such outrageous usage,

I were a mean, a shameless wretch, unworthy

To wield a sceptre in a land of slaves;

A soil abhor'd of virtue; should belie

My father's blood; belie those very maxims,

At other times you taught my youth,—Siffredi!

Sif. Behold, my prince, thy poor old servant,

Whose darling care, these twenty years, has been

To nurse thee up to virtue; behold him here,

Bent on his feeble knees, to beg, conjure thee,

With tears to beg thee, to controul thy passion,

And save thyself, thy honour, and thy people!

Kneeling with me, behold the many thousands

To thy protection trusted; fathers, mothers,

The sacred front of venerable age,

The tender virgin, and the helpless infant;

See them all

Here at thy feet conjuring thee to save them

From misery and war, from crimes and rapine!

Turn not away: oh! is there not some part

In thy great heart, so sensible to kindness,

And generous warmth, some nobler part, to feel

The prayers and tears of these, the mingled voice

Of heaven and earth?

Tan. There is, and thou hast touch'd it.

Rise, rise, Siffredi. Oh! thou hast undone me!

Unkind old man! Oh! ill-treated Tancred!

Which way shall I turn, Dishonour rears

Her hideous front, and misery and ruin.

Why have you rais'd this miserable conflict

Between the duties of the king and man?

Set virtue against virtue? But, hold, my soul,

Thy steady purpose: toss'd by various passions

To this eternal anchor keep: there is,

Can be no public without private virtue.

Then, mark me well, observe what I command,

To-morrow, when the senate meets again,

Unfold the whole; unravel the deceit:

Start not, my lord—this must and shall be done,

Or here our friendship ends. Howe'er disguis'd,

Whatever thy pretence, thou art a traitor.

Sif. I should, indeed, deserve the name of traitor,

And ev'n a traitor's fate, had I so slightly,

From principles so weak, done what I did,

As e'er to disavow it.

Tan. Ha!

Sif. My liege,

Expect not this: though practis'd long in courts,
I have not so far learn'd their subtle trade,
To veer obedient with each gust of passion.
I honour thee, I venerate thy orders,
But honour more my duty. Nought on earth
Shall ever shake me from that solid rock,
Nor smiles, nor frowns—

Tan. You will not, then?

Sif. I cannot.

Tan. Away! begone! Oh! my Rodolpho, come,
And save me from this traitor. Hence, I say!
No reply! Away! [*Exit Siffredi.*]

Re-enter RODOLPHO.

Rod. What can incense my prince so highly
Against his friend Siffredi?

Tan. Friend, Rodolpho!

When I have told thee what this friend has done,
How play'd me like a boy, a base-born wretch,
Who had nor heart nor spirit, thou wilt stand
Amaz'd, and wonder at my stupid patience.

Rod. Nothing so mean

As weak, insulted power, that dares not punish.
And how would that have suited with your love;
His daughter present, too? Trust me, your conduct,
Howe'er abhorrent to a heart like your's,
Was fortunate and wise. Not that I mean
E'er to advise submission—

Tan. Heav'n's! submission!

Could I descend to bear it, ev'n in thought,
Despise me, you, the world, and Sigismunda!
Submission! No! To-morrow's glorious light
Shall flash discovery on the scene of buseness.
Whatever be the risk, by heav'n's! to-morrow,
I will o'erturn the dirty, lie-built schemes
Of these old men, and shew my faithful senate,
That Manfred's son knows to assert and wear,
With undiminish'd dignity, that crown
This unexpected day has plac'd upon him.
But this, my friend, these stormy gusts of pride
Are foreign to my love. Till Sigismunda
Be disabus'd, my breast is tumult all,
And can obey no settled course of reason.
I see her still, I feel her powerful image,
That look, where with reproach complaint was mix'd,
Big with soft woe, and gentle indignation,
Which seem'd at once to pity and to scorn me.
Oh! let me find her. I too long have left
My Sigismunda to converse with tears,
A prey to thoughts that picture me a villain.
But ah! how, clogg'd with this accursed state,
A tedious world, shall I now find access?
Her father, too—ten thousand horrors crowd
Into the wild, fantastic eye of love—
Who knows what he may do? Come, then, my friend,
And by thy sister's hand, oh! let me steal
A letter to her bosom. I no longer
Can bear her absence, by the just contempt
She now must brand me with, inflam'd to madness.
Fly, my Rodolpho, fly! engage thy sister
To aid my letter. And this very ev'ning—
Secure an interview. I would not bear
This rack another day, not for my kingdom.
Till then, deep plung'd in solitude and shades,
I will not see the hated face of man.
Thought drives on thought, on passions' passions roll;
Her smiles alone can calm my raging soul. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

SIGISMUNDA discovered.

Sig. Ah! tyrant prince! ah! more than faithless
Tancred!

Unge'n'rous and inhuman in thy falsehood!
Hadst thou this morning, when my hopeless heart,
Submissive to my fortune and my duty,
Had so much spirit left, as to be willing
To give thee back thy vows; ah! hadst thou then
Confess'd the sad necessity thy state
Impos'd upon thee, and with gentle friendship,

Since we must part at last, our parting soften'd;
I should, indeed—I should have been unhappy,
But not to this extreme.

Is there, kind heav'n, no constancy in man?
No steadfast truth, no gen'rous, fix'd affection,
That can bear up against a selfish world?
No, there is none; ev'n Tancred is inconstant!
Hence! let me fly this scene! Whate'er I see,
These roofs, these walls, each object that surrounds
me,

Are tainted with his vows. But whither fly?
The groves are worse, the soft retreat of Belmont,
Its deep'ning glooms, gay lawns, and airy summits,
Will wound my busy memory to torture,
And all its shades will whisper—Faithless Tancred!
My father comes. How, sunk in this disorder,
Shall I sustain his presence?

Enter SIFFREDI.

Sif. Sigismunda,

My dearest child! I grieve to find thee thus
A prey to tears.

Awake to reason from this dream of love,
And shew the world thou art Siffredi's daughter.

Sig. Alas! I am unworthy of that name.

Sif. Thou art, indeed, to blame; thou hast too
rashly

Engag'd thy heart, without a father's sanction.
But this I can forgive; and if thy heart
Will now resume its pride, assert itself,
And greatly rise superior to this trial,
I to my warmest confidence again
Will take thee, and esteem thee more my daughter.

Sig. Oh! you are gentler far than I deserve.
It is, it ever was, my darling pride,
To bend my soul to your supreme commands,
Your wisest will; and though by love betray'd,
(Alas! and punish'd, too,) I have transgress'd
The nicest bounds of duty, yet I feel
A sentiment of tenderness, a source
Of filial nature springing in my breast,
That, should it kill me, shall controul this passion,
And make me all submission and obedience
To you, my honour'd lord, the best of fathers.

Sif. Come to my arms, thou comfort of my age!
Thou only joy and hope of these grey hairs!
Come, let me take thee to a parent's heart;
There, with the kindly aid of my advice,
Ev'n with the dew of these paternal tears,
Revive and nourish this becoming spirit;
Then, thou dost promise me, my Sigismunda—
Thy father stoops to make it his request—
Thou wilt resign thy fond, presumptuous hopes,
And henceforth never more indulge one thought
That in the light of love regards the king.

Sig. Hopes I have none! Those by this fatal day
Are blasted all. But from my soul to banish,
While weeping mem'ry there retains her seat,
Thoughts which the purest bosom might have che-
rish'd,

Once my delight, now ev'n in anguish charming,
Is more, my lord, than I can promise. [*Sions,*]

Sif. Absence and time, the soft'ner of our pas-
sion, will conquer this. Meantime, I hope from thee
A great, a gen'rous effort; that thou wilt now
Exert thy utmost force, nor languish thus
Beneath the vain extravagance of love.
Let not thy father blush to hear it said,
His daughter was so weak e'er to admit
A thought so void of reason, that a king
Should to his rank, his honour, and his glory,
The high, important duties of a throne,
Ev'n to his throne itself, madly prefer
A wild, romantic passion, the fond child
Of youthful dreaming thought and vacant hours;
That he should quit his heav'n-appointed station,
Desert his awful charge, the care of all.
What! must for thee,
To make thee blest, Sicilia be unhappy?

Rouse thee, for shame! and if a spark of virtue

Lies slumb'ring in thy soul, bid it blaze forth;
Nor sink unequal to the glorious lesson,
This day thy lover gave thee from his throne.

Sig. Ah! that was not from virtue. Had, my father,
That been his aim, I yield to what you say.
Why did you drag me to a sight so cruel?

Sif. It was a scene to fire thy emulation.
Sig. It was a scene of perfidy! But know,
I will do more than imitate the king;
For he is false: I, though sincerely pierc'd
With the best, truest passion, ever touch'd
A virgin's breast, here vow to heav'n and you,
Though from my heart I cannot, from my hopes
To cast this prince. What would you more, my
father! [happy:

Sif. Yes, one thing more; thy father then is
This world from thee, my honour, and thy own,
Demands one step; a step, by which, convinc'd,
The king may see thy heart disdains to wear
A chain which his has greatly thrown aside.
But above all, thou must root out for ever
From the king's breast the least remain of hope,
And henceforth make his mention'd love dishonour.
These things, my daughter, that must needs be done,
Can but this way be done—by the safe refuge,
The sacred shelter of a husband's arms.
And there is one—

Sig. Good heav'n! what means, my lord?

Sif. One of illustrious family, high rank,
Yet still of higher dignity and merit,
Who can and will protect thee; one to awe
The king himself—nay, hear me, Sigismunda—
The noble Osmond courts thee for his bride,
And has my faithful word. This day—

Sig. (Kneels.) My father!
Let me with trembling arms embrace thy knees.
Oh! if you ever wish to see me happy;
If e'er in infant years I gave you joy,
When, as I prattling twin'd around your neck,
You snatch'd me to your bosom, kiss'd my eyes,
And melting said you saw my mother there;
Oh! save me from that worst severity
Of fate! Oh! outrage not my breaking heart
To that degree! I cannot—'tis impossible—
So soon withdraw it, give it to another—
Or I shall die; shall, by the sudden change,
Be to distraction shock'd. Let me wear out
My hapless days in solitude and silence,
Far from the malice of a prying world;
At least—you cannot, sure, refuse me this—
Give me a little time; I will do all,
All I can do, to please you.

Sif. My daughter! you abuse
The softness of my nature—

Sig. Here, my father,
Till you relent, here will I grow for ever!

Sif. Rise, Sigismunda. Though you touch my
heart,
Nothing can shake the inexorable dictates
Of honour, duty, and determin'd reason.
Then by the holy ties of filial love,
Resolve, I charge thee, to receive Earl Osmond,
As suits the man who is thy father's choice,
And worthy of thy hand—I go to bring him—

Sig. Spare me, my dearest father!

Sif. I must rush
From her soft grasp, or nature will betray me!
(Aside.)

Quit me, my child!

Sig. You cannot, oh, my father!
You cannot leave me thus!

Sif. Come hither, Laura,
Come to thy friend. Now show thyself a friend.
Combat her weakness, dissipate her tears,
Cherish, and reconcile her to her duty. [Exit.

Enter LAURA.

Sig. Oh, woe on woe! distress'd by love and
duty!

Oh, every way unhappy Sigismunda!

Lau. Forgive me, madam, if I blame your grief.
How can you waste your tears on one so false?

Unworthy of your tenderness; to whom
Nought but contempt is due, and indignation?

Sig. You know not half the horrors of my fate!
I might, perhaps, have learn'd to scorn his false-
hood;

Nay, when the first sad burst of tears was past,
I might have rous'd my pride and scorn'd himself—
But 'tis too much, this greatest, last misfortune—
Oh, whither shall I fly? Where hide me, Laura,
From the dire scene my father now prepares?

Lau. What thus alarms you, madam?

Sig. Can it be?

Can I—ah, no!—at once give to another
My violated heart? in one wild moment!
He brings Earl Osmond to receive my vows.
Oh, dreadful change! for Tancred, haughty Os-
mond. [heart

Lau. Now, on my soul, 'tis what an outrage'd
Like yours should wish!—I should, by heav'n's,
esteem it

Most exquisite revenge!

Sig. Revenge! on whom?

On my own heart, already but too wretched!

Lau. On him! this Tancred! who has basely sold,
For the dull form of despicable grandeur,
His faith, his love!—At once a slave and tyrant!

Sig. Oh, rail at me, at my believing folly,
My vain, ill-founded hopes, but spare him, Laura.

Lau. Who rais'd these hopes? who triumphs
o'er that weakness?

Pardon the word—You greatly merit him;
Better than him, with all his giddy pomp;
You rais'd him by your smiles when he was nothing.
Where is your woman's pride, that guardian spirit
Giv'n us to dash the peridy of man? [ence—
Ye pow'rs! I cannot bear the thought with pati-
Before the public thus, before your father,
By an irrevocable, solemn deed,
With such inhuman scorn, to throw you from him:
To give his faithless hand, yet warm from thine,
With complicated meanness, to Constantia.
And to complete his crime, when thy weak limbs
Could scarce support thee, then, of thee regardless,
To lead her off!

Sig. That was indeed a sight
To poison love; to turn it into rage [ness
And keen contempt. What means this stupid weak-
That hangs upon me? Hence, unworthy tears!
Disgrace my cheek no more! No more, my heart,
For one so coolly false, or meanly fickle,
Dare to suggest

The least excuse! Yes, traitor, I will wring
Thy pride, will turn thy triumph to confusion!
Sicilia's daughters

Shall wond'ring see in me a great example
Of one who punish'd an ill-judging heart,
Who made it bow to what it most abhorr'd,
Crush'd it to misery, for having thus
So lightly listen'd to a worthless lover.

Lau. At last it mounts, the kindling pride
of virtue;

Trust me, thy marriage will embitter him.

Sig. Oh, may the furies light his nuptial torch!
Be it accurs'd as mine! For the fair peace,
The tender joys of hymeneal love,
May jealousy awak'd, and fell remorse,
Pour all their fiercest venom through their breast!
Where the fates lead, and blind revenge, I follow—
Let me not think—By injur'd love! I vow,
Thou shalt, base prince! perfidious and inhuman!
Thou shalt behold me in another's arms;
In his thou hatest! Osmond's!

Lau. Ay, that will sting

His soul to madness.

Your cooler thought besides will of the change
Approve, and think it happy.

Sig. Talk not of Osmond, but perfidious Tancred!

Rail at him, rail! Invent new names of scorn!
 Assist me, Laura, lend my rage fresh fuel;
 Support my stagg'ring purpose, which already
 Begins to fail me—Ah, my vaunts, how vain!
 How have I lied to my own heart!—Alas,
 My tears return, the mighty flood o'erwhelms
 me!

Lau. If thy own peace and honour cannot keep
 Thy resolution fix'd, yet, Sigismunda,
 Oh, think how deeply, how beyond retreat,
 Thy father is engag'd.

Sig. Ah, wretched weakness!
 That thus enthralls my soul;
 And have I then no tears for thee, my father?
 Can I forget thy cares, from helpless years,
 Thy tenderness for me? Shall I for these
 Repay thy stooping, venerable age,
 With shame, disgust, anguish, and dishonour?
 It must not be!—Thou first of angels! come,
 Sweet filial piety, and firm my breast!
 Yes, let one daughter to her fate submit,
 Be nobly wretched—but her father happy!
Laura!—they come! Oh, heav'ns, I cannot stand
 The horrid trial!—Open, open, earth!
 And hide me from their view.

Lau. Madam.

Re-enter SIFFREDI and OSMOND.

Sif. My daughter,
 Behold my noble friend who courts thy hand,
 And whom to call my son I shall be proud.

Os. Think not, I presume,
 Madam, on this, your father's kind consent,
 To make me blest. I love you from a heart,
 That seeks your good superior to my own;
 And will by ev'ry art of tender friendship,
 Consult your dearest welfare. May I hope,
 Yours does not disavow your father's choice?

Sig. I am a daughter, sir—and have no pow'r
 O'er my own heart—I die—Support me, *Laura.*

(Faints.)

Sif. Help—Bear her off—She breathes—my
 daughter!

Sig. Oh!
 Forgive my weakness—soft—my *Laura*, lead me—
 To my apartment. *[Exeunt Sig. and Lau.]*

Sif. Pardon me, my lord,
 If by this sudden accident alarm'd,
 I leave you for a moment. *[Exit.]*

Os. Let me think—
 What can this mean? Is it to me aversion?
 Or is it, as I fear'd she loves another?
Ha!—yea; perhaps the king, the young Count
Tancred,

They were bred up together—Surely that,
 That cannot be—Has he not giv'n his hand,
 In the most solemn manner, to Constantia?
 Does not his crown depend upon the deed?
 What is it then? I care not what it be.
 My honour now, my dignity demands,
 That my propos'd alliance, by her father,
 And ev'n herself accepted, be not scorn'd.
 I love her too—I never knew till now
 To what a pitch I love her. Oh, she shot
 Ten thousand charms into my inmost soul!
 She look'd so mild, so amiably gentle,
 She bow'd her head, she glow'd with such confu-
 sion,

Such loveliness of modesty! She is,
 In gracious mind, in manners, and in person,
 The perfect model of all female beauty!
 She must be mine—She is!—If yet her heart
 Consents not to my happiness, her duty,
 Join'd to my tender cares, will gain so much
 Upon her generous nature—That will follow.

The man of sense, who acts a prudent part,
 Not flatteringly steals, but forms himself the heart.

[Exit.]

SCENE I.—*The Garden belonging to Siffredi's house.*

Enter SIGISMUNDA and LAURA. Sigismunda with a letter in her hand.

Sig. 'Tis done!—I am a slave! The fatal vow
 Has pass'd my lips! Methought in those sad
 moments,

The tombs around, the saints, the darken'd altar,
 And all the trembling shrines with horror shook.

But here is still new matter of distress.
 Oh, Tancred, cease to persecute me more!

Oh, grudge me not some calmer state of woe;
 Some quiet gloom to shade my hopeless days,
 Where I may never hear of love and thee!

Has *Laura* too conspir'd against my peace?
 Why did you take this letter? Bear it back—
 I will not court new pain. *(Gives her the letter.)*

Lau. Madam, Rodolpho *[me,*
 Urg'd me so much, nay, ev'n with tears conjur'd
 But this once more to serve the unhappy king—

For such he said he was—that though enrag'd,
 Equal with thee, at his inhuman falsehood,

I could not to my brother's fervent pray'r
 Refuse this office—Read it—His excuses

Will only more expose his falsehood.

Sig. No:
 It suits not Osmond's wife to read one line
 From that contagious hand—she knows too well!

Lau. He paints him out distress'd beyond ex-
 pression,

Ev'n on the point of madness.
 He dies to see you, and to clear his faith.

Sig. Save me from that! That would be worse
 than all! *[then]*

Lau. I but report my brother's words; who
 Began to talk of some dark imposition,

That had deceiv'd us all; when interrupted,
 We heard your father and Earl Osmond near,

As summon'd to Constantia's court they went.
Sig. Ha! imposition? Well, if I am doom'd

To be, o'er all my sex, the wretch of love,
 In vain I would resist—Give me the letter—

To know the worst is some relief—Alas!
 It was not thus, with such dire palpitations,

That, Tancred, once I us'd to read thy letters.
(Attempts to read the letter, but gives it to Laura.)

Ah, fond remembrance blinds me! Read it, *Laura.*

Lau. *(Reads.)* "Deliver me, Sigismunda, from that
 most exquisite misery which a faithful heart can suffer

—to be thought base by her, from whose esteem even
 virtue borrows new charms. When I submitted to my
 cruel situation, it was not falsehood you beheld, but an

excess of love. Rather than endanger that, I for awhile
 gave up my honour. Every moment till I see you stabs

me with severer pangs than real guilt itself can feel.
 Let me then conjure you to meet me in the garden,

towards the close of the day, when I shall explain the
 mystery. We have been most inhumanly abused; and

that by the means of the very paper which I gave you,
 from the warmest sincerity of love, to ensure you the

heart and hand of
 TANCRED."

Sig. There, *Laura*, there, the dreadful secret
 sprung!

That paper! ah, that paper! it suggests
 A thousand horrid thoughts—I to my father

Gave it! and he perhaps—I dare not cast
 A look that way—If yet indeed you love me,

Oh, blast me not, kind Tancred, with the truth!
 Oh, pitying keep me ignorant for ever.

What strange, peculiar misery is mine!
 Reduc'd to wish the man I love were false!

Lau. Madam,
 Behold he comes—the king—

Sig. Heav'ns! how escape?
 No—I will stay—This one last meeting—Leave me.

[Exit Laura.]

Enter TANCRED.

Tan. And are these long, long hours of torture
 past!

My life! my Sigismunda!

(Throws herself at her feet.)

Sig. Rise, my lord.

To see my sov'reign thus no more becomes me.

Tan. Oh, let me kiss the ground on which you tread!

Let me exhale my soul in softest transport!

Since I again behold my Sigismunda! (Rises.)

Unkind! how couldst thou ever deem me false?

How thus dishonour love? After the vows,

The fervent truth, the tender protestations,

Which mine has often pour'd, to let thy breast,

Whate'er th' appearance was, admit suspicion?

Sig. How! when I heard myself your full consent

To the late king's so just and prudent will?

Heard it before you read, in solemn senate?

When I beheld you give your royal hand,

To her, whose birth and dignity of right

Demands that high alliance? Yes, my lord,

You have done well. The man whom heav'n

appoints

To govern others, should himself first learn

To bend his passions to the sway of reason.

In all, you have done well; but when you bid

My humbled hopes look up to you again,

And sooth'd with wanton cruelty my weakness—

That too was well—My vanity deserv'd

The sharp rebuke. [now,

Tan. Chide on, chide on. Thy soft reproaches

Instead of wounding, only sooth my fondness.

No, no, thou charming consort of my soul!

I never lov'd thee with such faithful ardour,

As in that cruel, miserable moment

You thought me false.

It was thy barb'rous father, Sigismunda,

Who caught me in the toil. He turn'd that paper,

Meant for th' assuring bond of nuptial love,

To ruin it for ever; he, he wrote

That forg'd consent, you heard, beneath my name,

Had he not been thy father—Ha! my love!

You tremble, you grow pale!

Sig. Oh, leave me, Tancred!

[set

Tan. No!—Leave thee!—Never! never till you

My heart at peace, till these dear lips again

Pronounce thee mine! Without thee, I renounce

Myself, my friends, the world—Here on this hand—

Sig. My lord, forget that hand, which never now

Can be to thine united—

Tan. Sigismunda!

What dost thou mean?

Sig. Inquire no more—I never can be thine.

Tan. What, who shall interpose? Who dares attempt

To brave the fury of an injur'd king,

Who, ere he sees thee ravish'd from his hopes,

Will wrap all blazing Sicily in flames?

Sig. In vain your pow'r, my lord—'Tis fatal error,

Join'd to my father's unrelenting will,

Has plac'd an everlasting bar betwixt us—

I am—Earl Osmond's—wife.

Tan. Earl Osmond's wife!

(After a long pause, during which they look at one another with the highest agitation, and most tender distress.)

Heav'n! did I hear thee right? What! marry'd? marry'd!

Lost to thy faithful Tancred? lost for ever!

Couldst thou then doom me to such matchless woe,

Without so much as hearing me? Distraction!

Alas! what hast thou done? Ah, Sigismunda!

Thy rash credulity has done a deed,

Which of two happiest lovers that e'er felt

The blissful pow'r, has made two finish'd wretches!

But—madness!—Sure thou know'st it cannot be!

This hand is mine! a thousand thousand vows—

Enter OSMOND.

Osm. (Snatches her hand from the king.) Madam,

this hand, by the most solemn rites,

A little hour ago, was giv'n to me,

And did not sov'reign honour now command me,
Never but with my life to quit my claim,
I would renounce it—thus!

Tan. Ha, who art thou?

Presumptuous man!

Sig. (Aside.) Where is my father? Heav'n's!

[Exit.

Osm. One thou shouldst better know—Yes—

view me, one

Who can and will maintain his rights and honour,

Against a faithless prince, an upstart king,

Whose first base deed is what a harden'd tyrant

Would blush to act.

Tan. Insolent Osmond! know,

This upstart king will hurl confusion on thee,

And all who shall invade his sacred rights,

Prior to thine—thine, founded on compulsion,

On infamous deceit!—I will annul,

By the high pow'r with which the laws invest me,

Those guilty forms in which you have entrapp'd,

My queen betroth'd, who has my heart, my hand,

And shall partake my throne—if, haughty lord,

If thou dost bid not know, then know it now;

And know, besides, as I have told thee this,

Shouldst thou but think to urge thy treason further—

Thy life shall answer for it.

Osm. Ha! my life!

It moves my scorn to hear thy empty threats.

When was it that a Norman baron's life

Became so vile, as on the frown of kings

To hang?—Of that, my lord, the law must judge;

Or, if the law be weak, my guardian sword—

Tan. Dare not to touch it, traitor, lest my rage

Break loose, and do a deed that misbecomes me.

Enter SIFFREDI.

Sif. My gracious lord, what is it I behold?

My sov'reign in contention with his subject?

Surely this house deserves from royal Tancred

A little more regard, than to be made

A scene of trouble, and unseemly jars.

Heavens! can your highness

From your exalted character descend,

Unkindly thus disturb the sweet repose,

The secret peace of families, for which

Alone the free-born race of man to laws

And government submitted?

Tan. My lord Siffredi,

Spare thy rebuke. The duties of my station

Are not to me unknown. But thou, old man,

Dost thou not blush to talk of rights invaded;

And of our best our dearest bliss disturb'd?

Thou, who with more than barbarous perfidy

Hast trampled all allegiance, justice, truth,

Humanity itself, beneath thy feet?

Thou know'st thou hast—I could, to thy confusion,

Return thy hard reproaches; but I spare thee

Before this lord, for whose ill-sorted friendship

Thou hast most basely sacrific'd thy daughter.

Farewell, my lord. For thee, lord constable,

Who dost presume to lift thy surly eye

To my soft love, my gentle Sigismunda,

I once again command thee on thy life—

Yes, chew thy rage, but mark me, on thy life,

No further urge thy arrogant pretensions! [Exit.

Osm. Ha! Arrogant pretensions! Heaven and

earth!

What! arrogant pretensions to my wife?

My wedded wife! Where are we? in a land

Of civil rule, of liberty and laws?

Not, on my life, pursue them? Giddy prince!

My life disdains thy nod. It is the gift

Of parent heaven, who gave me to an arm,

A spirit to defend it against tyrants.

Mine is a common cause. My arm shall guard,

Mix'd with my own, the rights of each Sicilian;

Ere to thy tyrant rage they fall a prey,

I shall find means to shake thy tottering throne,

And crush thee in the ruins!

Constantia is my queen!

Sif. Lord constable,
Let us be stedfast in the right; but let us
Act with cool prudence, and with manly temper,
As well as manly firmness. Remember that my
house

Protects my daughter still; and ere I saw her
Thus ravish'd from us by the arm of power,
This hand should act the Roman father's part.
Fear not; be temperate; all will yet be well.
I know the king. Trust me, to reason
He will return.

Osm. He will! By heavens, he shall!
You know the king—I wish, my Lord Siffredi,
That you had deign'd to tell me all you knew—
And would you have me wait, with duteous pati-
ence,

Till he return to reason? Ye just powers!
When he has planted on our necks his foot,
And trod us into slaves; when his vain pride
Is cloy'd with our submission.
No, no, my lord! there is a nobler way,
To teach the blind oppressive fury reason:
Oft has the lustre of avenging steel
Unseal'd the stupid eyes—The sword is reason!

Enter RODOLPHO, with Guards.

Rod. My lord high constable of Sicily.

In the king's name, and by his special order,
I here arrest you prisoner of state.

Osm. What king? I know no king of Sicily,
Unless he be the husband of Constantia. [*orders*]

Rod. Then know him now—behold his royal
To bear you to the castle of Palermo.

Sif. Let the big torrent foam its madness off.
Submit, my lord—No castle long can hold
Our wrongs. This, more than friendship or alli-
ance,

Confirms me thine; this binds me to thy fortunes,
By the strong tie of common injury,
Which nothing can dissolve. I grieve, Rodolpho,
To see the reign in such unhappy sort
Begin.

Osm. The reign! the usurpation call it!
This meteor king may blaze awhile, but soon
Must spend his idle terrors—sir, lead on—
Farewell, my lord—more than my life and fortune,
Remember well, is in your hands—my honour!

Sif. Our honour is the same. My son, farewell—
We shall not long be parted. On these eyes
Sleep shall not shed his balm, till I behold thee
Restor'd to freedom, or partake thy bonds. [*Exeunt*]

ACT V.—SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter SIFFREDI.

Sif. The prospect lowers around. I found the
king,

Though calm'd a little, with subsiding tempest,
As suits his generous nature, yet in love
Abated nought, most ardent in his purpose;
Inexorably fix'd, whate'er the risk,
To claim my daughter, and dissolve this marriage—
I have embark'd, upon a perilous sea,
A mighty treasure.

Bear witness, heaven! thou mind-inspecting eye!
My breast is pure. I have prefer'd my duty,
The good and safety of my fellow-subjects,
To all those views that fire the selfish race
Of mortal men, and mix them in eternal broils.

Enter an Officer belonging to Siffredi.

Off. My lord, a man of noble port, his face
Wrapt in disguise, is earnest for admission.

Sif. Go, bid him enter— [*Exit Off.*]
Ha! wrap'd in disguise!
And at this late unseasonable hour!
Who can it be?

Enter OSMOND, discovering himself.

Sif. Earl Osmond, you? Welcome, once more,
To this glad roof! But why in this disguise?

Would I could hope the king exceeds his promise!
I have his faith, soon as to-morrow's sun

Shall gild Sicilia's cliffs, you shall be free—
Has some good angel turn'd his heart to justice?

Osm. It is not by the favour of Count Tancred
That I am here. As much I scorn his favour,
As I defy his tyranny and threats—
Our friend Goffredo, who commands the castle,
On my parole, ere dawn to render back
My person, has permitted me this freedom.
Know then, the faithless outrage of to-day,
By him committed whom you call the king,
Has rous'd Constantia's court. Our friends, the
friends

Of virtue, justice, and of public faith,
Ripe, for revolt, are in high ferment all.
I thence of you, as guardian of the laws,
As guardian of this will, to you entrusted,
Desire, nay more, demand your instant aid,
To see it put in vig'rous execution. [*renew.*]

Sif. You cannot doubt, my lord, of my concur-
Who, more than I, have labour'd this great point?
'Tis my own plan; and if I drop it now,
I should be justly branded with the shame
Of rash advice, or despicable weakness.
But let us not precipitate the matter.

Constantia's friends are numerous and strong;
Yet Tancred's, trust me, are of equal force:
E'er since the secret of his birth was known,
The people all are in a tumult hurl'd,
Of boundless joy. Oh! if our prattling virtue
Dwells not in words alone—Oh, let us join,
My generous Osmond, to avert these woes,
And yet sustain our tott'ring Norman kingdom!

Osm. But how, Siffredi, how? If by soft means
We can maintain our rights, and save our country,
May his unnatural blood first stain the sword,
Who with unpitying fury first shall draw it!

Sif. I have a thought—The glorious work be
thine.

Suppose my daughter, to her God devoted,
Were plac'd within some convent's sacred verge,
Beneath the dread protection of the altar—

Osm. Ere then, by heavens! I would
Turn whining monk myself,
And pray incessant for the tyrant's safety.
What! how! because an insolent invader,
A sacrilegious tyrant, demands my wife;
What! shall I tamely yield her up,
Even in the manner you propose? Oh, then
I were supremely vile! degraded! sham'd!
The scorn of manhood! and abhor'd of honour!

Sif. There is, my lord, an honour, the calm child
Of reason, of humanity, and mercy,
Superior far to this punctilious demon,
That singly minds itself, and oft embroils
With proud barbarian niceties the world.

Osm. My lord, my lord, I cannot brook your
prudence;

It holds a pulse unequal to my blood—
Unblemish'd honour is the flower of virtue!
The vivifying soul! and he who slights it,
Will leave the other dull and lifeless dress.

Sif. No more, you are too warm.

Osm. You are too cool.

Sif. Too cool, my lord? I were indeed too cool,
Not to resent this language, and to tell thee—
I wish Earl Osmond were as cool as I
To his own selfish bliss—ay, and as warm

To that of others—But of this no more—
My daughter is thy wife—I gave her to thee,
And will, against all force, maintain her thine.
But think not I will catch thy headlong passions,
Whirl'd in a blaze of madness o'er the land;
Or, till the last extremity compell'd me,
Risk the dire means of war—The king, to-morrow,
Will set you free; and, if by gentle means
He does not yield my daughter to your arms,
And wed Constantia, as the will requires,
Why then expect me on the side of justice—
Let that suffice.

Osm. It does—Forgive my heat,
My rankled mind, by injuries inflam'd,
May be too prompt to take and give offence.
Sig. 'Tis past—Your wrongs, I own, may well transport

The wisest mind—But henceforth, noble Osmond,
Do me more justice, honour more my truth,
Nor mark me with an eye of squint suspicion—
Return, my son, and from your friend Goffredo
Release your word. There try, by soft repose,
To calm your breast.

Osm. Bid the vex'd ocean sleep,
Swept by the pinions of the raging north—
But your frail age, by care and toil exhausted,
Demands the balm of all-repairing rest. [skies,

Sig. Soon as to-morrow's dawn shall streak the
I, with my friends in solemn state assembled,
Will to the palace, and demand your freedom.
Then by calm reason, or by higher means,
The king shall quit his claim, and in the face
Of Sicily, my daughter shall be yours.
Farewell.

Osm. My lord, good night. [Exit *Sig.*

[After a long pause.] I like him not—
Yes, I have mighty matter of suspicion.
My honour is not safe, while here my wife
Remains. Who knows but he this very night
May bear her to some convent, as he mention'd.
The king too, though I smother'd up my rage,
I mark'd it well—will set me free to-morrow.
Why not to-night? He has some dark design—
By heav'ns, he has! I'm abus'd most grossly;
Made the vile tool of this old statesman's schemes;
I will not wait his crawling timid motions,
I will convince him that Earl Osmond never
Was form'd to be his dupe—I will bear her off
This night, and lodge her in a place of safety:
I have a trusty hand that waits not far.
Hence! let me lose no time—One rapid moment
Should ardent form, at once, and execute
A bold design—'Tis fix'd—The mine is laid,
And only wants my kindling torch to spring. [Exit.

SCENE II.—*Sigismunda's Apartment.*

Thunder. SIGISMUNDA and LAURA discovered.

Lau. Heavens! 'tis a fearful night!

Sig. Ah! the black rage

Of midnight tempest, or th' assuring smiles
Of radiant morn, are equal all to me;
Nought now has charms or terror to my breast.
The seat of stupid woe! Leave me, my Laura.
Kind rest, perhaps, may hush my woes a little.
Oh, for that quiet sleep that knows no morning!

Lau. Madam, indeed I know not how to go.
Indulge my fondness—Let me watch awhile
By your sad bed, 'till these dread hours shall pass.

Sig. Alas! what is the toil of elements, (*Thunder.*)
This idle perturbation of the sky,
To what I feel within? Oh, that the fires
Of pitying heaven would point their fury here!
Good night, my dearest Laura.

Lau. Oh, I know not

What this oppression means—But 'tis with pain,
With tears, I can persuade myself to leave you—
Well then—Good night, my dearest Sigismunda. [Exit.

Sig. And am I then alone? The most undone,
Most wretched being now beneath the cope
Of this affrighting gloom that wraps the world—
I said I did not fear—Ah, me! I feel
A shivering horror run through all my powers!
Oh, I am nought but tumult, fears, and weakness!
And yet how idle fear, when hope is gone,
Gone, gone for ever! Oh, thou gentle scene

(Looking towards her bed.)

Of sweet repose, where, by the oblivious draught
Of each sad toilsome day, to peace restor'd,
Unhappy mortals lose their woes awhile,—
Thou hast no peace for me! What shall I do?

How pass this dreadful night, so big with terror?
Here with the midnight shade, here will I sit,
(Sitting down.)

A prey to dire despair, and ceaseless weep
The hours away—Bless me—I heard a noise—
(Starting up.)

No, I mistook; nothing but silence reigns,
And awful midnight round. Again! Oh, heav'ns!
My lord the king!

Enter TANCRED.

Tan. Be not alarm'd, my love!

Sig. My royal lord, why, at this midnight hour—
How came you hither?

Tan. By that secret way
My love contriv'd, when we, in happier days,
Us'd to devote these hours, so much in vain,
To vows of love, and everlasting friendship.

Sig. Why will you thus persist to add new stings
To her distress, who never can be thine?
Oh, fly me! fly! you know—

Tan. I know too much.
Oh, how I could reproach thee, Sigismunda!
Pour out my injur'd soul in just complaints!
But now the time permits not; these swift mo-
ments—

I told thee how thy father's artifice
Rur'd me to seem perfidious in thy eyes.
Ever since—a dreadful interval of care!
My thoughts have been employ'd, not without hope,
How to defeat Siffredi's barb'rous purpose.
But thy credulity has ruin'd all,
Thy rash, thy wild—I know not what to name it—
Oh, it has prov'd the giddy hopes of man
To be delusion all, and sick'ning folly!

Sig. Ah, gen'rous Tanc'red! ah, thy truth de-
stroy's me!
Yes, yes, 'tis I, 'tis I alone am false!
My hasty rage, join'd to my tame submission,
More than the most exalted filial duty
Could e'er demand, has dash'd our cup of fate
With bitterness unequal'd. But, alas!
What are thy woes to mine?—to mine! just
heaven! [me]

Now is thy turn of vengeance—hate, renounce
Oh, leave me to the fate I well deserve,
To sink in hopeless misery! At least,
Try to forget the worthless Sigismunda!

Tan. Forget thee! No! Thou art my soul itself!
I have no thought, no hope, no wish but thee!
Ah, how forget thee! Much must be forgot,
Ere Tanc'red can forget his Sigismunda!

Sig. But you, my lord, must make that great effort.

Tan. Can Sigismunda make it?

Sig. Ah, I know not
With what success—But all that feeble woman
And love-entangl'd reason can perform,
I to the utmost will exert to do it.

Tan. Oh, barbarous Sigismunda!
And canst thou talk thus steadily; thus treat me
With such unpit'ying, unrelenting rigour?
Poor is the love, that rather than give up
A little pride, a little formal pride,
The breath of vanity, can bear to see
The man, whose heart was once so dear to thine,
By many a tender vow so mix'd together,
A prey to anguish, fury, and distraction!
Thou canst not surely make me such a wretch,
Thou canst not, Sigismunda! Yet relent,
Oh, save us yet! Rodolpho, with my guards,
Waits in the garden—Let us seize the moments
We ne'er may have again. With more than power
I will assert thee mine, with fairest honour.
The world shall ev'n approve; each honest bosom
Swell'd with a kindred joy to see us happy.

Sig. The world approve! what is the world
to me?

The conscious mind is its own awful world—
And mine is fix'd—Distress me, then, no more;

Not all the heart can plead (and it, alas!
Pleads but too much)
Shall ever shake th' unalterable dictates
That tyrannize my breast.

Tan. 'Tis well—no more—
I yield me to my fate. Yes, yes, inhuman!
Since thy barbarian heart is steel'd by pride,
Shut up to love and pity, here behold me
Cast on the ground, a vile and abject wretch!
Lost to all cares, all dignities, all duties!
Here will I grow, breathe out my faithful soul,
Here at thy feet—Death, death alone shall part us!
Sig. Have you then vow'd to drive me to per-
dition!

What can I more? Yes, Tancred! once again
I will forget the dignity my station
Commands me to sustain—for the last time
Will tell thee, that, I fear no ties, no duty,
Can ever root thee from thy hapless bosom.
Oh, leave me! fly me! were it but in pity!
To see what once we tenderly have lov'd,
Cut off from every hope—cut off for ever!
Is pain thy generosity should spare me.
Then rise, my lord; and if you truly love me,
If you respect my honour, nay, my peace,
Retire! for though th' emotions of my heart
Can ne'er alarm my virtue; yet, alas!
They tear it so, they pierce it with such anguish—
Oh, 'tis too much! I cannot bear the conflict!

Enter OSMOND.

Osm. Turn, tyrant, turn! and answer to my
honour,

For this thy base insufferable outrage!

Tan. Insolent traitor! Think not to escape
Thyself my vengeance! (*They fight, Osm. falls.*)

Sig. Help, here, help! Oh, heavens!
(*Throwing herself down by him.*)
Alas, my lord, what meant your headlong rage?
That faith, which I this day, upon the altar,
To you devoted, is unblemish'd, pure
As vestal truth; was resolutely yours,
Beyond the power of aught on earth to shake it.

Osm. Perfidious woman! die! (*Shortening his
sword, he plunges it into her breast.*) and
to the grave

Attend a husband, yet but half aveng'd!

Tan. Oh, horror! horror! execrable villain!

Osm. And, tyrant! thou!—thou shalt not o'er
my tomb

Exult—"Tis well—"Tis great!—I die content!
(*Dies.*)

Enter RODOLPHO and LAURA.

Tan. (*Throwing himself down by Sig.*) Quick!
here! bring aid! Ah, that gentle bosom
Pours fast the streams of life.

Sig. All aid is vain,
I feel the powerful hand of death upon me—
But, oh! it sheds a sweetness through my fate,
That I am thine again; and without blame
May in my Tancred's arms resign my sorrows!

Tan. Oh, death is in that voice so gently mild,
So sadly sweet, as mixes even with mine
The tears of hovering angels! Mine again!
And is it thus the cruel fates have join'd us?
Are these the horrid nuptials they prepare
For love like ours? Yes, death shall soon unite us.

Sig. Live, live, my Tancred! Let my death
suffice

To expiate all that may have been amiss.
May it appease the fates, avert their fury
From thy propitious reign!

Enter SIFFREDI, fixed in astonishment and grief.
My father! Oh, how shall I lift my eyes
To thee, my sinking father?

Sig. Awful heaven!
I am chastis'd—My dearest child!

Sig. Where am I?
A fearful darkness closes all around—

My friends! We needs must part—I must obey
Th' impetuous call. Farewell, my Laura!
Oh, my dear father, bow'd beneath the weight
Of age and grief—the victim ev'n of virtue,
Receive my last adieu! Where art thou, Tancred?
Give me thy hand—But, ah—it cannot save me
From the dire king of terrors, whose cold pow'r
Creeps o'er my heart—Oh!

Tan. How these pangs distract me!
Oh, lift thy gracious eyes;—Thou leav'st me then!
Thou leav'st me, Sigismunda!

Sig. Yes, but thy love and tenderness for me,
Sure makes it needless—Harbour no resentment
Against my father, venerate his zeal,
That acted from a principle of goodness,
From faithful love to thee. Live, and maintain
My innocence embalm'd, with holiest care—
Preserve my spotless memory! Oh—I die—
Eternal Mercy take my trembling soul!
Oh, 'tis the only sting of death to part
From those we love—from thee—farewell, my
(*Dies.*)

Tancred!

Tan. Thus then!

(*Flies to his sword, is held by Rodolpho.*)

Rod. Hold, hold, my lord! Have you forgot
Your Sigismunda's last request already?

Tan. Off! set me free! Think not to bind me
down,

With barb'rous friendship, to the rack of life!
What hand can shut the thousand thousand gates
Which death still opens to the woes of mortals?
I shall find means—No pow'r in earth or heav'n
Can force me to endure the hateful light,
Thus robb'd of all that lent it joy and sweetness!
Off, traitors, off! or my distracted soul
Will burst indignant from the gaul of nature,
To where she beckons yonder. No, mild seraph,
Point not to life—I cannot linger here,
Cut off from thee, the miserable pity,
The scorn of humankind! A trampled king!
Who let his mean, poor-hearted love, one moment,
To coward prudence stoop! who made it not
The first undoubting action of his reign,
To snatch thee to his throne, and there to shield
Thy helpless bosom from a ruffian's fury!
Oh, shame! Oh, agony! Oh, the fell stings
Of late, of vain repentance! Ha! my brain
Is all on fire! a wild abyss of thought!
Th' infernal world discloses! See! Behold him!
Lo! with fierce smiles he shakes the bloody steel,
And mocks my feeble tears. Hence, quickly hence!
Spurn his vile carcass! give it to the dogs!
Expose it to the winds and screaming ravens!
Or hurl it down that fiery steep to hell,
There with his soul to toss in flames for ever.
Ah, impotence of rage!

Rod. Preserve him, heaven!

Tan. What am I? Where?

Sad, silent, all? The forms of dumb despair,
Around some mournful tomb. What do I see?
This soft abode of innocence and love
Turn'd to the house of death! a place of horror!
Ah, that poor corpse! pale! pale! deform'd with
murder!

Is that my Sigismunda?

(*Throws himself down by her.*)

Sig. (*After a pathetic pause, looking on the scene
before him*) Have I liv'd

To these enfeebled years, by heav'n reserv'd
To be a dreadful monument of justice?
Taught hence, ye parents, who from nature stray,
And the great ties of social life betray;
Ne'er with your children act a tyrant's part:
'Tis yours to guide, not violate the heart.
Ye vainly weave, who o'er mankind preside,
Behold my righteous woes, and drop your pride;
Keep virtue's simple path before your eyes,
Nor think from evil good can ever rise.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE HONEY-MOON;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY JOHN TOBIN.



• Act V—Scene 3.

CHARACTERS.

DUKE OF ARANZA
COUNT MONTALBAN
BALTHAZAR

ROLANDO
LAMPEDO
JAQUES

CAMPILLO
LOPEZ
JULIANA

VOLANTE
ZAMORA
HOSTLESS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Street in Madrid.

Enter DUKE OF ARANZA, and COUNT MONTALBAN, followed by a Servant.

Duke. (Speaking to Servant.) This letter you will give my steward; this to my old tenant, Lopez. Use despatch, sir; Your negligence may ruin an affair Which I have much at heart. [*Exit Servant.*]

Why, how now, Count!
You look but dull upon my wedding day,
Nor show the least reflection of that joy [friend.
Which breaks from me, and should light up my
Count. If I could set my features to my tongue,
I'd give your highness joy. Still as a friend,
Whose expectation lags behind his hopes.
I wish you happy.

Duke. You shall see me so.
Is not the lady I have chosen fair?

Count. Nay, she is beautiful.

Duke. Of a right age? [of womanhood.

Count. In the fresh prime of youth, and bloom

Duke. A well-proportioned form, and noble presence? True.

Duke. Then her wit;—Her wit is admirable!

Count. There is a passing shrillness in her voice.

Duke. Has she not wit?

Count. A sharp-edged tongue, I own;
But uses it as bravoes do their swords—
Not for defence, but mischief. Then, her gentleness!
You had almost forgot to speak of that.

Duke. Ay, there you touch me! Yet, though she be prouder

Than the vexed ocean at its topmost height,
And ev'ry breeze will chafe her to a storm,

I love her still the better. Some prefer
Smoothly o'er an unwrinkled sea to glide;
Others to ride the cloud-aspiring waves,
And hear, amid the rending tackle's roar,
The spirit of an equinoctial gale.

What, though a patient and enduring lover—
Like a tame spaniel, that, with crouching eye,
Meets buffets, and caresses—I have ta'en,
With humble thanks, her kindness and her scorn;
Yet, when I am her husband, she shall feel
I was not born to be a woman's slave!
Can you be secret?

Count. You have found me so
In matters of some moment.

Duke. Listen, then:

I have prepar'd a penance for her pride,
To which a cell and sackcloth, and the toils
Of a barefooted pilgrimage, were pastime.
As yet she knows me, as I truly am,
The Duke Aranza: in which character
I have fed high her proud and soaring fancy
With the description of my state and fortunes,
My princely mansions, my delicious gardens,
My carriages, my servants, and my pomp.
Now, mark the contrast. In the very height
And fullest pride of her ambitious hopes,
I take her to a miserable hut,
(All things are well digested for the purpose),
Where, throwing off the title of a duke,
I will appear to her a low-born peasant.
There, with coarse raiment, household drudgery,
Laborious exercise, and cooling viands,
I will so lower her distemper'd blood,
And tame the devil in her, that, before
We have burnt out our happy honey-moon,
She, like a well-train'd hawk, shall, at my whistle,

Quit her high flights, and perch upon my finger,
To wait my bidding.

Count. Most excellent! A plot of rare invention!

Duke. When, with a bold hand, I have weeded
out

The rank growth of her pride, she'll be a garden
Lovely in blossom, rich in fruit; till then,
An unprun'd wilderness. But to your business.
How thrives your suit with her fair sister, Count?

Count. The best advancement I can boast of in it
Is, that it goes not backward. She's a riddle,
Which he that solv'd the sphinx's, would die
guessing.

If I but mention love, she starts away,
And wards the subject off with so much skill,
That whether she be hurt or tickled most,
Her looks leave doubtful. Yet I fondly think
She keeps me (as the plover from her nest
Fearful misleads the traveller) from the point
Where live her warmest wishes, that are breath'd
For me in secret.

Duke. You've her father's voice? [evening,

Count. Yes; and we have concerted, that this
Instead of Friar Dominic, her confessor,
Who from his pious office is disabled
By sudden sickness, I should visit her;
And, as her mind's physician feel the pulse
Of her affection.

Duke. May you quickly find
Her love to you the worst of her offences!
For then her absolution will be certain.
Farewell! I see Rolando.
He is a common railler against women;
And, on my wedding day, I will hear none
Blaspheme the sex. Besides, as once he fail'd
In the same suit that I have thriven in,
'Twill look like triumph. 'Tis a grievous pity
He follows them with such a settled spleen,
For he has noble qualities.

Count. Most rare ones—

A happy wit, and independent spirit.

Duke. And then he is a brave, too.

Count. Of as tried a courage
As ever walk'd up to the roaring throats
Of a deep rang'd artillery; and planted,
'Midst fire and smoke, upon an enemy's wall,
The standard of his country.

Duke. Farewell, Count.

Count. Success attend your schemes!

Duke. Fortune crown yours! [Exit.

Enter ROLANDO.

Count. Signo, Rolando, you seem melancholy.

Rol. As an old cat in the mumps. I met three
women—

I marvel much they suffer them to walk
Loose in the streets, whilst other untan'd monsters
Are kept in cages—three loud talking women!
They were discoursing of the newest fashions,
And their tongues went like—I have since been
thinking,

What most that active member of a woman
Of mortal things resembles. [smoke-jack!

Count. Have you found it?

Rol. Umph! not exactly—something like a
For it goes ever without winding up:
But that wears out in time—there fails the simile.
Next I bethought me of a water-mill;
But that stands still on Sundays; woman's tongue
Needs no reviving sabbath—and besides,
A mill, to give it motion, waits for grist;
Now, whether she has ought to say or no,
A woman's tongue will go for exercise.
In short, I came to this conclusion:
Most earthly things have their similitudes,
But a woman's tongue is yet incomparable.—
Was't not the duke that left you?

Count. 'Twas.

Rol. He saw me,
And hurried off!

Count. Ay! 'twas most wise in him,
To shun the bitter flowing of your gall.
You know he's on the brink of matrimony.

Rol. Why now, in reason, what can he expect?
To marry such a woman!

A thing so closely pack'd with her own pride,
She has no room for any thought of him.
Why, she ne'er threw a word of kindness at him,
But when she quarrell'd with her monkey. Then,
As he with nightly minstrelsy dol'd out
A lying ballad to her peerless beauty,
Unto his whining lute, and, at each turn,
Sigh'd like a paviour, the kind lady, sir,
Would lift the casement up—to laugh at him,
And vanish like a shooting star; whilst he
Stood gazing on the spot whence she departed:
Then, stealing home, went supperless to bed,
And fed all night upon her apparition.
Now, rather than espouse a thing like this,
I'd wed a bear that never learnt to dance,
Though her first hug were mortal.

Count. Peace, Rolando!

You rail at women as priests cry down pleasure;
Who, for the penance which they do their tongues,
Give ample licence to their appetites.

Come, come, however you may mask your nature,
I know the secret pulses of your heart
Beat towards them still. A woman hater! Pshaw!
A young and handsome fellow, and a brave one—

Rol. Go on.

Count. Had I a sister, mother, nay, my grandam,
I'd no more trust her in a corner with thee,
Than cream within the whiskers of a cat. [right,

Rol. Right! I should beat her. You are very
I have a sneaking kindness for the sex;
And, could I meet a reasonable woman,
Fair without vanity, rich without pride,
Discreet though witty, learn'd, yet very humble;
That has no ear for flattery, no tongue
For scandal: one who never reads romances;
Who loves to listen better than to talk,
And rather than be gadding would sit quiet;
Hates cards and cordials, goes ill-dress'd to
church;—

I'd marry certainly. You shall find two such,
And we'll both wed together.

Count. You are merry.

Where shall we dine together?

Rol. Not to-day.

Count. Nay, I insist.

Rol. Where shall I meet you, then?

Count. Here, at the Mermaid.

Rol. I don't like the sign;

A mermaid is half woman.

Count. Pshaw, Rolando!

You strain this humour beyond sense or measure.
Rol. Well, on condition that we're very private,
And that we drink no toast that's feminine,
I'll waste some time with you.

Count. Agreed.

Enter ZAMORA, disguised.

Rol. Go on, then;

I will, but give directions to my page,
And follow you.

Count. A pretty smooth-fac'd boy!

Rol. The lad is handsome; and, for one so young—
Save that his heart will flutter at a drum,
And he would rather eat his sword than draw it—
He is the noblest youth in Christendom,
The kindest and most gentle. Talk of woman!
Not all the rarest virtues of the sex,
If any cunning chemist could compound them,
Would make a tythe of his. When before Tunis
I got well scratch'd for leaping on the walls
Too nimbly, that same boy attended me,
'Twould bring an honest tear into thine eye,
To tell thee how, for ten days, without sleep,
And almost nourishment, he waited on me;

Cheer'd the dull time, by reading merry tales;
And when my feasting body smarted most,
Sweeter than a fond mother's lullaby
Over her peevish child, he sung to me,
That the soft cadence of his dying tones
Dropp'd like an oily balsam on my wounds,
And breath'd an healing influence throughout me.
But this is womanish! Order our dinner,
And I'll be with you presently.
Count. I will not fail. [Exit Count.

ZAMORA comes forward.

Rol. The wars are ended, boy.

Zam. I'm glad of that, sir. [master.

Rol. You should be sorry, if you love your

Zam. Then I am very sorry.

Rol. We must part, boy!

Zam. Part?

Rol. I am serious.

Zam. Nay, you cannot mean it.

Have I been idle, sir, or negligent?

Saucy I'm sure I have not. If aught else,

It is my first fault; chide me gently for it—

Nay, heavily; but do not say, we part!

Rol. I'm a disbanded soldier, without pay;

Fit only now with rusty swords and helmets

To hang up in the armoury, till the wars

New-burnish me again; so poor, indeed,

I can but leanly cater for myself,

Much less provide for thee.

Zam. Let not that

Divide us, sir; thought of how I far'd

Never yet troubled me, and shall not now.

Indeed, I never follow'd you for hire,

But for the simple and the pure delight

Of serving such a master. If we must part,

Let me wear out my service by degrees;

To-day omit some sweet and sacred duty,

Some dearer one to-morrow: slowly thus

My nature may be wean'd from her delight:

But suddenly to quit you, sir! I cannot!

I should go broken-hearted.

Rol. Pshaw, those tears!

Well, well, we'll talk of this some other day.

I dine with Count Montalban at the Mermaid;

In the mean time, go, and amuse yourself

With what is worthiest note in that fam'd city.

But hark, Eugenio! 'Tis a wicked place;

You'll meet (for they are weeds of every soil)

Abundance here of—women; keep aloof!

For they are like the smooth, but brittle, ice,

That tempts th' unpractic'd urchin to his ruin.

Keep aloof, boy! keep aloof!

They are like comets, to be wonder'd at,

But not approach'd. Go not within their reach.

[Exit Rolando.

Zam. Doubt me not, sir.

What a hard fate is mine! to follow thus

With love a gentleman that scorns my sex,

And swears no great or noble quality

Ever yet liv'd in woman! When I read to him

The story of Lucretia, or of Portia,

Or other glorious dame, or some rare virgin,

Who, cross'd in love, has died, 'mid peals of laugh—

He praises the invention of the writer; [ter,

Or, growing angry, bids me shut the book,

Nor with such dull lies wear his patience out.

What opposition has a maid like me

To turn the headstrong current of his spleen!

For though he sets off with a lavish tongue

My humble merits, thinking me a boy,

Yet, should I stand before his jaundic'd sight

A woman, all that now is fair in me

Might turn to ugliness; all that is good

Appear the smooth gloss of hypocrisy:

Yet, I must venture the discovery,

Though, 'tis a fearful hazard. This perplexity

Of hopes and fears makes up too sad a life;

I will or lose him quite or be his wife. [Exit.

SCENE II.—A Room in Balthazar's House.

Enter VOLANTE and BALTHAZAR.

Balth. Not yet apparel'd?

Vol. 'Tis her wedding-day, sir:

On such occasions women claim some grace.

Balth. How bears she

The coming of her greatness?

Vol. Bravely, sir.

Instead of the high honours that await her,

I think that, were she now to be enthron'd,

She would become her coronation:

For, when she has adjusted some stray lock,

Or fix'd at last some sparkling ornament,

She views her beauty with collected pride,

Musters her whole soul in her eyes, and says,

"Look I not like an empress?" But, she comes.

Enter JULIANA, in her wedding dress.

Jul. Well, sir, what think you? do I to the life

Appear a duchess, or will the people say,

"She does but poorly play a part which nature

Never design'd her for? But, where's the duke?"

Balth. Not come yet.

Jul. How! not come? the duke not come!

Vol. Patience, sweet sister: oft without a mur-

mur has been his delight to wait for you. [mur

Jul. It was his duty. Man was born to wait

On woman, and attend her sovereign pleasure!

This tardiness upon his wedding-day

Is but a sorry sample of obedience.

Balth. Obedience, girl!

Jul. Ay, sir, obedience. [make

Vol. Why, what a wire-drawn puppet you will

The man you marry! I suppose, ere long,

You'll chuse how often he shall walk abroad

For recreation; fix his diet for him;

Bespeak his clothes, and say on what occasions

He may put on his finest suit.

Jul. Proceed. [friends,

Vol. Keep all the keys, and when he bids his

Mete out a modicum of wine to each.

Had you not better put him on a livery

At once, and let him stand behind your chair?

Why, I would rather wed a man of dough,

Such as some spinster, when the pye is made,

To amuse her childish fancy, kneads at hazard

Out of the remnant paste—a paper man,

Cut by a baby. Heavens preserve me ever

From that dull blessing—an obedient husband!

Jul. And make you an obedient wife! a thing

For lordly man to vent his humours on;

A dull domestic drudge. To be abus'd

Or fondled as the fit may work upon him:

"If you think so, my dear;" and, "As you please;"

And, "You know best;" even when he nothing

knows.

I have no patience—that a free-born woman

Should sink the high tone of her noble nature

Down to slavish whisper, for that compound

Of frail mortality they call a man,

And give her charter up to make a tyrant!

Balth. You talk it most heroically. Pride

May be a proper bait to catch a lover,

But, trust me, daughter, 'twill not hold a husband.

Jul. Leave that to me. And what should I have

If I had fish'd with your humility? [caught

Some pert apprentice, or rich citizen.

Who would have bought me? Some poor gentleman,

Whose high patrician blood would have descended

To wed a painter's daughter, and—her ducats.

I felt my value, and still kept aloof;

Nor stoop'd my eye till I had met the man,

Pick'd from all Spain, to be my husband, girl:

And him I have so manag'd, that he feels

I have conferr'd an honour on his house,

By coyly condescending to be his. (Knocking.)

Balth. He comes.

Vol. Smooth your brow, sister.

Jul. For a man!
He must be one not made of mortal clay, then.

Enter DUKE OF ARANZA and two Attendants.
Oh! you are come, sir? I have waited for you!
Is this your gallantry? at such a time, too?

Duke. I do entreat your pardon—if you knew
The pressing cause—

Vol. Let me entreat for him.

Balth. Come, girl, be kind.

Jul. Well, sir, you are forgiven.

Duke. You are all goodness; let me on this hand—
(*Taking her hand, which she withdraws.*)

Jul. Not yet, sir; 'tis a virgin hand as yet,
And my own property: forbear awhile,
And, with this humble person, 'twill be yours.

Duke. Exquisite modesty! Come, let us on!
All things are waiting for the ceremony;
And, till you grace it, Hymen's wasting torch
Burns dim and sickly. Come, my Juliana. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Cottage.

Enter DUKE OF ARANZA, leading in Juliana.

Duke. You are welcome home.

Jul. Home! you are merry; this retired spot
Would be a palace for an owl!

Duke. 'Tis ours.

Jul. Ay, for the time we stay in it.

Duke. By heaven,

This is the noble mansion that I spoke of!

Jul. This! You are not in earnest, though you
bear it

With such a sober brow. Come, come, you jest.

Duke. Indeed I jest not; were it ours in jest,
We should have none, wife.

Jul. Are you serious, sir?

Duke. I swear, as I'm your husband, and no duke.

Jul. No duke!

Duke. But of my own creation, lady.

Jul. Am I betray'd? Nay, do not play the fool!
It is too keen a joke.

Duke. You'll find it true.

Jul. You are no duke, then?

Duke. None.

Jul. Have I been cozen'd? (*Aside.*)

And have you no estate, sir?

No palaces, nor houses?

Duke. None but this:

A small snug dwelling, and in good repair.

Jul. Nor money, nor effects?

Duke. None, that I know of.

Jul. And the attendants that have waited on us?

Duke. They were my friends; who, having done
my business,
Are gone about their own.

Jul. Why, then, 'tis clear. (*Aside.*)
That I was ever born! What are you, sir?

Duke. I am an honest man, that may content you:
Young, nor ill-favour'd. Should not that content
you,

I am your husband, and that must content you.

Jul. I will go home! (*Going.*)

Duke. You are at home, already. (*Staying her.*)

Jul. I'll not endure it! But, remember this—
Duke. or no duke, I'll be a duchess, sir!

Duke. A duchess! you shall be queen, to all
Who, of their courtesy, will call you so.

Jul. And I will have attendance.

Duke. So you shall,

When you have learnt to wait upon yourself.

Jul. To wait upon myself! must I bear this?
I could tear out my eyes, that bade you woo me,
And bite my tongue in two, for saying yes!

Duke. And if you should, 'twould grow again.
I think, to be an honest yeoman's wife
(For such, my would-be duchess, you will find me,)
You were cut out by nature.

Jul. You will find then,
That education, sir, has spoilt me for it.
Why! do you think I'll work?

Duke. I think 'twill happen, wife.

Jul. What! rub and scrub
Your noble palace clean?

Duke. Those taper fingers
Will do it daintily.

Jul. And dress your virtuels
(If there be any)? Oh! I could go mad.

Duke. And mend my hose, and darn my night-
caps neatly;

Wait, like an echo, till you're spoken to—

Jul. Or, like a clock, talk only once an hour?

Duke. Or like a dial; for that quietly
Performs its work, and never speaks at all.

Jul. To feed your poultry and your hogs!
oh, monstrous!

And when I stir abroad, on great occasions,
Carry a squeaking tithe pig to the vicar;
Or jolt with higglers' wives the market trot,
To sell your eggs and butter!

Duke. Excellent!

How well you sum the duties of a wife!

Why, what a blessing I shall have in you!

Jul. A blessing!

Duke. When they talk of you and me,
Darby and John shal' be no more remember'd;
We shall be so happy!

Jul. Shall we?

Duke. Wondrous happy!

Oh, you will make an admirable wife!

Jul. I'll make a devil.

Duke. What?

Jul. A very devil.

Duke. Oh, no! we'll have no devils.

Jul. I'll not bear it.

I'll to my father's!

Duke. Gently: you forget

You are a perfect stranger to the road.

Jul. My wrongs will find a way, or make one.

Duke. Softly!

You stir not hence, except to take the air;

And then I'll breathe it with you.

Jul. What, confine me?

Duke. 'Twould be unsafe to trust you yet abroad.

Jul. Am I a truant school-boy?

Duke. Nay, not so;

But you must keep your bounds.

Jul. And if I break them,

Perhaps you'll beat me.

Duke. Beat you!

The man, that lays his hand upon a woman,
Save in the way of kindness, is a wretch
Whom 'twere gross flattery to name a coward.
No, madam, I'll talk to you, I'll not beat you.

Jul. Well, if I may not travel to my father,

I may write to him surely! and I will—

If I can meet within your spacious dukedom

Three such unhop'd-for miracles at once,

As pens, and ink, and paper.

Duke. You will find them

In the next room. A word, before you go.

You are my wife, by ev'ry tie that's sacred;

The partner of my fortune and my bed—

Jul. Your fortune!

Duke. Peace! no fooling, idle woman!
Beneath the attesting eye of heav'n I've sworn
To love, to honour, cherish, and protect you.
No human pow'r can part us. What remains, then?
To fret, and worry, and torment each other,
And give a keener edge to our hard fate,
By sharp upbraidings, and perpetual jars?
Or, like a loving and a patient pair,
(Wak'd from a dream of grandeur, to depend
Upon their daily labour for support),
To soothe the taste of fortune's lowliness
With sweet content, and mutual fond endearment?
Now to your chamber; write what'er you please;

But pause before you stain the spotless paper,
With words that may inflame, but cannot heal!

Jul. Why what a patient worm you take me for!

Duke. I took you for a wife; and ere I've done,
I'll know you for a good one.

Jul. You shall know me

For a right woman, full of her own sex;
Who, when she suffers wrong, will speak her anger;
Who feels her own prerogative, and scorns,
By the proud reason of superior man,
To be taught patience, when her swelling heart
Cries out revenge! [Exit.]

Duke. Why, let the flood rage on!

There is no tide in woman's wildest passion
But hath an ebb. I've broke the ice, however.
Write to her father! She may write a folio—
But if she send it! 'Twill divert her spleen;
The flow of ink may save her blood letting;
Perchance she may have fits, they're seldom mortal,
Save when the doctor's sent for.—
Though I have heard some husbands say, and wisely,
A woman's honour is her safest guard,
Yet there's some virtue in a lock and key.

(Locks the door.)

So thus begins our honey moon. 'Tis well!
For the first fortnight, ruder than march winds,
She'll blow a hurricane. The next, perhaps,
Like April, she may wear a changeful face
Of storm and sunshine: and, when that is past,
She will break glorious as unclouded May,
And where the thorns grew bare, the spreading
blossoms

Meet with no lagging frost to kill their sweetness.
Whilst others for a month's delicious joy,
Buy a dull age of penance, we, more wisely,
Taste first the wholesome bitter of the cup,
That after to the very lees shall relish;
And to the close of this frail life prolong
The pure delights of a well-govern'd marriage. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—Balthazar's House.

Enter BALTHAZAR, followed by the Count, disguised
as a Friar.

Balth. These things premis'd, you have my full
consent

To try my daughter's humour: to that end
I have sent for her. But observe me, sir!
I will use no compulsion with my child:
Though of a merry spirit, I have found her,
In weighty matters, of so ripe a judgment,
That she shall chuse a husband for herself.
If I had tendered thus her sister Zamora,
I should not now have mourn'd a daughter lost!

Enter VOLANTE.

Vol. What is your pleasure?

Balth. Know this holy man;

(Introducing the Count to her.)

It is the father confessor I spoke of.
Though he looks young, in all things which respect
His sacred function, he is deeply learn'd.

Vol. It is the Count! (Aside.)

Balth. I leave you to his guidance:

And do not, with that wild wing you are wont,
Fly from his questions; act as may befit
The sober purpose of his visit here;
And, without diminution or concealment,
To his examination and free censure
Commit your actions and your private thoughts.

Vol. I shall observe, sir. [Exit Balthazar.]

Nay, 'tis he, I'll swear! (Aside.)

Count. Pray heaven she don't suspect me!
Well, young lady, you have heard your father's
commands! [Are we to do?

Vol. Yes: and now he has left us alone, what

Count. I am to listen, and you are to confess.

Vol. What! and then you are to confess, and I
am to listen? I'll take care you shall do penance
though.

Count. Pshaw!

(Aside.)

Vol. Well; but what am I to confess?

Count. Your sins, daughter; your sins.

Vol. What! all of them?

Count. Only the great ones.

Vol. The great ones! Oh, you must learn those
of my neighbours, whose business it is, like yours,
to confess everybody's sins but their own. If now
you would be content with a few trifling peccadilloes,
I would own them to you with all the frankness
of an author, who gives his reader the paltry
errata of the press, but leaves him to find out all
the capital blunders of the work himself.

Count. Nay, lady, this is trifling: I am in haste.

Vol. In haste! then suppose I confess my virtues?
you shall have the catalogue of them in a
single breath.

Count. Nay, then I must call your father.

Vol. Why, then, to be serious: If you will tell
me of any very enormous offences which I may
have lately committed, I shall have no objection in
the world to acknowledge them to you.

Count. It is publicly reported, daughter, you
are in love.

Vol. So, so! are you there! (Aside.) That I
am in love?

Count. With a man—

Vol. Why, what should a woman be in love with?

Count. You interrupt me, lady. A young man.

Vol. I'm not in love with an old one, certainly.
But is love a crime, father?

Count. Heaven forbid!

Vol. Why, then, you have nothing to do with it.

Count. Ay, but the concealing it is a crime?

Vol. Oh, the concealing it is a crime?

Count. Of the first magnitude.

Vol. Why, then, I confess—

Count. Well, what?

Vol. That the Count Montalban—

Count. Go on!

Vol. Is—

Count. Proceed!

Vol. Desperately in love with me.

Count. Pshaw! That's not to the point.

Vol. Well, well, I'm coming to it: and not being
able in his own person to learn the state of my
affections, has taken the benefit of clergy, and
assumed the disguise of a friar.

Count. Discovered!

Vol. Ha, ha, ha! You are but a young masquerader,
or you wouldn't have left your vizor at home.
Come, come, Count, pull off your lion's apparel,
and confess yourself an ass.

Count. Nay, Volante, hear me!

Vol. Not a step nearer! The snake is still dangerous,
though he has cast his skin. I believe you're
the first lover on record that ever attempted to gain
the affections of his mistress by discovering her
faults. Now, if you had found out more virtues in
my mind than there will ever be room for, and more
charms in my person than even my looking-glass
can create, why, then, indeed—

Count. What then?

Vol. Then I might have confessed what it is now
impossible I can ever confess: and so farewell, my
noble count confessor! [Exit.]

Count. Farewell!

And when I've hit upon the longitude,
And plumb'd the yet unfathom'd ocean,
I'll make another venture for thy love.
Here comes her father. I'll be fool'd no longer!

Enter BALTHAZAR.

Balth. Well, sir, how thrive you?

Count. E'en as I deserve: [me.

Your daughter has discovered, laughed at, and left

Balth. Yet I've another scheme.

Count. What is't?

Balth. My daughter,

Being a lover of my art, of late
Has vehemently urg'd to see your portrait;
Which, now 'tis finish'd, I stand pledg'd, she shall.
Go to the picture room—stand there conceal'd:
Here is the key. I'll send my daughter straight:
And if, as we suspect, her heart leans tow'rd's you,
In some unguarded gesture, speech, or action,
Her love will suddenly break out. Away!
I hear her coming.

Count. There's some hope in this.

Balth. It shall do wonders. Hence. [Exit Count..]
I'll tax her home.

Enter VOLANTE.

Vol. What, is he gone, sir?

Balth. Gone! d'ye think the man is made of marble? Yes, he is gone.

Vol. For ever?

Balth. Ay, for ever.

Vol. Alas, poor Count! or, has he only left you,
To study some new character? Pray, tell me!
What will he next appear in?

Balth. This is folly.

'Tis time to call your wanton spirits home;
You are too wild of speech.

Vol. My thoughts are free, sir;
And those I utter.

Balth. Far too quickly, girl:

Your shrewdness is a scare-crow to your beauty.

Vol. It will fright none but fools, sir: men of sense must naturally admire in us the quality they most value in themselves; a blockhead only protests against the wit of a woman, because he can't answer her drafts upon his understanding. But now we talk of the Count, don't you remember your promise, sir?

Balth. Umph! (Aside.) What promise, girl?

Vol. That I should see your picture of him.

Balth. So you shall, when you can treat the original with a little more respect.

Vol. Nay, sir, a promise!

Balth. Well, you'll find the door open: but, before you go, tell me honestly, how do you like the Count, his person, and understanding?

Vol. Why, as to his person, I don't think he's handsome enough to pine himself to death for his own shadow, like the youth in the fountain—nor yet so ugly as to be frightened to dissolution if he should look at himself in a glass. Then, as to his understanding, he has hardly wit enough to pass for a madman, nor yet so little as to be taken for a fool. In short, sir, I think the Count is very well worth any young woman's serious contemplation—when she has no other earthly thing to think about. (Runs off.)

Balth. So the glad bird, that flutters from the net.
Grown wanton with the thought of his escape,
Flies to the lined bush, and there is caught,
I'll steal and watch their progress. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—The Picture Room.

(The Count concealed behind his Portrait.)

Enter VOLANTE.

Vol. Confess that I love the Count! A woman may do a more foolish thing than fall in love with such a man, and a wiser one than to tell him of it. (Looks at the picture.) 'Tis very like him; the hair is a shade too dark—and rather too much complexion for a despairing innamorato. Confess that I love him! Now there is only his picture; I'll see if I can't play the confessor a little better than he did. "Daughter, they tell me you are in love?" "Well, father, there is no harm in speaking the truth." "With the Count Montalban, daughter?" "Father, you are not a confessor, but a conjuror!" "They add, moreover, that you have named the day for your marriage?" "There, father, you are misinformed; for like a discreet maiden, I have left that for him to do." Then he should throw off his disguise; I should gaze at him with astonish-

ment; he should open his arms, whilst I sunk gently into them. (The Count catches her in his arms.) The Count!

Enter BALTHAZAR.

My Father, too! Nay, then, I am fairly hunted into the toil. There, take my hand, Count, while I am free to give it.

Enter a Servant, with a letter.

Serv. A letter, sir.

Balth. From Julianq! [Exit.]

Vol. Well, what says she, sir?

Count. This will spoil all. (Aside.)

Vol. It bears untoward news:

Is she not well, sir?

Balth. 'Tis not that.

Vol. What then, sir?

See how he knits his brow!

Balth. Here must be throats cut.

Vol. What moves you thus, sir?

Balth. That, would stir a statue.

Your friend's a villain, sir! (To the Count.) Read, read it out.

And you, if I mistake not, are another.

Vol. What can this mean?

Balth. Peace! Hear him read the letter.

Count. (Reads.) Dearest father! I am deceived, betrayed, insulted!

The man, whom I have married, is no duke!

Vol. No duke!

Balth. I'll be revenged! Read, sir; read!

Count. (Reads.) He has neither fortune, family, nor friends.

Balth. You must have known all this, sir. But proceed.

Count. (Reads.) He keeps me prisoner here, in a miserable hovel; from whence, unless I am speedily rescued by your interference, you may never hear more of your forlorn, abused JULIANA.

Balth. What answer you to this, sir?

Count. Nothing.

Vol. How!

Balth. 'Tis plain you are a partner in the trick That robb'd a doting father of his child.

Count. Suspend your anger but a few short days, And you shall find, though now a mystery Involves my friend—

Balth. A mystery! What mystery?

There are no 'mysteries in honest men:

What mystery I say, can solve this conduct?

Is he a duke?

Count. I cannot answer that.

Balth. Then he's a villain!

Count. Nay, upon my soul,

He means you fairly, honourably, nobly.

Balth. I will away to-night. Olmedo! Perez!

Perhaps your Countship means me fairly too,

Nobly and honourably!

Get my horses!

[Exeunt Servants.]

You have some mystery, too, sir; but ere I set

My sole surviving hope on such a hazard,

I'll look into your countship's pedigree:

And for your noble, honourable duke,

I'll travel night and day until I reach him!

And he shall find I am not yet so old.

But that my blood will flame at such an insult,

And my sword leap into my grasp. Believe me,

I will have full revenge!

Count. You shall.

Balth. I will, sir!

And speedily!

Count. Proceed, then, on your journey.

With your good leave, I'll bear you company:

And as the traveller, perplex'd awhile

In the benighted mazes of a forest,

Breaks on a champain country, smooth and level,

And sees the sun shine glorious; so shall you, sir,

Behold a bright close, and a golden end,

To this now dark adventure,

Vol. Go, my father! [fairly.
Balth. You speak in riddles, sir; yet you speak
Count. And, if I speak not truly, may my hope
 In this fair treasure be extinct for ever!

Balth. Then quickly meet us here, prepar'd for travel.

If, from the cloud that overhangs us now,
 Such light should break as you have boldly
 promis'd,

My daughter and my blessing still are yours, sir.

Count. Bless in that word, I quit you. [Exit.

Balth. Come, girl!

This shall be sifted thoroughly: till then

You must remain a fresh ungather'd flow'r.

Vol. Well, sir; I am not yet so overblown,

But I may hang some time upon the tree,

And still be worth the plucking.

Balth. True, my girl.

And better 'twere to wither on thy stem,

And scatter on the earth thy maiden leaves,

Than graft thee where thy sweetness and thy beauty

Would all be wasted. Come, we must prepare.

[Exeunt.

SCENE IV.—The Cottage.

Enter DUKE OF ARANZA, in a Peasant's Dress.

Duke. She hath compos'd a letter; and, what's

Contriv'd to send it by a village boy [worse,

That pass'd the window. Yet she now appears

Profoundly penitent.

'Tis a conversion too miraculous.

Her cold disdain yields with too free a spirit;

Like ice, which, melted by unnatural heat—

Not by the gradual and kindly thaw

Of the resolving elements—give it air, [her.

Will straight congeal again—She comes—I'll try

Enter JULIANA, in a Peasant's Dress.

Why, what's the matter now?

Jul. That foolish letter!

Duke. What! you repent of having written it?

Jul. I do, indeed. I could cut off my fingers

For being partners in the act.

Duke. No matter;

You may indite one in a milder spirit,

That shall pluck out its sting.

Jul. I can.

Duke. You must.

Jul. I can.

Duke. You shall.

Jul. I will, if 'tis your pleasure.

Duke. Well replied!

I now see plainly you have found your wits,

And are a sober, metamorphos'd woman.

Jul. I am, indeed.

Duke. I know it: I can read you.

There is a true contrition in your looks;

Yours is no penitence in masquerade—

You are not playing on me.

Jul. Playing, sir! [things

Duke. You have found out the vanity of those

For which you lately sigh'd so deep.

Jul. I have, sir.

Duke. A dukedom! pshaw! it is an idle thing.

Jul. I have begun to think so.

Duke. That's a lie! (Aside.)

Is not this tranquil and retired spot

More rich, in real pleasures, than a palace?

Jul. I like it infinitely.

Duke. That's another! (Aside.)

The mansion's small, 'tis true, but very snug.

Jul. Exceeding snug.

Duke. The furniture not splendid,

But then all useful.

Jul. All exceeding useful.

There's not a piece on't but serves twenty purposes.

Duke. And, though we're seldom plagued by vi-

sitors,

We have the best of company—ourselves.

Nor, whilst our limbs are full of active youth,

Need we loll in a carriage, to provoke

A lazy circulation of the blood;

When walking is a nobler exercise.

Jul. More wholesome, too.

Duke. And far less dangerous.

Jul. That's certain.

Duke. Then for servants, all agree,

They are the greatest plagues on earth.

Jul. No doubt on't.

Duke. Who then, that has a taste for happiness,

Would live in a large mansion, only fit

To be an habitation for the winds;

Keep gilded ornaments for dust and spiders;

See everybody, care for nobody;

When they could live as we do?

Jul. Who, indeed?

Duke. Here we want nothing.

Jul. Nothing. Yes, one thing.

Duke. Indeed! what's that?

Jul. You will be angry.

Duke. Nay—

Not if it be a reasonable thing.

Jul. What wants the bird, who, from his wiry

Sings to the passing travellers of air [prison,

A wistful note—that she were with them, sir?

Duke. Umph! What, your liberty! I see it now,

(Aside.)

Jul. 'Twere a pity that in such a paradise

I should be cag'd.

Duke. Why, whither would you, wife?

Jul. Only to taste the freshness of the air,

That breathes a wholesome spirit from without;

And weave a chaplet for you, of those flow'rs

That throw their perfume through my window bars,

And then I will return, sir.

Duke. You are free,

But use your freedom wisely.

Jul. Doubt me not, sir!

I'll use it quickly, too. [Aside, and exit.

Duke. But I do doubt you.

There is a lurking devil in her eye,

That plays at bopeep there, in spite of her.

Her anger is but smother'd, not burnt out,

And ruddy, give it vent, to blaze again.

You have your liberty—

But I will watch you closely, lady,

And see that you abuse it not. [Exit.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—An Inn.

ROLANDO sitting at a table.

Rol. 'Sdeath, that a reasonable thinking man

Should leave his friend and bottle for a woman!

Here is the Count, now, who, in other matters,

Has a true judgment, only seethe his blood

With a full glass beyond his usual stint,

And women, like a wildfire, runs throughout him.

Immortal man, is but a shufflecock,

And wine and women are but the battledores

That keep him going! What! Eugenio!

Enter ZAMORA.

Zam. Your pleasure, sir?

Rol. I am alone, and wish

One of your songs to bear me company.

Zam. A merry or a sad one, sir?

Rol. No matter.

Zam. I have but one that you have ever heard.

Rol. Let it be that.

Zam. I shall obey you, sir.

Now woman's wit assist me. (Sings.)

SONG.—ZAMORA.

In vain the tears of anguish flow,

In vain I mourn, in vain I sigh;

For he, alas! will never know,

That I must live for him, or die.

*Ah! could I dare myself reveal!
Would not my tale his pity move?
And sighs of pity seldom fail
In noble hearts to waken love.
But should he view, without a tear,
My altering form, my waning bloom,
Then, what is left me but despair!
What refuge but the silent tomb!*

Rol. It is a mournful ditty, yet 'tis pleasing.

Zam. It was, indeed, a melancholy tale
From which I learnt it.

Rol. Lives it with you still? [dream, sir:

Zam. Faintly, as would an ill-remember'd
Yet so far I remember—Now my heart— (Aside.)

'Twas of a gentleman—a soldier, sir,
Of a brave spirit: and his outward form
A frame to set a soul in. He had a page,
Just such a boy as I, a faithful stripling,
Who, out of pure affection, and true love,
Follow'd his fortune to the wars.

Rol. Why this
Is our own history.

Zam. So far, indeed,
But not beyond, it bore resemblance, sir.
For in the sequel (if I well remember)
'This loving boy (so, sir, the story ran).
Turn'd out to be a woman.

Rol. How! a woman!

Zam. Yes, sir, a woman.

Rol. Live with him a twelvemonth, and he not
find the secret out!

Zam. 'Twas strange.

Rol. Strange! 'twas impossible! At the first blush,
A palpable and most transparent lie!
Why, if the soldier had been such an ass,
She had herself betray'd it.

Zam. Yet, 'tis said,
She kept it to her death; that, oft as love
Would heave the struggling passion to her lips,
Shame set a seal upon them: thus long time
She nourish'd, in this strife of love and modesty,
An inward slow-consuming martyrdom,
'Till in the sight of him her soul most cherish'd—
Like flow'rs, that on a river's margin, fading
Through lack of moisture, drop into the stream,
So, sinking in his arms, her parting breath
Reveal'd her story.

Rol. You have told it well, boy.

Zam. I feel it deeply, sir; I know the lady.

Rol. Know her! you don't believe it?

Zam. What regards
Her death, I will not vouch for. But the rest—
Her hopeless love, her silent patience,
The struggle 'twixt her passion and her pride—
I was a witness to. Indeed, her story
Is a most true one.

Rol. She should not have died;

A wench like this were worth a soldier's love:
And were she living now—

Enter COUNT MONTALHAN.

Zam. 'Tis well! (Aside.)

Count. Strange things have happen'd, since we
parted, captain!

I must away to-night.

Rol. To-night! and whither? [know:

Count. 'Tis yet a secret. Thus much you shall
If a short fifty miles you'll bear me company,
You shall see—

Rol. What?

Count. A woman tam'd.

Rol. No more;

I'll go a hundred. Do I know the lady?

Count. What think you of our new-made duchess?

Rol. She?

What mortal man has undertaken her?
Perhaps the keeper of the beasts, the fellow
That puts his head into the lion's mouth.
Or else some tiger-tamer to a nabob.

Count. Who, but her husband?

Rol. With what weapons?

Count. Words.

Rol. With words? why then he must invent a
Which yet the learned have no glimpses of.
Fasting and fustigation may do something;
I've heard that death will quiet some of them;
But words! mere words! cool'd by the breath of
man!

He may preach tame a howling wilderness;
Silence a full-mouth'd battery with show-balls;
Quench fire with oil; with his repelling breath
Puff back the northern blast; whistle 'gainst thunder:
These things are feasible. But still a woman
With the nine parts of speech!—

Count. You know him not.

Rol. I know the lady.

Count. Yet, I tell you

He has the trick to draw the serpent's fang,
And yet not spoil her beauty.

Rol. Could he discourse, with fluent eloquence,
More languages than Babel sent abroad,
The simple rhet'ric of her mother tongue
Would pose him presently; for woman's voice
Sounds like a fiddle in a concert, always
The shrillest, if not loudest instrument.
But we shall see. [Exeunt Count and Rolando.

Zam. He was touch'd surely, with the piteous tale
Which I deliver'd; and, but that the Count
Prevented him, would have broke freely out
Into a full confession of his feeling
Tow'rd's such a woman as I painted to him.
Why then, my boy's habiliments, adieu!
Henceforth, my woman's tire—I'll trust to you.

[Exit.

SCENE II.—The Duke's Palace.

*Enter CAMPILLO, the Duke's Steward, and another
Servant.*

Serv. But can no one tell the meaning of this
faucy?

Camp. No: 'tis the duke's pleasure, and that's
enough for us. You shall hear his own words:—

*For reasons, that I shall hereafter communicate, it
is necessary that Jaquez should, in all things, at pre-
sent, act as my representative: you will, therefore,
command my household to obey him as myself, until
you hear further from (Signed) ARAZZA.*

Serv. Well, we must wait the upshot. But how
bears Jaquez his new dignity?

Camp. Like most men in whom sudden fortune
combats against long-established habit. (Laughing
without.)

Serv. By their merriment, this should be he.

Camp. Stand aside, and let us note him.

*Enter JAQUEZ, dressed as the Duke, followed by six
Attendants, who in vain endeavour to restrain their
laughter. [Exit Servant.*

Jaquez. Why, you ragamuffins! what d'ye titter
at? Am I the first great man that has been made
off-hand by a tailor? Show your grinders again, and
I'll hang you like onions, fifty on a rope. I can't
think what they see ridiculous about me, except,
indeed, that I feel as if I was in armour, and my
sword has a trick of getting between my legs, like
a monkey's tail, as if it was determined to trip up
my nobility. And now, villains! don't let me see
you tip the wink to each other, as I do the honours
of my table. If I tell one of my best stories, don't
any of you laugh before the jest comes out, to show
that you have heard it before: take care that you
don't call me by my christian name, and then pre-
tend it was by accident; that shall be transporta-
tion at least: and when I drink a health to all
friends, don't fancy that any of you are in the
number.

Enter a Servant.

Well, sir?

Serv. There is a lady without, presses vehemently to speak to your grace.

Jaquez. A lady?

Serv. Yes, your highness,

Jaquez. Is she young?

Serv. Very, your grace!

Jaquez. Handsome?

Serv. Beautiful, your highness!

Jaquez. Send her in.—[*Exit Servant.*—You may retire; I'll finish my instructions by-and-by. Young and handsome! I'll attend to her business in *propria persona*. Your old and ugly ones I shall despatch by deputy. Now to alarm her with my consequence, and then soothe her with my condescension. I must appear important; big as a country pedagogue, when he enters the school-room with—a hem! and terrifies the apple-munching urchins with the creaking of his shoes. I'll swell like a shirt bleaching in a high wind; and look burly as a Sunday headle, when he has kicked down the unhallowed stall of a profane old apple-woman. Bring my chair of state! Hush!

Enter JULIANA.

Jul. I come, great duke, for justice!

Jaquez. You shall have it.

Of what do you complain?

Jul. My husband, sir! [offence?

Jaquez. I'll bang him instantly! What's his

Jul. He has deceived me.

Jaquez. A very common case; few husbands answer their wives' expectations.

Jul. He has abused your grace.

Jaquez. Indeed! if he has done that, he swings most loftily. But how, lady, how?

Jul. Shortly thus, sir:

Being no better than a low-born peasant, He has assum'd your character and person.

Enter DUKE ARANZA.

Oh! you are here, sir? This is he, my lord.

Jaquez. Indeed! [*Aside.*] Then I must tickle him. Why, fellow, d've take this for an ale-house, that you enter with such a swagger? Know you where you are, sir?

Duke. The rogue reproves me well! [*Aside.*] I had forgot.

Most humbly I entreat your grace's pardon, For this unusher'd visit; but the fear Of what this wayward woman might allege Beyond the truth—

Jul. I have spoke naught but truth.

Duke. Has made me thus unmannerly.

Jaquez. 'Tis well. You might have us'd more ceremony.

Proceed. (To Juliana.)

Jul. This man, my lord, as I was saying, Passing himself upon my inexperience For the right owner of this sumptuous palace, Obtain'd my slow consent to be his wife; And cheated, by this shameful perfidy, Me of my hopes—my father of his child.

Jaquez. Why, this is swindling; obtaining another man's goods under false pretences; that is, if a woman be a good: that will make a very intricate point for the judges. Well, sir, what have you to say in your defence?

Duke. I do confess I put this trick upon her; And for my transient usurpation Of your most noble person, with contrition I bow me to the rigour of the law.

But for the lady, sir, she can't complain.

Jul. How! not complain? To be thus vilely co- And not complain! [zen'd,

Jaquez. Peace, woman! Though Justice be blind, she is not deaf.

Duke. He does it to the life! [*Aside.*] Had not her most exceeding pride been doting, She might have seen the difference, at a glance, Between your grace and such a man as I am.

Jaquez. She might have seen that certainly. Proceed.

Duke. Nordid I fall so much beneath her sphere, Being what I am, as she had soar'd above it Had I been that which I have only feign'd.

Jaquez. Yet, you deceiv'd her.

Jul. Let him answer that.

[wives;

Duke. I did: most men in something cheat their Wives gull their husbands; 'tis the course of wooing. Now, hating that my title and my fortune Were evanescent, in all other things I acted like a plain and honest suitor.

I told her she was fair, but very proud; That she had taste in music, but no voice; That she danc'd well, yet still might borrow grace From such or such a lady. To be brief; I prais'd her for no quality she had not, Nor over-priz'd the talents she possess'd: Now, save in what I have before confess'd, And I challenge her worst spite to answer me, Whether, in all attentions, which a woman, A gentle and a reasonable woman, Looks for, I have not to the height fulfill'd, If not outgone her expectations?

Jaquez. Why, if she has no cause of complaint since you were married—

Duke. I dare her to the proof on't.

Jaquez. Is it so, woman?

(To Juliana.)

Jul. I don't complain of what has happen'd since; The man has made a tolerable husband, But for the monstrous cheat he put upon me, I claim to be divorc'd.

Jaquez. It cannot be.

Jul. Cannot, my lord?

Jaquez. No. You must live with him.

Jul. Never!

Duke. Or, if your grace will give me leave— We have been wedded yet a few short days— Let us wear out a month as man and wife; If, at the end on't, with uplifted hands, Morning and ev'ning, and sometimes at noon, And bended knees, she doesn't plead more warmly—

Jul. If I do—

[part us.

Duke. Then let her will be done, that seeks to *Jul.* I do implore your grace to let it stand Upon that footing.

Jaquez. Humph! Well, it shall be so; with this proviso, that either of you are at liberty to hang yourselves in the meantime. (*Rises.*)

Duke. We thank your providence. Come, Juliana— [and then,

Jul. Well, there's my hand: a month's soon past, I am your humble servant, sir.

Duke. For ever.

Jul. Nay, I'll be hang'd first.

Duke. That may do as well.

Come, you'll think better on't.

Jul. By all—

Duke. No swearing.

Jaquez. No, no; no swearing.

Duke. We humbly take our leaves.

[*Exit with Juliana, and Servants.*

Jaquez. I begin to find, by the strength of my nerves, and the steadiness of my countenance, that I was certainly intended for a great man; for what more does it require to be a great man, than boldly to put on the appearance of it? How many sage politicians are there, who can scarce comprehend the mystery of a mousetrap; valiant generals, who wouldn't attack a bulrush, unless the wind were in their favour; profound lawyers, who would make excellent wigblocks; and skilful physicians, whose knowledge extends no further than writing death-warrants in Latin; and are shining examples that a man will never want gold in his pocket, who carries plenty of brass in his face. It will be rather awkward, to be sure, to resign at the end of a month: but, like other great men in office, I must make the most of my time, and retire with a good grace, to

avoid being turned out; as a well-bred dog always walks down stairs, when he sees preparations ripe for kicking him into the street. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—An Inn.

Enter BALTHAZAR, as having fallen from his horse, supported by VOLANTE, COUNT MONTALBAN, &c. and preceded by the Hostess.

Hostess. This way, this way, if you please. Alas! poor gentleman! (Brings a chair.) How do you feel now, sir? (They set him down.)

Balth. I almost think my brains are where they should be—

Confound the jade!—though they dance merrily To their own music.

Count. Is a surgeon sent for?

Hostess. Here he comes, sir.

Enter LAMPEDO.

Lamp. Is this the gentleman?

Balth. I want no surgeon; all my bones are whole.

Vol. Pray, take advice.

Balth. Well! Doctor, I have doubts Whether my soul be shaken from my body; Else I am whole.

Lamp. Then you are safe, depend on't; Your soul and body are not yet divorc'd; Though if they were, we have a remedy: Nor have you fracture, sir, simple or compound; Yet very feverish! I begin to fear Some inward bruise—a very raging pulse! We must phlebotomize.

Balth. You won't. Already There is too little blood in these old veins To do my cause full justice.

Lamp. Quick and feverish! He must lie down a little; for, as yet, His blood and spirits being all in motion, There is too great confusion in the symptoms, To judge discreetly from.

Balth. I'll not lie down.

Vol. Nay; for an hour or so.

Balth. Well, be it so.

Hostess. I'll shew you to a chamber: this way, this way, if you please. [Exit all but Lampedo.]

Lamp. 'Tis the first patient, save the miller's mare,

And an old lady's cat, that has the phthisic, That I have touch'd these six weeks. Well, good hostess!

Enter Hostess.

How fares your guest?

Hostess. He must not go to-night.

Lamp. No; nor to-morrow—

Hostess. Nor the next day, neither.

Lamp. Leave that to me.

Hostess. He has no hurt, I fear. [his doctor,

Lamp. None: but, as you're his cook, and I'm Such things may happen. You must make him ill, And I must keep him so; for, to say truth, 'Tis the first biped customer I've handled. Like the subscribers to my work on levers.

Hostess. Hard times, indeed! No business stirring my way. [hostess.]

Lamp. So I should guess, from your appearance, You look as if, for lack of company, You were obliged to eat up your whole larder.

Hostess. Alas! 'tis so:

Yet I contrive to keep my spirits up.

Lamp. Yes; and your flesh, too. Look at me.

Hostess. Why, truly,

You look half starv'd.

Lamp. Half starv'd! I wish you'd tell me Which half of me is fed. I shew more points Than an old horse, that has been three weeks pounded:

Yet I do all to tempt them into sickness. Have I not, in the jaws of bankruptcy,

And to the desolation of my person, Painted my abop, that it looks like a rainbow? New double-gilt my pestle and my mortar, That some, at distance, take it for the sun? And blaz'd in flaming letters o'er my door, Each one a glorious constellation, "Surgeon, apothecary, accoucheur?" (For midwife is grown vulgar.) Yet they ail not: Phials and gallipots still keep their ranks, As if there were no cordial virtue in them. The healing chime of pulverizing drags They shun as 'twere a tolling bell, or death-watch. I never give a dose, or set a limb! But, come, we must devise, we must devise How to make much of this same guest, sweet hostess. Hostess. You know I always make the most of them. [let's in; Lamp. Spoke like an ancient tapstress! Come, And, while I soothe my bowels with an omelette, (For, like a nest of new-wak'd rooklings, hostess, They caw for provender,) and take a glass Of thy Palernian, we will think of means; For though to cure men be beyond our skill, 'Tis hard, indeed, if we can't keep them ill. [Exit all.]

SCENE IV.—The Cottage.

Enter DUKE OF ARANZA, bringing in JULIANA, having overtaken her in an attempt to escape.

Duke. Nay, no resistance: for a month, at least, I am your husband.

Jul. True! and what's a husband? [him,

Duke. Why, as some wives would metamorphose A very miserable ass, indeed!

Jul. True, there are many such.

Duke. And there are men

Whom not a swelling lip, or wrinkled brow, Or the loud rattle of a woman's tongue, Or, what's more hard to parry, the warm pressure Of lips, that from the inmost heart of man Plucks out his stern resolves, can move one jot From the determin'd purpose of his soul, Or stir an inch from his prerogative. Ere it be long, you'll dream of such a man.

Jul. Where, waking, shall I see him?

Duke. Look on me.

Come to your chamber.

Jul. I won't be confin'd.

Duke. Won't! Say you so?

Jul. Well, then, I do request You won't confine me.

Duke. You'll leave me?

Jul. No, indeed;

As there is truth in language, on my soul, I will not leave you!

Duke. You've deceiv'd me once—

Jul. And, therefore, do not merit to be trusted.

I do confess it: but, by all that's sacred,

Give me my liberty, and I will be

A patient, drudging, most obedient wife.

Duke. Yes; but a grumbling one.

Jul. No, on my honour,

I will do all you ask, ere you have said it.

Duke. And with no secret murmuring of your spirit?

Jul. With none, believe me.

Duke. Have a care;

For if I catch thee on the wing again, I'll clip ye closer than a garden hawk, And put ye in a cage where daylight comes not; Where you may fret your pride against the bars, Until your heart break. (Knocking at the door.) See who's at the door. See who's at the door. (She goes and returns.)

Enter LOPEZ.

My neighbour Lopez! Welcome, sir! My wife— (Introducing her.) A chair. (To Juliana. She brings a chair to Lopez, and throws it down.)

Your pardon; you'll excuse her, sir;
A little awkward, but exceeding willing.
One for your husband. (*She brings another chair,
and is going to throw it down as before; but
the Duke looking steadfastly at her, she desists,
and places it gently by him.*)

Pray, be seated, neighbour.

Now, you may serve yourself.

Jul. I thank you, sir.

Duke. I'd rather you should sit.

Jul. If you will have it so. 'Would I were dead!
(*Aside. Brings a chair, and sits down.*)

Duke. Though, now I think again, 'tis fit you stand,

That you may be more free to serve our guest.

Jul. Even as you command. (*Rises.*)

Duke. You will eat something? (*To Lopez.*)

Lopez. Not a morsel, thankye. (*least?*)

Duke. Then you will drink? a glass of wine, at
Lopez. Well, I am warm with walking, and care not if I do taste your liquor.

Duke. You have some wine, wife?

Jul. I must e'en submit. (*Exit.*)

Duke. This visit, sir, is kind and neighbourly.

Lopez. I came to ask a favour of you. We have, to-day, a sort of merry-making on the green hard by—'twere too much to call it a dance—and as you are a stranger here—

Duke. Your patience for a moment.

Re-enter JULIANA, with a horn of liquor.

Duke. (*Taking it.*) What have we here?

Jul. 'Tis wine; you call'd for wine.

Duke. And did I bid you bring it in a nutshell?

Lopez. Nay, there is plenty.

Duke. I can't suffer it.

You must excuse me. (*To Lopez.*) When friends drink with us,

'Tis usual, love, to bring it in a jug,
Or else they may suspect we grudge our liquor.

You understand—a jug.

Jul. I shall remember. (*Exit.*)

Lopez. I am ashamed to give you so much trouble.

Duke. No trouble; she must learn her duty, sir:

'I'm only sorry you should be kept waiting.

But you were speaking—

Lopez. As I was saying, it being the conclusion of our vintage, we have assembled the lads and lasses of the village—

Re-enter JULIANA.

Duke. Now we shall do. (*Pours out.*)

Why, what the devil's this?

Jul. Wine, sir.

Duke. This wine? 'Tis foul as ditch-water!

Did you shake the cask?

Jul. What shall I say? (*Aside.*) Yes, sir.

Duke. You did?

Jul. I did.

Duke. I thought so.

Why, do you think, my love, that wine is phisic,
That must be shook before 'tis swallow'd?

Come, try again.

Jul. I'll go no more.

Duke. You won't?

Jul. I won't.

Duke. You won't! (*Shewing the key.*)

*You had forgot yourself, my love.

Jul. Well, I obey!

Duke. Was ever man so plagued!

I am ashamed to try your patience, sir;

But women, like waches, must be set with care,
To make them go well.

Re-enter JULIANA.

Ay, this looks well. (*Pouring it out.*)

Jul. The heavens be prais'd!

Duke. Come, sir, your judgment.

Lopez. 'Tis excellent! But, as I was saying, to-day we have some country pastimes on the green;

will it please you both to join our simple recreations?

[*draught, sir.*
Duke. We will attend you. Come, renew your
Lopez. We shall expect you presently: till then,
good even, sir. [*and make you ready.*]

Duke. Good even, neighbour. [*Exit Lopez.*] Go

Jul. I take no pleasure in these rural sports.

Duke. Then you shall go to please your husband.

Hold!

I'll have no glittering gewgaws stuck about you,
To stretch the gaping eyes of idiot wonder,
And make men stare upon a piece of earth
As on the star-wrought firmament; no feathers,
To wave as streamers to your vanity;
Nor cumbrous silk, that, with its rustling sound,
Makes proud the flesh that bears it. She's adorn'd
Amplly, that in her husband's eye looks lovely—
The truest mirror that an honest wife
Can see her beauty in.

Jul. I shall observe, sir.

Duke. I should like well to see you in the dress
I last presented you.

Jul. The blue one, sir?

Duke. No, love, the white. Thus modestly attir'd,
An half-blown rose stuck in thy braided hair,
With no more diamonds than those eyes are made of,
No deeper rubies than compose thy lips,
Nor pearls more precious than inhabit them;
With the pure red and white, which that same band
Which blends the rainbow mingles in thy cheeks;
This well proportion'd form, (think not I flatter,)
In graceful motion to harmonious sounds,
And thy free tresses dancing in the wind—
Thou'lt fix as much observance as chaste dames
Can meet without a blush. [*Exit Jul.*]

I'll trust her with these bumpkins. There no cock-
comb

Shall box his fulsome praises in her ear,
And swear she has in all things, save myself,
A most especial taste. No meddling gossip
(Who, having claw'd, or cuddled into bondage
The thing misnam'd a husband, privately
Instructs less daring spirits to revolt)
Shall, from the fund of her experience, teach her
When lordly man can best be made a fool of;
And how, and when, and where, with most success,
Domestic treaties, on the woman's side,
Are made and ratified.
Ye that would have obedient wives, beware
Of meddling woman's kind, officious care. [*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Inn.*

Enter Hostess, followed by LAMPEDO.

Hostess. Nay, nay; another fortnight.

Lamp. It can't be.

The man's as well as I am: have some mercy!
He hath been here almost three weeks already.

Hostess. Well, then, a week.

Lamp. We may detain him a week.

Enter BALTHAZAR behind, in his nightgown, with a drawn sword.

You talk now like a reasonable hostess,
That sometimes has a reck'ning with her conscience.

Hostess. He still believes he has an inward bruise.

Lamp. I would to heaven he had! or that he'd
slipp'd

His shoulder-blade, or broke a leg or two,
(Not that I bear his person any malice,)
Or lux'd an arm, or even sprain'd his ankle!

Hostess. Ay, broken anything except his neck.

Lamp. However, for a week I'll manage him:
Though he has the constitution of a horse—
A farrier should prescribe for him.

Balth. A farrier! (*Aside.*)

Lamp. To-morrow we phlebotomise again;
Next day, my new invented patent draught;

Then I have some pills prepar'd;

On Thursday we throw in the bark; on Friday—

Balth. (*Coming forward.*) Well, sir, on Friday—
what on Friday? come,

Proceed.

Lamp. Discovered!

Hostess. Mercy, noble sir!

(*They fall on their knees.*)

Lamp. We crave your mercy!

Balth. On your knees? 'tis well!

Pray, for your time is short.

Hostess. Nay, do not kill us.

Balth. You have been tried, condemn'd, and only
For execution. Which shall I begin with?

Lamp. The lady, by all means, sir.

Balth. Come, prepare. (*To the Hostess.*)

Hostess. Have pity on the weakness of my sex!

Balth. Tell me, thou quaking mountain of gross
flesh,

Tell me, and in a breath, how many poisons—

If you attempt it—(*to Lamp. who is endeavouring to
make off*)—you have cook'd up for me?

Hostess. None, as I hope for mercy!

Balth. Is not thy wine a poison?

Hostess. No, indeed, sir;

'Tis not, I own, of the first quality;

But—

Balth. What?

Hostess. I always give short measure, sir,
And ease my conscience that way.

Balth. Ease your conscience!

I'll ease your conscience for you.

Hostess. Mercy, sir!

Balth. Rise, if thou canst, and hear me.

Hostess. Your commands, sir?

Balth. If in five minutes all things are prepar'd
For my departure, you may yet survive.

Hostess. It shall be done in less.

Balth. Away, thou lump-fish! [*Exit Hostess.*]

Lamp. So! now comes my turn! 'tis all over
with me!

There's dagger, rope, and ratsbane in his looks!

Balth. And now, thou sketch and outline of a man!
Thou thing that hast no shadow in the sun!

Thou eel in a consumption, eldest born

Of Death on Famine! thou anatomy

Of a starv'd pilchard!

Lamp. I do confess my leanness. I am spare;
And, therefore, spare me.

Balth. Why! wouldst thou have made me
A thoroughfare for thy whole shop to pass through?

Lamp. Man, you know, must live.

Balth. Yes: he must die, too.

Lamp. For my patients' sake—

Balth. I'll send you to the major part of them.

The window, sir, is open; come, prepare.

Lamp. Pray, consider;

I may hurt some one in the street.

Balth. Why, then,

I'll rattle thee to pieces in a dice-box,

Or grind thee in a coffee-mill to powder,

For thou must sup with Plato: so, make ready;

Whilst I, with this good small-sword for a lancet,

Let thy starv'd spirit out, (for blood thou hast none,)

And nail thee to the wall, where thou shalt look

Like a dry'd beetle, with a pin stuck through him.

Lamp. Consider my poor wife.

Balth. Thy wife!

Lamp. My wife, sir.

Balth. Hast thou dar'd think of matrimony, too?

No flesh upon thy bones, and take a wife!

Lamp. I took a wife because I wanted flesh.

I have a wife, and three angelic babes,

Who, by those looks, are well nigh fatherless.

Balth. Well, well! your wife and children shall
plead for you.

Come, come; the pills! where are the pills? pro-
duce them.

Lamp. Here is the box.

Balth. Were it Pandora's, and each single pill
Had ten diseases in it, you should take them.

Lamp. What, all?

Balth. Ay, all; and quickly, too. Come, sir,
begin—that's ~~well~~ another.

Lamp. One's a dose.

Balth. Proceed, sir!

Lamp. What will become of me?

Let me go home, and set my shop to rights,
And, like immortal Cæsar, die with decency.

Balth. Away! and thank thy lucky star! I have not
Bray'd thee in thine own mortar, or expos'd thee
For a large specimen of the lizard genus.

Lamp. Would I were one! for they can feed on air.

Balth. Home, sir, and be more honest. [*Exit.*]

Lamp. If I am not,

I'll be more wise, at least.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A Wood.

Enter ZAMORA, in woman's apparel, veiled.

Zam. Now, all good spirits, that delight to prosper
The undertakings of chaste love, assist me!
Yon tier he comes: I'll rest upon this bank.
If I can move his curiosity,
The rest may follow.

[*She reclines upon the bank, pretending sleep.*]

* *Enter* ROLANDO.

Rol. What, ho! Eugenio!

He is so little apt to play the truant,

I fear some mischief has befallen him.

(*Sees Zamora.*)

What have we here? a woman! By this light,

Or rather, by this darkness, 'tis a woman!

Doing no mischief—only dreaming of it.

It is the stillest, most inviting spot!

We are alone: if, without waking her,

I could just brush the fresh dew from her lips,

As the first blush of morn salutes the rose—

Hold, hold, Rolando! art thou not forsworn,

If thou but touchest even the finger's end

Of fickle woman? I have sworn an oath, [me,

That female flesh and blood should ne'er provoke

That is, in towns, or cities: I remember

There was a special clause, or should have been,

Touching a woman sleeping in a wood;

For though, to the strict letter of the law,

We bind our neighbours, yet, in our own cause,

We give a liberal and large construction

To its free spirit. Therefore, gentle lady—

(*She stirs, as if awaking.*)

Hush! she prevents me. Pardon, gentle fair one,

That I have broke thus rudely on your slumbers;

But, for the interruption I have caus'd,

You see me ready, as a gentleman,

To make you all amends.

Zam. To a stranger

You offer fairly, sir; but from a stranger—

Rol. What shall I say? Not so; you are no

Stranger.

Zam. Do you, then, know me? Heav'n forbid!

(*Aside.*)

Rol. Too well.

Zam. How, sir?

Rol. I've known you, lady, 'bove a twelvemonth;

And, from report, lov'd you an age before.

Why, is it possible you never heard

Of my sad passion?

Zam. Never.

Rol. You amaze me!

Zam. What can he mean?

(*Aside.*)

Rol. The sonnets I have written to your beauty

Have kept a paper-mill in full employ!

And then the letters I have given by dozens

Unto your chambermaid! But I begin,

By this unlook'd-for strangeness you put on,

Almost to think she ne'er deliver'd them.

Zam. Indeed she never did. He does but jest.

I'll try. (*Aside.*) Perhaps you misdirected them? What superscription did you put upon them?

Rol. What superscription? None.

Zam. None!

Rol. Not a tittle.

Think ye, fair lady, I have no discretion? I left a blank, that, should they be misled, Or lost, you know—

Zam. And in your sonnets, sir,

What title was I honour'd by?

Rol. An hundred!

All but your real one.

Zam. What is that?

Rol. She has me.

'Faith! lady, you've run me to a stand. I know you not; never before beheld you; Yet I'm in love with you extempore: And though, by a tremendous oath, I'm bound Never to hold communion with your sex, Yet has your beauty and your modesty— Come, let me see your face.

Zam. Nay; that would prove I had no modesty; perhaps, nor beauty. Besides, I, too, have taken a rash oath, Never to love but one man—

Rol. At a time?

Zam. One at all times.

Rol. You're right: I am the man.

Zam. You are, indeed, sir.

Rol. How? now you are jesting.

Zam. No, on my soul! I have sent up to heav'n A sacred and irrevocable vow; And if, as some believe, there does exist A spirit in the waving of the woods, Life in the leaping torrent, in the hills And seated rocks a contemplating soul, Brooding on all things round them, to all nature I here renew the solemn covenant, Never to love but you, sir.

Rol. And who are you?

Zam. In birth and breeding, sir, a gentlewoman: And, but I know the high pitch of your mind From such low thoughts maintains a tow ring distance,

I would add, rich; yet is it no misfortune. Virtuous, I will say boldly. Of my shape, Your eyes are your informers. For my face, I cannot think of that so very meanly. For you have often praised it.

Rol. I! Unveil, then, That I may praise it once again.

Enter VOLANTE.

Zam. Not now, sir. We are observ'd.

Rol. (*Seeing Volante.*) Confusion! this she-devil! 'Tis time, then, to redeem my character. (*Aside.*) I tell you, lady, you must be mistaken; I'm not the man you want. (*To Zam.*) Meet me to-night. (*Apert.*)

Will not that answer serve?—At eight precisely. (*Apert.*)

I tell you, 'tis not I.—Here, on this spot. (*Apert.*) *Zam.* I humbly beg your pardon.

Rol. Well, you have it.—

Remember!

Zam. Trust me.

Rol. A most strange adventure! Pray, lady, do you know who that importunate woman is that just left us?

Vol. No signor.

Rol. *They walk by each other, he whistling, and she humming a tune.* Have you any business with me?

Vol. I wanted to see you, that's all. They tell me you are the valiant captain that have turned woman-bater, as the boy left off eating nuts, because he met with a sour one.

Rol. Would I were in a freemason's lodge!

Vol. Why there?

Rol. They never admit women.

Vol. It must be a dull place.

Rol. Exceeding quiet. How shall I shake off this gad-fly? Did you ever see a man mad?

Vol. Never.

Rol. I shall be mad presently.

Vol. I hope it won't be long first. I can wait an hour or so.

Rol. I tell you, I shall be mad.

Vol. Will it be of the merry sort? [*mad!*]

Rol. Stark-staring, maliciously, mischievously

Vol. Nay, then, I can't think of leaving you; for you'll want a keeper.

Rol. 'Would thou hadst one! If it were valiant now to beat a woman—

Vol. Well, why don't you begin? Psha! you have none of the right symptoms. You don't stare with your eyes, nor foam at the mouth. Mad, indeed! You're as much in your sober senses as I am. [*ward?*]

Rol. Then I am mad incurably! Will you go for-

Vol. No.

Rol. Backward?

Vol. No.

Rol. Will you stay where you are?

Vol. No. Rank and file, captain: I mean to be one of your company.

Rol. Impossible! You're not tall enough for anything but a drummer: and then, the noise of your tongue would drown the stoutest sheepskin in Christendom.

Vol. Can you find any employment for me?

Rol. No: you are fit for nothing but to beat hemp in a workhouse, to the tuneful accompaniment of a headle's whip.

Vol. I could be content to be so employed, if I were sure you would reap the full benefit of my labour.

Rol. Nay, then, I'll go another way to work with you—What, ho! Eugenio, serjeant, corporal!

Vol. Nay, then, 'tis time to scamper: he's bringing his whole regiment on me. [*Exit.*]

Rol. She's gone; and has left me happy. But this other—How is her absence irksome! There is such magic in her graceful form, Such sweet persuasion in her gentle tongue, As thaws my firm resolves, and changes me To that same soft and pliant thing I was, Ere yet I knew a haughty woman's scorn. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—A Rural Scene.

A dance of Rustics. LOPEZ comes forward.

Lopez. (*Seeing the Duke and Juliana approach.*) Hold! our new guests.

Enter DUKE OF ARANZA and JULIANA.

Neighbours, you're kindly welcome!

Will't please you join the dance, or be mere gazers?

Duke. I am for motion, if this lady here Would trip it with me.

Lopez. My wife, sir, at your service.

If it be no offence, I'll take a turn with your's.

Duke. By all means. Lady, by your leave— (*Salutes Lopez's Wife.*)

Lopez. A good example—

(*Attempts to salute Juliana; she boxes his ears.*)

Jul. Badly follow'd, sir.

Lopez. Zounds! what a tingler!

Duke. Are you not asham'd? (*To Juliana.*)

My wife is young, sir; she'll know better soon

Than to return a courtesy so tartly.

Your's has been better tutor'd. (*Salutes her.*)

Lopez. Tutor'd! Zounds!

I only meant to ape your husband, lady:

He kisses where he pleases.

Jul. So do I, sir;

Not where I have no pleasure.

Duke. Excellent! (*Aside.*)

Jul. My lips are not my own. My hand is free, sir, (*Offering her hand.*)

Lopez. Free! I'll be sworn it is!

Jul. Will't please you take it?

Duke. Excuse her rustic breeding: she is young; And you will find her nimble in the dance.

Lopez. Come, then, let's have a stirring roundelay.

[*They dance; Jul. at first perversely, but afterwards entering into the spirit of it. Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Cottage.*

JULIANA, sitting at her needle, sings; during which the DUKE OF ARANZA steals in behind.

SONG.—JULIANA.

*At the front of a cottage, with woodbine grown o'er,
Fair Lucy sat turning her wheel,
Unconscious that William was just at the door,
And heard her her passion reveal.*

*The bells rung,
And she sung,
Ding, dong, dell,
It were well*

If they rung for dear William and me.

But when she look'd up, and her lover espy'd,

*Ah! what was the maiden's surprise!
She blush'd as he woo'd her and call'd her his bride,
And answer'd him only with sighs.*

*The bells rung,
And she sung,
Ding, dong, dell,
It is well!*

They shall ring for dear William and me!

Duke. Ay, this looks well, when, like the humming bee,

We lighten labour with a cheerful song.
Come, no more work to night. (*Sits by her.*) It is the last

That we shall spend beneath this humble roof:
Our fleeting month of trial being past,
To-morrow you are free.

Jul. Nay, now you mock me,
And turn my thoughts upon my former follies.
You know, that to be mistress of the world,
I would not leave you.

Duke. No!

Jul. No, on my honour!

Duke. I think you like me better than you did:
And yet, 'tis natural—come, come, be honest;
You have a sort of hank'ring,—no wild wish,
Or vehement desire, yet a slight longing,
A simple preference, if you had your choice,
To be a duchess, rather than the wife
Of a low peasant?

Jul. No, indeed, you wrong me.

Duke. I mark'd you closely at the palace, wife.
In the full tempest of your speech, your eye
Would glance to take the room's dimensions,
And pause upon each ornament; and then
There would break from you a half-smother'd sigh,
Which spoke distinctly—"these should have been
mine!"

And, therefore, (though with a well-temper'd spirit,)
You have some secret swellings of the heart
When these things rise to your imagination.

Jul. No, never: sometimes in my dreams, I own;
You know we cannot help our dreams.

Duke. What then? [*dreams,*]

Jul. Why, I confess that, sometimes, in my
A noble house and splendid equipage,
Diamonds and pearls, and gilded furniture,
Will glitter, like an empty pageant, by me;
And then I'm apt to rise a little feverish.
But never do my sober, waking thoughts,
As I'm a woman worthy of belief,
Wander to such forbidden vanities.
Yet, after all, it was a scurvy trick!

Your palace, and your pictures, and your plate!
Your fine plantations, your delightful gardens,
That were a second paradise—for fools!
And then, your grotto,—so divinely cool!
Your Gothic summer-house, and Roman temple!
'Twould puzzle much an antiquarian
To find out their remains.

Duke. No more of that.

Jul. You had a dozen spacious vineyards, too!
Alas! the grapes are sour: and above all,
The Barbary courses that was breaking for me!

Duke. Nay, you shall ride him yet.

Jul. Indeed!

Duke. Believe me,
We must forget these things.

Jul. They are forgot.

And by this kiss, we'll think of them no more,
But when we want a theme to make us merry.

Duke. It was an honest one, and spoke thy soul;
And by the fresh lip and unsullied breath
Which join'd to give it sweetness—

Enter BALTHAZAR.

Jul. How! my father!

Duke. Signor Balthazar! You are welcome, sir,
To our poor habitation.

Balth. Welcome, villain!

I come to call your dukeship to account,
And to reclaim my daughter.

Duke. You will find her
Reclaim'd already; or I've lost my pains. (*Aside.*)

Balth. Let me come at him!

Jul. Patience, my dear father! [*sir;*]

Duke. Nay, give him room. Put up your weapon,
'Tis the worst argument a man can use;
So let it be the last. As for your daughter,
She passes by another title here,
In which your whole authority is sunk—
My lawful wife.

Balth. Lawful! his lawful wife!

I shall go mad! Did you not basely steal her,
Under a vile pretence?

Duke. What I have done,
I'll answer to the law.

Of what do you complain?

Balth. Are you not
A most notorious, self-confess'd impostor? [*state*]
Duke. True, I am somewhat dwindled from the
In which you lately knew me; nor alone

Should my exceeding change provoke your wonder,
You'll find your daughter is not what she was.

Balth. How, Juliana?

Jul. 'Tis, indeed, most true.

I left you, sir, a froward, foolish girl,
Full of capricious thoughts and fiery spirits,
Which, without judgment, I would vent on all.
But I have learnt this truth indelibly,
That modesty, in deed, in word, and thought,
Is the prime grace of woman; and with that,
More than by frowning looks, and saucy speeches,
She may persuade the man that rightly loves her,
Whom she was ne'er intended to command.

Balth. Amazement! Why, this metamorphosis
Exceeds his own! What spells, what cunning witchcraft

Has he employ'd?

Jul. None: he has simply taught me
To look into myself: his powerful rhetoric
Hath with strong influence impress'd my heart,
And made me see, at length, the thing I have been,
And what I am, sir.

Balth. And are you, then, content
To live with him?

Jul. Content! I am most happy!

Balth. Can you forget your crying wrongs?

Jul. Not quite, sir:

They sometimes serve us to make merry with.

Balth. How like a villain he abus'd your father?

Jul. You will forgive him that for my sake.

Balth. Never!

Duke. Why, then, 'tis plain, you seek your own revenge,

And not your daughter's happiness.

Balth. No matter.

I charge you, on your duty as my daughter,
Follow me!

Duke. On a wife's obedience,
I charge you, stir not!

Jul. You, sir, are my father;
At the bare mention of that hallow'd name,
A thousand recollections rise within me,
To witness you have ever been a kind one:
This is my husband, sir—

Balth. Thy husband! well—

Jul. 'Tis fruitless now to think upon the means
He us'd—I am irrevocably his:

And when he pluck'd me from my parent tree,
To graft me on himself, he gather'd with me
My love, my duty, my obedience;
Add, by adoption, I am bound as strictly
To do his reasonable bidding now,
As once to follow your's.

Balth. Yet I will be reveng'd.

Duke. You would have justice. (To *Balth.*)

Balth. I will.

Duke. Then forthwith meet me at the duke's.

Balth. What pledge have I for your appearance
there?

Duke. Your daughter, sir. Nay, go, my Juliana!
'Tis my request: within an hour at farthest,
I shall expect to see you at the palace. [sir.]

Balth. Come, Juliana. You shall find me there.

Duke. Look not thus sad at parting, Juliana:
All will run smooth yet.

Balth. Come!

Jul. Heav'n grant it may!

Duke. The duke shall right us all, without delay.
[Exit.]

SCENE II.—A Wood.

Enter VOLANTE, and four of Count Montalban's
servants, masked.

Vol. That's he, stealing down the pathway yonder.
Put on your vizors; and remember, not a word.
(*They retire.*)

Enter ROLANDO.

Now I shall be even with your hemp-beating. [Exit.]

Rol. Here am I come to be a woman's toy,
And spite of sober reason, play the fool.

'Tis a most grievous thing, that a man's blood
Will ever thwart his noble resolution,
And make him deaf to other argument
Than the quick beating of his pulse. (*Count's Servants come forward, and surround him.*)

Heyday!

Why, what are these? If it be no offence,
May I enquire your business?

(*They hold a pistol to each side of his head.*)

Now I can guess it. Pray, reserve your fire.

(*They proceed to bind him.*)

What can this mean? Mute, gentlemen; all mute!

Pray, were ye born of woman? Still ye are mute!

Why, then, perhaps, you mean to strangle me.

(*They bind him to a tree, and go off.*)

How! gone? Why, what the devil can this mean?
It is the oddest end to an amour!

Enter VOLANTE, and three other Women.

Vol. This is the gentleman we're looking for.

Rol. Looking for me! You are mistaken, ladies:

What can you want with such a man as I am?

I am poor, ladies, miserably poor;

I am old, too, though I look young; quite old;

The ruins of a man. Nay, come not near me!

I would for you I were a porcupine,

And every quill a death!

Vol. By my faith, he rails valiantly, and has a
valiant sword, too, if he could draw it. Was ever

poor gentleman so near a rope without being able
to hang himself!

Rol. I could bear being bound in every limb,
So ye were tongue-ty'd.

That I could cast out devils to torment you!

Though ye would be a match for a whole legion.

Vol. Come, come.

Rol. Nay, ladies, have some mercy: drive me not
To desperation, though, like a bear,
I'm fix'd to the stake, and must endure the baiting.

(*After repeated struggles, disengages his right
arm, with which he draws his sword, and
cuts the ropes that bind him.*)

Vol. The bear is breaking his chain. 'Tis time
to run, then. (*The Women run off; Rolando
extricates himself, and comes forward.*)

Rol. So, they are gone! What a damnable condition
I am in! The devils that worried St. Anthony
were a tame set to these! My blood boils! By all
that's mischievous, I'll carbonado the first woman
I meet! If I do not, why, I'll marry her. Here's
one already!

Enter ZAMORA, veiled.

Zam. I've kept my word, sir. [oath.]

Rol. So much the worse! for I must keep my
Arg you prepar'd to die?

Zam. Not by your hand.

I hardly think, when you have seen my face,
You'll be my executioner.

Rol. Thy face!

What, you are handsome? Don't depend on that:

For if those rosy fingers, like Aurora's, her,

Lifting the veil from day, should usher forth

Twin sparkling stars, to light men to their ruin;

Balm-breathing lips, to seal destruction on;

An alabaster forehead, hung with locks

That glitter like Hyperion's; and a cheek,

Where the live crimson steals upon the white,

You have no hope of mercy!

Zam. (*Unveiling.*) Now, then, strike!

Rol. Eugenio!

Zam. Your poor boy, sir.

Rol. How! a woman!

A real woman!

What a dull ass have I been! Nay, 'tis so!

Zam. You see the sister of that scornful lady,

Who, with such fix'd disdain, refus'd your love,

Which, like an arrow failing of its aim,

Glancing from her impenetrable heart,

Struck deep in mine: in a romantic hour,

Unknown to all, I left my father's house,

And follow'd you to the wars. What has since hap-

pen'd,

It better may become you to remember

Than me to utter.

Rol. I am caught at last!

Caught by a woman! excellently caught,

Hamper'd beyond redemption! Why, thou witch!

That, in a brace of minutes, hast produc'd

A greater revolution in my soul [ress,

Than thy whole sex could compass! thou enchant-

Prepare: for I must kill thee certainly;

(*Throws away his sword.*)

But it shall be with kindness. My poor boy!

(*They embrace.*)

I'll marry thee to-night. Yet, have a care!

For I shall love thee most unmercifully. [me,

Zam. And as a wife, should you grow weary of

I'll be your page again.

Rol. We'll to your father.

Zam. Alas! I fear I have offended him

Beyond the reach of pardon.

Rol. Think not so.

In the full flood of joy at your return,

He'll drown his anger, and absolving tears

Shall warmly welcome his poor wanderer home.

What will they say to me? Why, they may say,

And truly, that I made a silly vow,

But was not quite so foolish as to keep it. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—*Duke of Aranza's Palace.*

Enter BALTHAZAR and JULIANA, COUNT MONTALBAN and VOLANTE, preceded by a Servant.

Balth. You'll tell his highness I am waiting for *Serv.* What name, sir? [him.]

Balth. No matter; tell him, an old man, Who has been basely plunder'd of his child, And has perform'd a weary pilgrimage In search of justice, hopes to find it here.

Serv. I will deliver this. [Exit.]

Balth. And he shall right me; Or I will make his dukedom ring so loud With my great wrongs, that—

Jul. Pray, be patient, sir.

Balth. Where is your husband?

Jul. He will come, no doubt. [quickly.]

Count. I'll pawn my life for his appearance, *Enter Servant.*

Balth. What news, sir?

Serv. The duke will see you presently.

Balth. 'Tis well!

Has there been here a man to seek him lately?

Serv. None, sir.

Balth. A tall, well-looking man enough, Though a rank knave, dress'd in a peasant's garb?

Serv. There has been no such person.

Balth. No, nor will be.

It was a trick to steal off safely, And get the start of justice. He has reach'd, Ere this, the nearest sea-port, or inhabits One of his air-built castles. (Trumpets, &c.)

Serv. Stand aside!

Enter DUKE OF ARANZA, superbly dressed, preceded by Jaquez, and followed by Attendants and Six Ladies.

Duke. Now, sir, your business with me?

Balth. How?

Jul. Amazement!

Duke. I hear you would have audience.

Jaquez. Exactly my manner. (Aside.)

Balth. Of the duke, sir.

Duke. I am the duke.

Balth. The jest is somewhat stale, sir.

Duke. You'll find it true.

Balth. Indeed!

Jaquez. Nobody doubted my authority. (Aside.)

Jul. Be still, my heart; (Aside.)

Balth. I think you would not trifle with me now.

Duke. I am the Duke Aranza.

Count. 'Tis e'en so. (To Balthazar.)

Duke. And what's my greater pride, this lady's husband;

Whom, having honestly redeem'd my pledge, I thus take back again. You now must see The drift of what I have been lately acting, And what I am. And though, being a woman Giddy with youth and unrestrained fancy, The domineering spirit of her sex I have rebuk'd too-sharply; yet, 'twas done, As skilful surgeons cut beyond the wound, To make the cure complete.

Balth. You have done most wisely.

And all my anger dies in speechless wonder.

Jaquez. So does all my greatness. (Aside.)

Duke. What says my Juliana?

Jul. I am lost, too,

In admiration, sir: my fearful thoughts Rise, on a trembling wing, to that rash height, Whence, growing dizzy once, I fell to earth; Yet since your goodness, for the second time, Will lift me, though unworthy, to that pitch Of greatness, there to hold a constant light, I will endeavour so to bear myself, That in the world's eye, and my friends' observance, And, what's far dearer, your most precious judgment, I may not shame your dukedom. [ment,]

Duke. Bravely spoken!

Why, now you shall have rank and equipage; Servants, for you can now command yourself;

Glorious apparel, not to swell your pride, But to give lustre to your modesty.

All pleasures, all delights, that noble dames Warm their chaste fancies with, in full abundance Shall flow upon you; and it shall go hard But you shall ride the Barbary courser, too.

Count. You have kept my secret, and I thank you.

Count. Your grace has reason; for, in keeping that,

I well nigh lost my mistress. On your promise, I now may claim her, sir. (To Balthazar.)

Balth. What says my girl?

Vol. Well, since my time is come, sir—

Balth. Take her, then. (Joins their hands.)

Duke. But who comes yonder?

Count. 'Sdeath! why, 'tis Rolando!

Duke. But that there hangs a woman on his arm, I'd swear 'twas he.

Vol. Nay, 'tis the gentleman.

Duke. Then have the poles met!

Vol. Oh! no; only two of the planets have jostled each other. Venus has had too much attraction for Mars.

Enter ROLANDO, with ZAMORA, veiled.

Count. Why, captain!

Duke. Signor Rolando! [a woman!]

Rol. (After they have laughed some time.) Nay, 'tis And one that has a soul, too, I'll be bound for't.

Vol. He must be condemned to her for some offence, as a truant horse is tied to a log, or a great school-boy carries his own rod to the place of execution. [still!]

Rol. Laugh till your lungs crack, 'tis a woman

Count. I'll not believe it till I see her face.

Vol. It is some boy dress'd up to cozen us.

Rol. It was a boy dress'd up to cozen me.

Suffice it, sirs, that being well convinc'd, In what I lately was a stubborn sceptic, That women may be reasonable creatures: And finding that your grace, in one fair instance, Has wrought a wondrous reformation in them, I am resolv'd to marry; (all laugh) for 'tis odds (Our joint endeavours lab'ring to that end) That, in another century or two, They may become endurable. What say you? (To the Duke.)

Have I your free consent?

Duke. Most certainly.

Rol. Your's sir? (To the Count.)

Count. Most readily.

Rol. And your's? (To Balthazar.)

Balth. Most heartily.

Jaquez. He does not ask mine. (Aside.)

Rol. Add but your blessing, sir, and we are happy!

What think you of my page?

(Zamora unveils, and kneels to Balthazar.)

Vol. How!

Balth. Zamora!

[feet—

Zam. Your daughter, sir—who, trembling at your

Balth. Come to my heart!

You knew how deeply you were rooted there, Or scarce had ventur'd such a frolic.

Zam. That, sir,

Should have prevented me.

Balth. There: she is your's, sir;

If you are still determin'd.

Rol. Fix'd as fate!

Nor in so doing do I change my mind;

I swore to wed no woman—she's an angel.

Vol. Ay, so are all women before marriage; and that's the reason their husbands so soon wish them in heaven afterwards. [ample]

Duke. Those who are tartly tongued: but our experience shall manifest—A gentle wife Is still the sterling comfort of man's life; To fools a torment, but a lasting boon To those who wisely keep the Honey-moon.

[Exeunt.]

THE APPRENTICÉ;

A FARCE, IN TWO ACTS.—BY ARTHUR MURPHY.



Act II.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS

WINGATT
DICK
GARGLE

SIMON
SCOTCHMAN
IRISHMAN

CATCHPOLE
WATCHMEN
CHARLOTTA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Enter WINGATT and SIMON.

Win. Nay, nay, but I tell you I am convinced. I know it is so; and so, friend, don't you think to trifle with me; I know you're in the plot, you scoundrel, and if you don't discover all, I'll—

Simon. Dear heart, sir, you won't give a body time.

Win. Zookers! a whole month missing, and no account of him far or near! Sirrah, I say he could not be 'prentice to your master so long, and you live so long in one house with him, without knowing his haunts and all his ways, and then, varlet, what brings you here to my house so often?

Simon. My master Gargle and I, sir, are so uneasy about un, that I have been running all over the town this morning to inquire for un, and so in my way I thought I might as well call here.

Win. A villain! to give his father all this trouble. And so you have not heard any thing of him, friend?

Simon. Not a word, sir, as I hope for mercy, though, as sure as you are there, I believe I can guess what's come on un. As sure as anything, master, the gipsies have gotten hold on un, and we shall have un come home as thin as a rake, like the young girl in the city, with living upon nothing but crusts and water for six-and-twenty days.

Win. The gipsies have got hold of him, ye block-head! Get out of the room. Here you, Simon!

Simon. Sir.

Win. Where are you going in such a hurry? Let me see; what must be done? A ridiculous

unskull, with his d—d Cassanders and Cloppatras, and trumpery, with his romances, and his Odyssey Popes, and a parcel of rascals not worth a groat! Zookers! I'll not put myself in a passion. Simon, do you step back to your master, my friend Gargle, and tell him I want to speak with him, though I don't know what I shall send for him for; a sly, slow, hesitating blockhead! he'll only plague me, with his physical cant and his nonsense. Why don't you go, you booby, when I bid you?

Simon. Yes, sir.

[Exit.

Win. This fellow will be the death of me at last! I have been tormenting for him all the days of my life, and now the scoundrel's run away. Suppose I advertise the dog? Ay, but if the villain should deceive me, and happen to be dead, why then he tricks me out of six shillings; my money's flung into the fire. Zookers, I'll not put myself in a passion, let him follow his nose; 'tis nothing at all to me: what care I?

Re-enter SIMON.

What do you come back for, Simon?

Simon. As I was going out, sir, the post came to the door, and brought this letter.

Win. Let me see it. The gipsies have got hold of him; ha, ha! What a pretty fellow you are! ha, ha! Why don't you step where I bid you, sirrah?

Simon. Yes, sir.

[Exit.

Win. Well, well, I'm resolv'd, and it shall be so. I'll advertise him to-morrow morning, and promise, if he comes home, all shall be forgiven; and when the blockhead comes, I may do as I please, ha, ha! I may do as I please. Let me see—he had on—

slidikins, what signifies what he had on? I'll read my letter, and think no more about him. Hey! what a plague have we here? (*Mutters to himself.*) Bristol—a what's all this! (*Reads.*) "Esteemed friend,—Last was twentieth ultimo, since none of thine, which will occasion brevity. The reason of my writing to thee at present, is to inform thee that thy son came to our place with a company of strollers, who were taken up by the magistrate, and committed as vagabonds to jail." Zookers! I'm glad of it—a villain of a fellow! Let him lie there. "I am sorry thy lad should follow such profane courses; but out of the esteem I bear unto thee, I have taken thy boy out of confinement, and sent him off for your city in the waggon, which left this four days ago. He is consigned to thy address, being the needful from thy friend and servant, EBENEZER BROADBRIM." Wounds! what did he take the fellow out for? A scoundrel, rascal! turn'd stage-player—I'll never see the villain's face. Who comes there?

Re-enter SIMON.

Simon. I met my master over the way, sir. Our cares are over. Here is Mr. Gargle, sir.

Win. Let him come in, and do you go down stairs, you blockhead. [*Exit Simon.*]

Enter GARGLE.

So, friend Gargle, here's a fine piece of work—Dick's turn'd vagabond!

Gar. He must be put under a proper regimen directly, sir. He arrived at my house within these ten minutes, but in such a trim! He's now below stairs; I judged it proper to leave him there till I had prepared you for his reception.

Win. Death and fire! what could put it into the villain's head to turn buffoon?

Gar. Nothing so easily accounted for: why, when he ought to be reading the Dispensatory, there was he constantly poring over plays, and farces, and Shakspeare.

Win. Ay, that d—d Shakspeare! I hear the fellow was nothing but a deer-stealer in Warwickshire. I never read Shakspeare. Wounds! I caught the rascal myself, reading that nonsensical play of Hamlet, where the prince is keeping company with strollers and vagabonds. A fine example, Mr. Gargle.

Gar. His disorder is of the malignant kind, and my daughter has taken the infection from him. Bless my heart! she was as innocent as water-gruel, till he spoiled her. I found her the other night in the very fact.

Win. Zookers! you don't say so? caught her in the fact?

Gar. Ay, in the very fact of reading a play-book in bed.

Win. Oh, is that the fact you mean? Is that all? though that's bad enough.

Gar. But I have done for my young madam; I have confined her to her room, and locked up all her books.

Win. Lookye, friend Gargle, I'll never see the villain's face. Let him follow his nose, and bite the bridle.

Gar. Sir, I have found out that he went three times a week to a spouting-club.

Win. A spouting-club, friend Gargle! What's a spouting-club?

Gar. A meeting of 'prentices, and clerks, and giddy young men, intoxicated with plays; and so they meet in public-houses to act speeches; there they all neglect their business, despise the advice of their friends, and think of nothing but to become actors.

Win. You don't say so! a spouting-club! Wounds, I believe they are all mad.

Gar. Ay, mad indeed, sir: madness is occasioned

in a very extraordinary manner; the spirits flowing in particular channels,—

Win. 'Sdeath! you're as mad yourself as any of them.

Gar. And continuing to run in the same ducts—

Win. Ducks! d—n your ducks! Who's below there? Tell that fellow to come up.

Gar. Dear sir, be a little cool; inflammatories may be dangerous. Do, pray, sir, moderate your passions.

Win. Pr'ythee be quiet, man; I'll try what I can do. Here he comes.

Enter DICK.

Dick. "Now, my good father, what's the matter?"

Win. So, friend, you have been upon your travels, have you? You have had your frolic? Lookye, young man, I'll not put myself in a passion. But, death and fire, you scoundrel! what right have you to plague me in this manner? Do you think I must fall in love with your face, because I am your father?

Dick. "A little more than kin, and less than kint." (*Aside.*)

Win. Ha, ha! what a pretty figure you cut now! Ha, ha! why don't you speak, you blockhead? Have you nothing to say for yourself?

Dick. Nothing to say for yourself! What an old prig it is! (*Aside.*)

Win. Mind me, friend, I have found you out; I see you'll never come to good. Turn stage-player! wounds! you'll not have an eye in your head in a month, ha, ha! you'll have 'em knocked out of the sockets with withered apples; remember, I tell you so.

Dick. A critic, too! (*Whistles.*) Well done, old Square-toes. (*Aside.*)

Win. Lookye, young man, take notice of what I say: I made my own fortune, and I could do the same again. Wounds! if I were placed at the bottom of Chancery-lane, with a brush and black-bull, I'd make my own fortune again. You read Shakspeare! Get Cocker's Arithmetic; you may buy it for a shilling on any stall: best book that ever was written.

Dick. Pretty well, that; ingenious, faith! Egad, the old fellow has a pretty notion of letters. (*Aside.*)

Win. Can you tell how much is five-eighths of three-sixteenths of a pound? Five-eighths of three-sixteenths of a pound. Ay, ay, I see you're a blockhead. Lookye, young man, if you have a mind to thrive in this world, study figures, and make yourself useful—make yourself useful.

Dick. "How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable seem to me all the uses of this world!" (*Aside.*)

Win. Mind the scoundrel now.

Gar. Do, Mr. Wingate, let me speak to him—softly, softly: I'll touch him gently. Come, come, young man, lay aside this sulk'y humour, and speak as becomes a son.

Dick. "Oh, Jephtha, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!"

Win. What does the fellow say?

Gar. He relents, sir. Come, come, young man, he'll forgive.

Dick. "They fool me to the top of my bent." 'Gad, I'll un'em, to get rid of'em—"a truant disposition, good my lord." No, no, stay; that's not right—I have a better speech. (*Aside.*) "It is as you say; when we are sober, and reflect but ever so little on our follies, we are ashamed and sorry: and yet, the very next minute, we rush again into the very same absurdities."

Win. Well said, lad, well said. Mind me, friend; commanding our own passions, and artfully taking advantage of other people's, is the sure road to wealth. Death and fire! but I won't put myself in a passion; 'Tis my regard for you makes me speak;

and if I tell you you're a scoundrel, 'tis for your good.

Dick. Without doubt, sir. (*Stifling a laugh.*)

Win. If you want anything, you shall be provided. Have you any money in your pocket? Ha, ha! what a ridiculous nuff-skull you are now! Ha, ha! Come, here's some money for you. (*Pulls out his money and looks at it.*) I'll give it to you another time; and so you'll mind what I say to you, and make yourself useful for the future.

Dick. "Else, wherefore breathe I in a Christian land?"

Win. Zookers! you blockhead, you'd better stick to your business, than turn buffoon, and get truncheons broken upon your arm, and be tumbling upon carpets.

Dick. "I shall, in all my best, obey you," daddy.

Win. Very well, friend, very well said; you may do very well if you please; and so I'll say no more to you: but make yourself useful; and so now go and clean yourself, and make ready to go home to your business; and mind me, young man, let me see no more play-books, and let me never find that you wear a laced waistcoat; you scoundrel, what right have you to wear a laced waistcoat? I never wore a laced waistcoat! never wore one till I was forty. But I'll not put myself in a passion; go and change your dress, friend.

Dick. I shall, sir—

"I must be cruel only to be kind:

Thus bad begins, but worse remains behind."

Cocker's Arithmetic, sir?

Win. Ay, Cocker's Arithmetic—study figures, and they'll carry you through the world.

Dick. Yes, sir. (*Stifling a laugh.*) *Cocker's Arithmetic!* [*Exit.*]

Win. Let him mind me, friend Gargle, and I'll make a man of him.

Gar. Ay, sir, you know the world. The young man will do very well; I wish he were out of his time; he shall then have my daughter.

Win. Yes, but I'll touch the cash; he sha'n't finger it during my life. I must keep a tight hand over him. (*Goes to the door.*) Do ye hear, friend? Mind what I say, and go home to your business immediately. Friend Gargle, I'll make a man of him.

Re-enter DICK.

Dick. "Who call'd on Achmet? *Did not Barbarossa require me here?"

Win. What's the matter now? Barossa! Wounds! What's Barossa? Does the fellow call me names? What makes the blockhead stand in such confusion?

Dick. "That Barbarossa should suspect my truth!"

Win. The fellow's stark staring mad; get out of the room, you villain, get out of the room, (*Dick stands in a sullen mood.*)

Gar. Come, come, young man, everything is easy; don't spoil all again; go and change your dress, and come home to your business. Nay, nay, be ruled by me. (*Thrusts him off.*)

Win. I'm very peremptory, friend Gargle; if he vexes me once more, I'll have nothing to say to him. Well, but now I think of it, I have Cocker's Arithmetic below stairs in the counting-house; I'll step and get it for him, and so he shall take it home with him. Friend Gargle, your servant.

Gar. Mr. Wingate, a good evening to you. You'll send him home to his business?

Win. He shall follow you home directly. Five-eighths of three-sixteenths of a pound! multiply the numerator by the denominator! five times sixteen is ten times eight, ten times eight is eighty, and—a—a—carry one. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter DICK and SIMON.

Simon. Lord love ye, master; I'm so glad you're

come back. Come, we had as good 'e'en gang home to my master Gargle's.

Dick. No, no, Simon, stay a moment; this is but a scurvy coat I have on; and I know my father has always some jemmy thing lock'd up in his closet; I know his ways. He takes 'em in pawn; for he'll never part with a shilling without security.

Simon. Hush! he'll hear us; stay, I believe he's coming up stairs.

Dick. (*Goes to the door, and listens.*) No, no, no; he's going down, growling and grumbling; ay, say ye so? "Scoundrel, rascal! Let him bite the bridle. Six times twelve is seventy-two." All's safe, man; never fear him. Do you stand here; I shall despatch this business in a crack.

Simon. Blessings on him! what is he about now? Why, the door is locked, master.

Dick. Ay, but I can easily force the lock; you shall see me do it as well as any Sir John Brute of 'em all. "This right leg!"

Simon. Lord love you, master, that's not your right leg.

Dick. Pho! you fool, don't you know I'm drunk? "This right leg here is the best locksmith in England, so, so." (*Forces the door and goes in.*)

Simon. He's at his plays again. Odds my heart, he's a rare hand! he'll go through with it, I'll warrant him. The old codger must not smoke that I have any concern; I must be main cautious. Lord bless his heart, he's to teach me to act Scrub. He began with me long ago, and I got as far as the jesuit before a went out of town:—"Scrub!—Coming, sir. Lord, ma'am, I've a whole packet full of news; some say one thing, and some say another; but, for my part, ma'am, I believe he's a Jesuit, that's main pleasant; I believe he's a Jesuit."

Re-enter DICK.

Dick. "I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?"

Simon. No, master; we're all snug.

Dick. This coat will do charmingly. I have bilked the old fellow nicely. In a dark corner of his cabinet, I found this paper; what it is the light will show. (*Reads.*) "I promise to pay"—Ha!—"promise to pay to Mr. Moneytrap, or order, on demand,"—'Tis his hand; a note of his; yet more. "The sum of seven pounds, fourteen shillings, and seven-pence, value received, by me. London, this 15th June, 1755." 'Tis wanting what should follow; his name should follow; but 'tis off, because the note is paid.

Simon. Oh, lud! dear sir, you'll spoil all. I wish we were well out of the house. Our best way, master, is to make off directly.

Dick. I will, I will; but first help me on with this coat. Simon, you shall be my dresser; you'll be fine and happy behind the scenes.

Simon. Oh, lud! it will be main pleasant; I have been behind the screens in the country.

Dick. Have you, where!

Simon. Why, when I lived with the man that shewed wild beasts.

Dick. Harkye, Simon! when I am playing some deep tragedy, and "cleave the general ear with horrid speech," you must take out your white pocket handkerchief and cry bitterly. (*Teaches him.*)

Simon. But I haven't got a white pocket handkerchief.

Dick. Then I'll lend you mine. (*Pulls out a ragged one.*)

Simon. Thank ye, sir.

Dick. And when I am playing comedy, you must be ready to laugh your guts out, (*teaches him.*) for I shall be very pleasant. Tol-de-rol. (*Dances.*)

Simon. Never doubt me, sir.

Dick. Very well; now run down and open the street-door; I'll follow you in a crack.

Simon. I'm gone to serve you, master.

Dick. To serve thyself; for, lookye, Simon, when I am manager, claim thou of me the care of the wardrobe, with all those moveables, whereof the property-man now stands possessed.

Simon. Oh, lud! this is charming; hush! I am gone. *(Going.)*

Dick. Well, but harkye, Simon, come hither. "What money have you about you, master Matthew?"

Simon. But a tester, sir.

Dick. A tester! that's something of the least, master Matthew; let's see it.

Simon. You have had fifteen sixpences now.

Dick. Never mind that, I'll pay you all at my benefit.

Simon. I don't doubt that, master, but mum.

[Exit.]

Dick. Thus far we run before the wind. An apothecary! make an apothecary of me! What, cramp my genius over a pestle and mortar, or mew me up in a shop with an alligator stuffed, and a beggarly account of empty boxes! to be cullingsimples, and constantly adding to the bills of mortality! No, no; it will be much better to be pasted up in capitals: "The part of Romeo by a young gentleman who never appeared on any stage before!" My ambition fires at the thought. But, hold! mayn't I run some chance of failing in my attempt? hissed, pelted, laughed at; not admitted into the green-room. That will never do. Down, busy devil, down, down! Try it again: loved by the women, envied by the men, applauded by the pit, clapped by the gallery, admired by the boxes.—"Dear colonel, is not he a charming creature?"—"My lord, don't you like him of all things?"—"Makes love like an angel!"—"What an eye he has!"—"Fine legs!"—"I'll certainly go to his benefit." Celestial sounds! And then I'll get in with all the painters, and have myself put up in every print-shop, in the character of Macbeth: "This is a sorry sight." *(Stands in an attitude.)* In the character of Richard: "Give me another horse; bind up my wounds." This will do rarely. And then I have a chance of getting well married. Oh! glorious thought! By heaven, I will enjoy it, though but in fancy! But what's o'clock? It must be almost nine. I'll away at once: this is club-night. Egad! I'll go to them for awhile: the spouters are all met; little they think I'm in town; they'll be surprised to see me. Off I go, and then for my assignation with my master Gargle's daughter. Poor Charlotte! she's locked up, but I shall find means to settle matters for her escape. She has a pretty theatrical genius. If she fly to my arms like a hawk to its perch, it will be so rare an adventure, and so dramatic an incident!

"Limbs do your office, and support me well;
Bear me but to her, then fail me if you can."

[Exit.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Spouting Club.

The President and Members seated.

Pres. Come, we'll fill a measure the table round. "Now good digestion wait on appetite, and health on both." Come, give us a speech.

Scotch. Come, now, I'll gee you a touch of Moebeeth.

1 Mem. That will be rare. Come, let's have it.

Scotch. What dost leer at, mon? I have had muckle applause at Edinburgh, when I enacted in the Reegiceede, and now I intend to do Moebeeth; I seed the dagger yesterneet, and I thought I should ha' killed every one that came in my way.

Irish. Stand out of the way, lads, and you'll see me give a touch of Othollo, my dear. *(Takes a cork, burns it, and blacks his face.)* The devil burn the cork! it won't do it fast enough.

1 Mem. Here, here, I'll lend you a helping hand. *(Blacks him. Knocking at the door.)*

Pres. "Open locks, whoever knocks."

Enter DICK.

Dick. "How now, ye secret, black, and midnight hags! what is't ye do?"—"How fare the honest partners of my heart?"—"What bloody scene has Roscius now to act?"—"Arrah! my dear cousin Mackshane, won't you put a remembrance upon me?"

Irish. Ow! but is it mocking you are? Lookye! my dear, if you'd be taking me off—don't you call it taking off?—by my shoul, I'd be making you take yourself off. What, if you're for being obstoporous, I would not matter you three skips of a flea.

Dick. Nay, pr'ythee, no offence: I hope we shall be brother-players.

Irish. Ow! then we'd be very good friends; for you know two of a trade can never agree, my dear.

Dick. What do you intend to appear in?

Irish. Othollo, my dear; let me alone; you'll see how I'll bodder 'em; though, by my shoul, myself does not know but I'll be frightened, when everything is in a hubbub, and nothing to be heard but "Throw him over!"—"Over with him!"—"Off, off, off the stage!"—"Music!" Ow! but may be the dear craturs in the boxes will be looking at my legs; ow! to be'sure, the devil burn the look they'll give 'em!

Dick. I shall certainly laugh in the fellow's face. *(Aside.)*

Scotch. Stay till you hear me give a specimen of elocution.

Dick. What, with that impediment, sir?

Scotch. Impediment! what impediment? I do not leesp, do I? I do not squeet; I am well leem'd, am I not?

Irish. By my shoul, if you go to that, I am as well timbered myself as any of them, and shall make a figure in genteel and top comedy.

Scotch. I'll give you a specimen of Mockbeeth.

Irish. Make haste, then, and I'll begin Othollo.

Scotch. "Is this a dagger that I see before me," &c.

Irish. *(Collaring him.)* "Willain, be sure you prove my love a whore," &c. *(Another Member comes forward with his face powdered, and a pipe in his hand.)*

Mem. "I am thy father's spirit, Hamlet—"

Irish. You my father's spirit! My mother was a better man than ever you was.

Dick. Pho! pr'ythee: you are not fat enough for a ghost.

Mem. I intend to make my first appearance in it for all that; only I'm puzzled about one thing, I want to know, when I come on first, whether I should make a bow to the audience.

Watch. *(Behind.)* Past five o'clock, cloudy morning!

Dick. Eh! past five o'clock! 'sdeath! I shall miss my appointment with Charlotte. I have staid too long, and shall lose my proselyte. "Come, let us adjourn." "We'll scour the watch: confusion to morality! I wish the constable were married. Huza, huza!"

All. Huza, huza!

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A Street.

Enter DICK, with a lantern and ladder.

Dick. All's quiet here; the coast's clear; now for my adventure with Charlotte; this ladder will do rarely for the business, though it would be better if it were a ladder of ropes—but hold! have I not seen something like this on the stage? yes, I have, in some of the entertainments. Ay, "I do remember an apothecary, and hereabout he dwells:"—this is my master Gargle's; being dark, the beg-

gar's shop is shut. "What, ho! apothecary!"
 "But, soft! what light breaks through yonder window? It is the east, and Juliet is the sun. Arise, fair sun," &c.

CHARLOTTE appears at a window.

Char. Who's there? My Romeo?

Dick. "The same, my love, if it not thee displease."

Char. Hush! not so loud; you'll waken my father.

Dick. "Alas! there is more peril in thine eye."

Char. Nay, but, pr'ythee, now; I tell you, you'll spoil all. What made you stay so long?

Dick. "Chide not, my fair; but let the god of love laugh in thy eyes, and revel in thy heart."

Char. As I am a living soul, you'll ruin everything; be but quiet, and I'll come down to you. *(Going.)*

Dick. No, no; not so fast, Charlotte; let us act the garden-scene first.

Char. A fiddlestick for the garden-scene!

Dick. Nay, then, I'll act Ranger. "Up I go, neck or nothing."

Char. Dear heart, you're enough to frighten a body out of one's wits. Don't come up; I tell you there's no occasion for the ladder. I have settled everything with Simon, and he's to let me through the shop, when he opens it.

Dick. Well, but I tell you I would not give a farthing for it without the ladder, and so up I go; if it were as high as the garret, up I go.

Enter SIMON, at the door.

Simon. Sir, sir; madam, madam—

Dick. Pr'ythee, be quiet, Simon; I am ascending the high top-gallant of my joy.

Simon. An' please you, master, my young mistress may come through the shop; I am going to sweep it out, and she may escape that way fast enow.

Char. That will do purely; and so do you stay where you are, and prepare to receive me.

[Exit from above.]

Simon. Master, leave that there, to save me from being respected.

Dick. With all my heart, Simon.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. Oh lad! I'm frightened out of my wits: feel with what a pit-a-pat action my heart beats.

Dick. 'Tis an alarm to love: quick let me snatch thee to thy Romeo's arms, &c.

Watch. *(Behind.)* Past six o'clock, and a cloudy morning!

Dick. "Is that the raven's voice I hear?"

Simon. No, master, it's the watchman's.

Char. Dear heart, don't let us stand fooling here; as I live and breathe we shall both be taken. do, for heaven's sake, let us make our escape.

Dick. Yes, my dear Charlotte, we will go together.

Together to the theatre we'll go,
 There to their ravish'd eyes our skill we'll shew,
 And point new beauties—to the pit below.

[Exit with Charlotte.]

Simon. And I to sweep my master's shop will go.

[Exit into the house.]

Enter a Watchman.

Watch. Past six o'clock, and a cloudy morning. Heyday! what's here? A ladder at master Gargle's window! I must alarm the family. Ho! master Gargle! *(Knocks at the door.)*

Gar. *(Above.)* What's the matter? How comes this window to be open? Ha! a ladder! Who's below there?

Watch. I hope you an't robbed, master Gargle!

As I was going my rounds, I found your window open.

Gar. I fear this is some of that young dog's tricks. Take away the ladder; I must inquire into all this. *[Exit.]*

Re-enter SIMON, like Scrub.

Simon. "Thieves! murder! thieves! popery!"

Watch. What's the matter with the fellow?

• *Simon.* "Spare all I have, and take my life!"

Watch. Any mischief in the house?

Simon. "They broke in with fire and sword; they'll be here this minute."

Watch. What, are there thieves in the house?

Simon. "With sword and pistol, sir."

Watch. How many are there of them?

Simon. "Five-and-forty."

Watch. Nay, then, 'tis time for me to go. *[Exit.]*

Enter GARGLE.

Gar. Dear heart, dear heart! she's gone, she's gone! my daughter, my daughter! What's the fellow in such a fright for?

Simon. "Down on your knees; down on your marrow-bones, down on your marrow-bones."

• *Gar.* Get up, you fool, get up. Dear heart, I'm all in a fermentation.

Enter WINGATE.

Win. So, friend Gargle, you're up early, I see; nothing like rising early; nothing to be got by lying in bed, like a lumberly fellow. What's the matter with you? Ha, ha! You look frightened.

Gar. Oh! no wonder. My daughter, my daughter!

Win. Your daughter! What signifies a foolish girl!

Gar. Oh! dear heart, dear heart! out of the window—

Win. Fallen out of the window? Well, she was a woman, and 'tis no matter; if she's dead, she's provided for. Here, I found the book—could not meet with it last night—here it is, friend Gargle; take it, and give it to that scoundrel of a fellow.

Gar. Lord! sir, he's returned to his tricks.

Win. Returned to his tricks! What, broke loose again?

Gar. Ay, and carried off my daughter with him.

Win. Carried off your daughter! How did the rascal contrive that?

Gar. Oh! dear sir, the watch alarmed us awhile ago, and I found a ladder at the window; so, I suppose, my young madam made her escape that way.

Win. I'll never see that fellow's face.

Simon. Secrets, secrets!

Win. What, are you in the secret, friend?

Simon. To be sure, there be secrets in all families; but, for my part, I'll not speak a word, pro or con, till there's a peace.

Win. You won't speak, sirrah! I'll make you speak. Do you know nothing of this numskull?

Simon. Who, I, sir? He came home last night from your house, and went out again directly.

Win. You saw him, then?

Simon. Yes, sir; saw him, to be sure, sir; he made me open the shop-door for him; he stopped on the threshold and pointed at one of the clouds, and asked me if it was not like an ouzel.

Win. Like an ouzel! Wounds! what's an ouzel?

Gar. And the young dog came back in the dead of night to steal away my daughter.

Enter a Porter.

Win. Who are you, pray? What do you want?

Por. Is one Mr. Gargle here?

Gar. Yes. Who wants him?

Por. Here's a letter for you.

Gar. Let me see it. Oh, dear heart! (*Reads.*) "To Mr. Gargle, at the Pestle and Mortar." Slid-ikins! this is a letter from that unfortunate young fellow.

Win. Let me see it, Gargle. (*Reads.*) "To Mr. Gargle, &c.—Most potent, grave, and reverend doctor; my very noble and approved good master—That I have ta'en away your daughter, it is most true; true, I will marry her—'tis true, 'tis pity, and pity 'tis, 'tis true." What, in the name of common sense, is all this? "I have done your shop some service, and you know it; no more of that: yet I could wish, that at this time I had not been this thing." What can the fellow mean? "For time may have yet one fated hour to come, which, winged with liberty, may overtake occasion past." Overtake occasion past! no, no; time and tide wait for no man. "I expect redress from thy noble sorrows. Thine and my poor country's ever.—R. WINGATE." Mad as a March hare! I have done with him; let him stay till the shoe pinches, a crack-brained nunsull!

Por. An't please ye, sir, I fancy the gentleman is a little beside himself; he took hold on me here by the collar, and called me villain, and bid me prove his wife a whore. Lord help him, I never see'd the gentleman's spouse in my born days before.

Gar. Is she with him now?

Por. I believe so; there's a likely young woman with him, all in tears.

Gar. My daughter, to be sure.

Por. I fancy, master, the gentleman's under troubles. I brought it from a spunging-house.

Win. From a spunging-house?

Por. Yes, sir, in Gray's-inn-lane.

Win. Let him lie there, let him lie there; I am glad of it.

Gar. Do, my dear sir, let us step to him.

Win. No, not I; let him stay there. This it is to have a genius. Ha, ha! A genius! Ha, ha! A genius is a fine thing, indeed! Ha, ha! [*Exit.*]

Gar. Poor man! he has certainly a fever on his spirits. Do you step in with me, honest man, till I slip on my coat, and then I'll go after this unfortunate boy.

Por. Yes, sir; 'tis in Gray's inn-lane. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—A Spunging-house.

DICK and BAILEY discovered at a table, and **CHARLOTTE** sitting in a disconsolate manner by him.

Bail. Here's my service to you, young gentleman. Don't be uneasy; the debt is not much. Why do you look so sad?

Dick. Because captivity has robbed me of a just and dear diversion.

Bail. Never look sulky at me; I never use anybody ill. Come, it has been many a good man's lot; here's my service to you: but we've no liquor; come, we'll have t'other howl.

Dick. "I've now not fifty ducats in the world, yet still I am in love, and pleased with ruin."

Bail. What do you say? You've fifty shillings, I hope?

Dick. Now, thank heaven, I'm not worth a groat.

Bail. Then there's no credit here, I can tell you that; you must get bail, or go to Newgate. Who, do you think, is to pay house-rent for you? Such poverty-struck devils as you sha'n't stay in my house. You shall go to quod, I can tell you that. (*A knocking at the door.*) Coming, coming! I am coming. I shall lodge you in Newgate, I promise you, before night. Not worth a groat! You're a fine fellow to stay in a man's house. You shall go to quod. [*Exit.*]

Dick. Come, clear up, Charlotte; never mind

this. Come, now, let us act the prison-scene in the Mourning Bride.

Char. How can you think of acting speeches when we're in such distress?

Dick. Nay, but, my dear angel—

Enter WINGATE and GARGLE.

Come, now, we'll practice an attitude. How many of 'em have you?

Char. Let me see: one, two, three—and then, in the fourth act, and then—Oh, gemini! I have ten, at least.

Dick. That will do swimmingly. I've a round dozen myself. Come, now begin; you fancy me dand, and I think the same of you. Now mind. (*They stand in attitudes.*)

Win. Only mind the villain. (*Apart to Gargle.*)

Dick. "Oh! thou soft fleeting form of Linda-mira!"

Char. "Illusive shade of my beloved lord!"

Dick. "She lives, she speaks, and we shall still be happy!"

Win. You lie, you villain, you sha'n't be happy. (*Knocks him down.*)

Dick. (*On the ground.*) "Perdition catch your arm, the chance is thine!"

Gar. So, my young madam, I have found you again.

Dick. "Capulet, forbear; Paris, let loose your hold. She is my wife; our hearts are twined together."

Win. Sirrah! villain! I'll break every bone in your body. (*Strikes him.*)

Dick. "Parents have flinty hearts; no tears can move 'em: children must be wretched."

Win. Get off the ground, you villain; get off the ground.

Dick. 'Tis a pity there are no scene-drawers to lift me.

Win. 'Tis mighty well, young man! Zookers! I made my own fortune; and I'll take a boy out of the Blue-coat-hospital, and give him all I have. Lookye here, friend Gargle, you know I'm not a hard-hearted man. The scoundrel, you know, has robbed me; so, d'ye see? I won't hang him; I'll only transport the fellow: and so, Mr. Catchpole, you may take him to Newgate.

Gar. Wel' but, dear sir, you know I always intended to marry my daughter into your family; and if you let the young man be ruined, my money must all go into another channel.

Win. How's that? Into another channel! Must not lose the handling of his money. (*Aside.*) Why, I told you, friend Gargle, I'm not a hard-hearted man. If the blockhead would but get as many crabbed, physical words from Hypocrites and Allen, as he has from his nonsensical trumpery—ha, ha! I don't know, between you and I, but he might pass for a very good physician.

Dick. "And must I leave thee, Juliet?"

Char. Nay, but, pr'ythee, now, have done with your speeches. You see we are brought to the last distress, and so you had better make it up. (*Apart to Dick.*)

Dick. Why, for your sake, my dear, I don't care if I do. (*Apart.*) Sir, you shall find, for the future, that we'll both endeavour to give you all the satisfaction in our power.

Win. Very well, that's right.

Dick. And since we don't go on the stage, 'tis some comfort that the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players.

Some play the upper, some the under parts,

And most assume what's foreign to their hearts;

Thus life is but a tragi-comic jest,

And all is farce and mummery at best. [*Exeunt.*]

THE TAILORS;

OR, A TRAGEDY FOR WARM WEATHER:

A BURLESQUE TRAGEDY, IN THREE ACTS.



Act III — Scene 5.

CHARACTERS.

FRANCISCO
CAMPBELLO
PEARCLY
HAGGLESTON
REGNIADES
ABRAHAMIDES
BERNARDO

CHRISTOPHORIDES
HUMPHRYMINOS
BARTHOLOMEUS
ISAACOS
JACKIDES
ZACHARIDES
RALPHO

TIMOTHEUS
PHILOPPOMENOS
DOROTHEA
TITTILLINDA
TINDERELLA
MOPPERELLA
BLOUSIDORA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Tailor's Work-Shop.

ABRAHAMIDES discovered.

Enter BERNARDO and BARTHOLOMEUS.

Abr. Welcome, Bernardo! Now, what say our friends?

Bern. Great Abrahamides, the chief of all,
Who led th' embattled tailors first to war,
Success attends you to your utmost wish:
Behold the brave Bartholomew is come,
Willing to hear, and aid your utmost aim.

Abr. His mein is noble, and bespeaks the tailor;
Not of the dunghill and degenerate race,
But such as the brave Elliot led to battle.
Will he not bend before a master's frown?
Or flow dissolving in a tankard's tears?

Bern. Injurious thought!

Bart. To ease you of your fears,
I will retire; you'll one day know me better.

Abr. Forgive me, stranger, if, in caution old,
I seem to trust appearance ev'n like thine.
Whence and what art thou? [breath;

Bart. In Wapping's distant realm I drew my
Where long my father held his peaceful sway.
Fir'd with the love of liberty and beer,
Urg'd by Bernardo's friendship, I am come
To offer aid: if aid, so mean as mine,
Can aught avail a cause so great, so just!

Abr. Say, who thy sire?

Bart. The old Bartholomew.

Abr. Thrice happy omen! Welcome to my arms,
Thou generous son of that brave man I lov'd:
We oft in early youth together work'd,
On the same board together cross-legg'd sat;
In summer cucumbers, in winter cabbages,
Together eat. Oft at the skittle-ground—

Bern. Consider, sir, this time admits no pause
For friendship's softer ties: One hour, perhaps,
Decides our utmost fate! [youth,

Abr. Well urg'd, Bernardo. Say, thou generous
How stands thy state? speak, if in peace or war?

Bart. In peace profound with all the neighbouring
Nor that alone; for amity's strict league [chiefs.
Unites us all. Far on the adverse coast,
As far as Redriff's ample range extends,
Great Christophorides resides in state.
While northward, to Whitechapel's awful mount,
The great Humphryminos, renown'd in arms,
Leads the tremendous sons of Spitalfields.

Bern. What are your numbers, and how dis-
ciple'd? [arms.

Bart. Full fifteen hundred men complete in
Abr. A goodly band! Now, gallant stranger,
By good intelligence I'm well inform'd, [hear!
The tyrant masters meet in close divan,
At the Five Bells. Part of their dark design
Is known, the rest conceal'd: But, I've ta'en care
To place Isaacos, with a chosen band,

Instructed to discover, or disturb
Their inmost councils from their destin'd aim:
Be it thy care to haste Humphryminos
And Christophorides to this night's council;
While each subaltern chief prepares the men.

Bart. I will, brave chief. Where is the council held? [yard.]

Abr. Why, at the Orange-tree, in White-hart-
Bart. 'Till then, farewell!

Abr. Nay, quick! be Mercury;
Set feathers to thy heels, and fly like thought,
From them, to me again!

Bart. The spirit of the time shall teach me speed. [Exit.]

Bern. Spoke like a sprightly tailor!

Abr. A gallant youth!

Bernardo, ere the midnight clock has struck,
Be thou with me; some doubts perplex my breast
Which this night's council must or clear or cure.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—An Apartment in Francisco's house.

Enter FRANCISCO and DOROTHEA.

Dor. Francisco, stay! unkind Francisco, stay!
Nor let thy Dorothea plead in vain:
Consider, love, thy swaddled legs, thy gout, and
all thy pains.

Fran. Cease, Dorothea, to perplex my breast
With idle fears: Whene'er my duty calls, [me:
Thou know'st, nor gout, nor rheumatism can stop
Cease then to ask for what I must deny.

Dor. True, I'm a woman; therefore full of fear;
But, tho' my body's weak, my mind is noble,
For that is full of thee: On thee I gaze,
Watch every virtue, catch the kindling flame!
Cease then to tax thy Dorothea's heart
With idle fears; those fears are all for thee!
Oh, but this night absent thyself from council,
And Dorothea then will ask no more!

Fran. It cannot, must not be.

Dor. Cannot? must not?

Fran. Ah, no!

Dor. And yet there was a time, my Franky,
When Dolly might obtain a greater suit:
If she but look'd as if she had a want,
Thy penetrating eyes, and generous heart,
Watch'd every look, prevented every wish:
There was a time, when in the afternoon,
As you prepar'd to take your usual nap,
No pillow pleas'd but Dorothea's breast;
When to the last your eyes would gaze on her,
'Till poppy sleep oppress'd them; she with joy
Strok'd thy lank cheeks, and lull'd thy soul to rest:
But, ah! that time (I know not why) is past.

Fran. Oh, peace! thou fair upbraider, chide no
more! [thee;

Thou know'st my heart still glows with fondness for
But, go I must: The fate of all the trade
Depends on this night's council; 'tis decisive:
Campbello, the great father of the trade,
With his own hand hath summon'd. Absence now
Would cast reproach on all my former fame!

Dor. Oh! didst thou know but all, thou would'st

Fran. What means my love? [not go.]

Dor. Alas! I fear to tell.

Fran. Keep me not on the rack! Perplex no
But tell me all! [more,

Dor. Wilt thou not chide me then?

Fran. Chide thee, my love?

Dor. Oh! smooth that angry brow,
I'll tell thee all. Last night, I had a dream!

Fran. A dream! a dream!

Dor. Nay, hear me, ere you blame!

Methought you took me in a one-horse chaise,
Unto the Star and Garter, Richmond-hill.
Placid and pleas'd, we had a charming ride:
But, while we gaz'd on the rich prospect round,
Sudden, methought, I stumbled; anxious fear

Urg'd me to catch at thee—at thee, my love,
My best support—but thou, alas! wert gone!

When, lo! far off, the bottom of the hill,
I saw thee rising from the watry Thames,
All dripping wet! with eager haste I ran:
As I drew nigh, what woras can paint my fears,
When I beheld blood trickling down thy face:
At that sad sight, I wak'd with horror!

Fran. Wet?

Dor. Dripping wet!

Fran. And bloody too?

Dor. All a gore blood! and from that hour to this,
Remembrance chills me with the very thought!

Fran. Trust me, my love, my heart recoils with
fear!

Dor. Oh, seize the happy omen! stay at home!
I'll send a message, that you're sick in bed.

Fan. What, for a dream? no; it shall ne'er be
said,

A dream could awe a master-tailor's soul!
Besides, inform me, what's this dream to me,
More than the world in general?

Dor. Gallant man! [Fran. going.)

Yet, stay, Francisco, stay!

Fran. Thou plead'st in vain!

How would St. Clement's sons, renown'd in art,
And their proud dames, (whose mantuas sweep the
ground,

With heads made up of wool, and rumps of cork)
Attain the lustre of Francisco's name,
Should it be known, a dream could e'er deter
Him from his duty! no; come what come may,
I'm fix'd to go; for 'tis our council-day.

Dor. Oh, rigid virtue! more than stoic pride!
Since then thou wilt go, leave not thy cloak behind:
Screen thy lov'd self, thy Dolly's dearer half,
From the dank dew, and each unkindly fog:
Sure rigid honour does not that forbid.

Fran. In that, and every thing that's free from
Francisco lives but to oblige his Dolly. [shame,

Dor. 'Tis kindly said! Who waits without?
come in!

Enter MOPPERELLA.

Forth from the clothes-press, fetch the red roqueleau.
[Mopperella goes out, and returns with a roqueleau.)

And now, one parting kiss! one more! farewell!
Remember well—Hold, hold, my boding heart!
Whate'er Francisco's fate, his Dolly suffers!

Oh, my Francisco!

Fran. Oh, my Dorothea! [Exeunt severally.]

SCENE III.—A Room at the Five Bells.

CAMPBELLO, HAGGLESTONON, PEARCY, FRAN-
CISCO, REGNIADES, &c. in council.

Camp. My friends, a set of worthy men you are,
Prudent, and just, and careful for the trade.
In various meetings, and with long debate,
With no small toil, at length it was resolv'd,
This night's conclusive meeting crowns the whole:
Whether by open war, or covert guile,
We now debate: Who can advise, may speak!

Hag. 'Tis true, this point demands our utmost
And since no generous usage can restrain [care;
Those sons of riot, harsher means be tried!
For if their insults you unpunish'd bear,
A train of horrid ills will soon ensue,
Even to the ruin of our antique trade.

Therefore, by my advice, be forthwith rais'd
A large subscription, plac'd in proper hands,
Which may let loose the merciless stern law
To hunt the slaves, like hell-hounds, thro' the
world! [plan.]

Pear. Much I approve great Hagglestonon's
United firmly, we have nought to fear:
But if in our own body should be found
Some hollow bosoms, men who, void of shame,
Prefer ignoble ease to glorious toil,

And manly with their rude demands comply;
Should there be such (as worthy cause I have
To fear there are) where is your remedy?
To what end serves the patriot's honest toil,
If silken slaves of ease thus bar success?
Ills such as these who could prevent or cure?

Reg. That can I.

Sage Latitatos, learned in the law,
With much sound wisdom prov'd, that not alone
The rebels who demand, but all who give
More than the stated price assign'd by law,
Are liable to prosecution deep.
Be it thy care, oh, father of the trade!
Thou sage Campbello, with thy utmost strength
And speed, to forward Hagglestonon's plan:
Spare no offender! then we soon shall know
Our friends from foes; as all the wise prefer
An avow'd enemy to a doubtful friend.

Fran. Rude am I in speech, and little skill'd
In soft persuasive arts; but yet I trust
By facts my injur'd character to save.
Nor need I now relate, oh, tailors here,
The services which I have done the trade;
They are all known; arts such as these I leave
To them, who think that boasting gives them honour.
Yet some, in justice to myself, I must—
When, at the time of general mourning, all
To Bedfordbury, and to White-hart-yard,
Straight ran in crowds, with haste to intercept
Each other's men, submitting to their terms,
Stepp'd not I forth, and check'd the rude barbarians?
Who was it first propos'd this very plan?
Was that the action of a doubtful friend?
Who call'd the general meeting in the Strand?
Ye came, 'tis true; but what did ye effect?
Ye spent the time in noisy vain debates.
Seeing you wavering, and irresolute,
With honest scorn, I cater'd for myself:
What could I do? Say, if a baron sends
To me for cloaths, what, must I leave him clothless?
Or, if a duke, who pays me nobly, sends
For a rich birth-day suit, what, must I say
I can't afford to pay my journeymen?
Oh, inconsiderate, ungrateful men!
Little I thought, that after all my toils,
From early youth down to decrepid age,
Reproach should ever stain my honest fame;
Less, it should come from Percy's slippant tongue.
'Tis true, I gave more than the law allows;
So have you all: if you call that a crime,
From guilt like that not even Percy's free.

Pear. Who dares name guilt, and with a Percy's name?

Fran. That dare I!

Pear. You know your age protects you;
Your safety else you would not hazard thus.

Fran. Safety from thee?

Camp. Hold, hold, my noble friends!
Restrain your fire, check this impetuous rage,
Nor let these sparks be kindled into flame.
Percy, be dumb, and learn respect to age!
Thy worth, Francisco, still will be remember'd,
Long as the tailor's business has a being.
Think not, thou venerable man, that words,
Hastily dropp'd in council, point at thee;
For whosoever strives to wrong thy fame,
Will find the dart recoil upon himself. [fame,

Reg. Ere I would wrong the great Francisco's
May my right-hand forget to hold the needle!
Whate'er I spoke was for the common good:
The ill was general, fatal the effect.
Which to prevent was the utmost of my aim.

Pear. Forgive me, sage Francisco, if rash youth
Forget respect, so due to age like thine.

Fran. Oh, great Regniades, and Percy too,
Forgive my warmth, if, when my fame's attack'd,
My swelling heart e'en bursts with indignation!
For what is dearer to a tailor's soul?

Acknowledgment like this restores my love:

I am no Scythian, nurs'd with tiger's milk,
But yield with joy to friendship's softer tie.

Camp. Ay, this is right! Say, shall I put the question?

Is it resolv'd, that one and all unite?

Omnos. All, all; all nine, as but one man.

Camp. Well have ye done, well ended long desynod of tailors, like to what you are! [bates,
Yet, ere we part—
(A noise is heard, of breaking windows and shouting.)

Enter Waiter.

Waiter. Haste, gentlemen! my worthy masters,
For all the journeymen are up in arms, [ran!
Caps, hats, and brick-bats fly about the street,
And knock down every master that they meet!

[Exit.

SCENE IV.—A Street.

Enter ABRAHAMIDES solus.

Ab. With what unequal tempers are we form'd!
What tho' adorn'd with splendour, arm'd with
Obedient tailors tremble at my nod; [power,
Tho' at each club the chair of honour's plac'd
For me alone; what tho' on every slate,
My name stands foremost—still I am unhappy:
I groan beneath the complicated pangs
Of love and of ambition! Ye jarring pair,
Why do you join to rack a heart like mine?
Yet why should love be e'er denied the brave?
Is there no way to reap the fruit of both?
Conceal my love, ambition yet may thrive:
Come, plausible Prudence, neither vice nor virtue,
Yet worth them all; pale-fac'd Hypocrisy,
Lend thy smooth smile to hide my close design:
And, friendly Caution, with thy timid eye,
Watch, lest some spy should dog me to my haunt. [Exit.

SCENE V.—Tittillinda's Lodgings.

Enter TITTILLINDA and BLOUSIDORA.

Titt. Still must I mourn, for ever mourn my fate,
Oppress'd by fortune, and a slave to love!
Oh, would but fortune smile, love yet might bless
Our future days, and Abrahamides
Fill these lov'd arms, with joys unutterable.
Instead of that—

Blous. Torment thyself no more!
Think what you are, your present happiness;
Great Abrahamides is still thy slave.

Titt. In vain you urge me to forget my woes.

Blous. How many ladies, in your situation,
Would think themselves completely blest to see
An Abrahamides sigh at their feet;
One who, by general voice of all the Flints,
From his sole merit was elected chief.

Titt. True, Blousidora, merit such as his
Might gratify a woman's utmost pride:
Great is his merit; greater still his love.
Sure I shall ne'er forget that fatal day,
When at the Court of Conscience first we met:
Urg'd by hard creditors, oppress'd by foes,
Obedient to the summons there I came;
Full thirty shillings was the vast, vast debt:
Friendless, unknowing in the quirks of law,
While the brow-beating justices insult,
Forth from the crowd there stepp'd a gallant youth,
Whose form might claim attention even from queens!
He ask'd the sum; then fifteen shillings paid,
(His whole week's wages) and subscrib'd a note,
By weekly payments to discharge the rest.

Blous. Oh, gracious youth! But tell me, hapless
Was he till then unknown? [fair,

Titt. His name, his form,
'Till that blest hour, were utterly unknown.
Forth from the wond'ring crowd he led me home;
Then order'd dinner, and some brandy-punch;
Enquir'd my name, my state, sooth'd all my griefs
Then urg'd his passion in so soft a strain!

What could I do? my Blousidora, say!
Could I refuse the gentle generous youth?

Blous. While he is faithful, why should you complain?

Titt. Have I not cause? my Blousidora, say!
While cruel fortune frowns, he can't support me;
My father's doors are ever shut against me:
Whene'er that thought occurs, my spirits sink,
And my whole soul goes forth in sighs and tears!

(*Weeps.*)
[*Exit.*]

Blous. Here comes the chief.

Enter ABRAHAMIDES.

Ab. In tears, my Tittillinda?
Lift up thine eyes, and see who comes to cheer thee.

Titt. My Abrahamides!

Ab. Yes, Tittillinda,
Thy faithful Abrahamides is come,
To sooth thy sorrows, cheer thy drooping spirits.
But why these tears? why, with heart-rending sighs,
Heaves thy sad bosom? Is there aught on earth,
Within my power, I would not do to serve thee?
Titt. Oh, generous youth!

Ab. Trust me, my love, I fear'd
Some rude unfeeling bailiff was the cause
Of thy sad tears. But, most of all I fear'd,
You pin'd for pleasures I could not afford!

Titt. Oh, no! all pleasures centre in thy arms.
I envy not the fair, whose happier fate
Nightly affords to go to Sadler's Wells;
Or to White-Conduit-house, where butter'd loaves
Assuage their hunger; and to cool their thirst,
Sweet-sliding syllabub affords its aid:

Free be their joys, joys once, alas, my own!
Nor yet unhappy Tittillinda's fate,
While Abrahamides continues love.

Ab. Oh, my soul's joy, if Fortune crown our arms,
My Tittillinda shall no longer mourn:
A few short hours will soon decide our fate.
When next we meet, I'll raise thee to an height,
Shall gather all thy gazing neighbours round,
To wonder who the devil plac'd thee there.
But if we ne'er meet more—

Titt. What means my love?

Ab. Be ignorant, till thou applaud'st the deed.

Titt. I seek to know no more than you reveal.
Yet, ere thou goest, drink some generous punch,
To cheer thy drooping soul.

Ab. Short be our joys,
Whene'er our duty calls. But come, my love;
If Fate but favour us, our future days
Shall roll in peace, in luxury, and ease, [pease.]
And all be crown'd with punch, with pork, with }
}

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Francisco's house.*

Enter DOROTHEA and MOPPERELLA.

Mop. Cease, my dear mistress, cease these
fruitless tears,
Nor let the canker grief destroy thy beauty.
My master never later stays than ten,
But he sends word.

Dor. Oh, you mistake me quite!
Far other sorrows load my throbbing breast.

Mop. What other sorrows can disturb you now?
I'm sure no woman in the parish goes
Or better fed, or better drest than thou,
Or takes more pleasure in a handsome way.

Dor. Happiest of tailors' ladies sure am I;
Ungrateful were it to deny the truth.

'Tis true, Francisco drives but with one horse,
Nor envy I those ladies drive with two;—
But, Mopperella, as you talk of eating,
Say, is the sparrow-grass got ready yet?

Mop. The water's boiling, and the toast is made;
But Betty says she will not put the grass
Into the saucepan, till my master comes.

Dor. Betty is careful.

Mop. Then, dear madam, say,
Since you confess that you enjoy all pleasure,
A country-house, and town, a one-horse chaise,
White Conduit-house, and every joy beside,
Why do you grieve thus?

Dor. True, my Mopperella,
I have a country-house in Lambeth-Marsh,
Genteelly furnish'd; nor need fear, when drest,
The envious glance of Madam Sarcenet's eye:
Yet, for all this, I am unhappy still.

I know not why—but, ah! my boding heart
Presages ill from this night's fatal council. [out?]

Mop. What, do you grieve because my master's
Oh, grieve no more; he will be back to supper.

Madam. was I in your place, I protest,
I should be merry as a gig all day.

Dor. Thou hast no husband, Moppy! if thou hadst,
Thou wouldst not prattle at this idle rate:

How can a single woman ever feel
Those little fears, that nice uneasiness,
Which go distinguish every prudent wife?

Mop. Madam, tho' single, yet I can pronounce,
If I was married, I should love my husband;

But tho' I lov'd him, yet I would not fret

When he was out—unless he stay'd all night.

Dor. Stay out all night? Hold your irreverent
tongue! (*Knocking.*)

Your master comes! I know his knock—begone!
Bid Betty hasten supper: Well I know,
When he returns, he's hungry and fatigu'd,

*Enter FRANCISCO with his head broken, led by a
Waiter.*

Fran. Here, Robin, here's a tester!

Dor. What do I see!

Oh, speak, Francisco! ease me of my fears!

Fran. Be not alarm'd, my love; but lend thy arm,
To prop my feeble steps.

Dor. Run for a surgeon!

Fran. Hast thou no sticking-plaster here my love?

Dor. I have, my love; and Hungry water too.

How art thou now?

Fran. Better; much better, love;

Only a little faint with loss of blood.

Dor. No wonder, love: Did'st thou not faint
before? [ness!]

Fran. A tailor's soul bears all with equal firm-

Dor. But say, my love, how hap'd this dire
misadventure!

Fran. Why, in the middle of our long debate,
The journeymen, assembled all in arms,
With stones broke every window: Then, whilst I
Entleavour'd to oppose (the rest being old)

Myself alone amidst an host of foes,
Oppress'd by numbers, senseless fell to earth,

Till Robin pick'd me up, and led me home.

Dor. Where was thy Dolly then, to bind thy head?
But now my dream is so, my fears are gone!

Why wouldst thou go, against thy Dolly's warning?

Fran. Who can control his fate? All must submit;

Monarchs, and tailors, must submit to fate.

Dor. That's true. Then let me put thee now to bed,
And rest, perhaps, will heal thy smarting wounds.

Fran. I will; and in the morning soon will get
A judge's warrant for that rascal Isaac.

Dor. Isaac? who's he?

Fran. Why, our late foreman; he

Was at her head.

Dor. Then trounce him well, my love!

But come, get thee to bed; and then—

Fran. What then?

Dor. I'll make my love some whey.

Fran. And so you may. (*Fran. is led out.*)

Dorothea alone.

For Isaac get a warrant? I'm undone!
What can I do? Ha! when he's fast asleep,

I'll send for Isaac, give him instant notice,
That he may shun the danger. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—*An Antichamber and Ale-house.*

ABRAHAMIDES and BERNARDO meeting.

Abr. Oh, faithful friend, sole partner of my coun-
Thy early industry proclaims thy heart. [cilia,

Bern. None yet arriv'd? what means this dull
delay? [come,

Abr. 'Tis yet too soon; therefore I bid thee
To share the troubles that disturb my breast.

Bern. Is this a time, oh, chief, to harbour fear,
When our long-labour'd scheme is near its birth?

Abr. Mistake me not: So cold a guest as fear
Ne'er found admittance into this firm breast.
I fear and doubt of others.

Bern. Who? explain! [meetings,

Abr. Hast thou not mark'd, in all our various
Some fearful hearts, still wavering and weak!

Bern. Whom do you mean?

Abr. Pale Zachariades,
Envious Phillippomenos, I fear;
Ralpho's cold heart; Timotheus' addle brain!

Bern. Why do you doubt them?

Abr. Oh, I know them well:

On the same board together oft we've work'd;
Oft have I seen them with an abject eye,
Tremble before the tyrant master's frown,
And crouch beneath the foreman's weak dominion.

Bern. If thus you doubt, 'twere better to prevent
The ills you fear, than wait in vain their cure.

Abr. That's my design.

Bern. Shall I secure them, then?

Abr. Not yet, with open force: With deeper art,
We'll make their fears the rulers of their fate.
Involv'd in guilt, they'll then have no retreat,
But must go forward. This night's hostile act
(I know Isaacos will do his duty)
Commences war; no hopes of peace remain.

Bern. Have you yet heard from great Isaacos?

Abr. Yes, my Bernardo, that the blow is struck:
That done, they all dispers'd, but will attend
Their several duties here. In the mean time,
Be it thy care to watch those heartless Dungs;
Inform the leaders of the eastern climes,
Redriff, and Wapping, of our honest fears,
That when we've singled out these half-made souls,
Should we not bring them to the paths of honour,
Then, like a limb diseas'd, we'll lop them off.

Bern. Bravely resolv'd, my chief. But sure 'tis
That we repair to council. [time

Abr. Let's go in. [Exit.

SCENE III.—*The Club-Room.*

BERNARDO, CHRISTOPHORIDES, HUMPHRYMI-
NOS, BARTHOLOMEUS, ZACHARIADES, PHILIP-
POMENOS, and RALPHO, in council; ABRAHA-
MIDES in the chair.

Abr. Oh, gallant men, chief pillars of the trade!
For the last time we meet to fix the plan
Of future action. 'Tis well known to all,
Some timid Dungs (unworthy of the name
Alike of tailor or of man, from whom
Opprobrious provcats rise to hurt our fame)
Meanly descend to work for half-a-crown.
Whilst this continues, all our schemes are vain:
What's to be done?

Hum. Great Abrahamides,
Permit a man, unskill'd in council sage,
Yet from plain facts, that have been, thence conclude
What may be. When the weaving sons of silk,
Oppress'd with debts and hunger, rose in arms,
They had visions then, as we have now:
What did they do? where'er they found a man
Doubting or falt'ring, him they strait compell'd:
Hence, soon a formidable band arose,
And all the sister trades were for'd to join.
Lo! their example points us out the way. [found

Bart. And since, among such numbers, will be
Some dastard Dungs, let chosen bands be plac'd

To storm the masters' houses where they work;
And at the midnight hour, when sunk in sleep,
Break all their windows, frighten all their wives;
While others shall assault each house of call,
Smash all their slates, and plunder every box:
'Till by experience, they are taught to know
No private safety can depend on aught
But on the common good. We want not men,
Nor chiefs to lead them.

Zach. Measures such as these,
Could we insure success, would gain our ends.
The Dungs are numerous, and, tho' so base
To dread the noble toil of glorious war,
Yet that same baseness may defeat our valour.
It is well known, before these fatal broils,
The Flints and Dungs in friendly intercourse
Together work'd, together friendly drank;
Hence all are known, his name, his habitation,
His house of haunt, and each particular:
Should we proceed to force, as is advis'd,
With informations they would straight repair
To Sir John Fielding; whose fierce myrmidons,
At unexpected moments, might entrap
Singly our chiefs, and throw them into gaol.

Bern. And if they do, they cannot hang us, sure!
Breaking of windows is not capital.

Zach. But plundering boxes is.

Bern. That we'll avoid.

Zach. Think on the Riot Act.

Bern. Ere that is read,

All our swift-footed Flints, as swift as ducks,
Will soon elude their search.

Zach. But when asleep,
Can they escape? may they not then be ta'en?

Bern. Suppose they are, is there a man so base,
Who fears for such a cause, to live in gaol,
When from each box they will be well supplied
With beef, with cabbage, cucumbers, and porter.
Fear, more than wisdom, dictates gentler means.

Abr. Bernardo, you forget!

Bern. I stand reprov'd. [knows
Zach. Fear! fear, Bernardo! sure he but little
Firm Zachariades, who doubts his courage.

Bern. Curs'd be the man who doubts it! Well I
Thro' every purlieu of long Drury-lane, [know,
And Covent-garden, has thy prowess shone;
And White-hart-yard is wanton at thy name,
Nor is thy matchless hardness unknown;
For, while the slaves of ease repose on down,
Oft on the flinty pavement hast thou laid,
Hush'd by the murmuring kennel to thy slumbers.
I meant not to reproach, but only raise
Thy well-known courage to support our cause.

Phil. His courage none can doubt; and since all
here

Are free, with freedom will I speak my mind:
I own I think with Zachariades,
That gentler means at first should be propos'd,
To win as friends, rather than treat as foes.

Chris. No generous means will ever win a Dung;
Their sordid souls are lost to every sense
Of kindness, or of honour; force alone
Can e'er prevail on them. Ye have my voice.

Enter ISAACOS.

Abr. Welcome, Isaacos! what's the news with
thee?

Isaacos. At first I strove with subtle art to gain
Full information of their dark design;
Sounded the waiters; but I found it vain,
For their own pretences secur'd the door:
That known, resolv'd at last to give no time
For future schemes, my troops I quickly form'd,
And in an instant, at the signal given,
A cloud of brick-bats darken'd all the air,
Smash'd every window, deafen'd every ear:
Sudden they gaz'd; at the next onset fled,
Rout upon rout, confusion worse confounded!
Hats, wigs, and bottles, pipes and tailors, lay

In one promiscuous carnage! Soon all fled,
Save those whom wounds or gouty limbs detain'd.
Great Hagglestonon, prostrate on the earth—

Abr. White-liver'd tailor!

There let him lie, and be the earth on him!

Isaacos. With him, Regniades, Francisco, fell.
This done, we all dispers'd, and all are safe.

Abr. Conduct like this deserves our public thanks.

Omnes. To great Isaacos our thanks be paid!

Isaacos. Oh, you o'er-rate my services too much;
All I can boast, is to have done my duty.

Abr. Thus, by one brave and daring bright example,

You see how vigour will insure success:

And, Zachariades, I trust, will own,

On that alone depends our future hope.

Zach. I meant not to oppose the public voice,
But freely gave my thoughts.

Abr. Then we conclude,

With hostile vigour to compel the Dungs.

All. All; all resolve!

Abr. In Covent-garden, ere to-morrow's dawn,
We'll muster all our troops; there let each chief
Attend for further orders. Good night to all!

[*Exeunt all but Abr. and Bern.*]

Abr. What think'st thou now, Bernardo? Didst thou mark

The pallid Dungs?

Bern. I did; and saw that fear

Shrank their cold hearts, and wither'd every nerve.

Abr. They have not hearts to enter into guilt;

Them I can never trust: some safer way

Must, then, be found to rid us of our fears.

Bern. Ay; but what way?

Abr. Put powder in their drink.

Bern. What dost thou mean? gunpowder?

Abr. No, nor James's powder:—excruciating jalap!

Bern. Ha! jalap! [bowels,

Abr. Gripe-giving Mercury will reach their
And render them unfit for active deeds.

Bern. True; that will do. Where is it to be got?

Abr. Know'st thou no lean apothecary?

Bern. No.

Abr. Then buy it at a common chemist's shop.

Bern. If we should give too much?

What if the powder should not work at all?

Abr. Suppose it should not?

Hast thou, Bernardo, gone with me so far,

Trod every step, and shar'd in every honour,

And start'st thou at a paltry accident,

Which may or may not happen?

Bern. Doubt me not.

But you remember what the bakers did,

Out of mere fun, and too much jalap given?

Abr. Their comrade died, and they absconded.

Well!

And what of that? Mark me, Bernardo, well:

Consider well the precipice we're on;

For should we fail, be sure that thou and I

To public justice the first victims fall.

Bern. No more! thou hast convinc'd me; I am resolv'd.

Abr. Yet, hear! shall we, when rais'd thus high,

When one step higher crowns our utmost hopes?

Nay, more—but this is for thy private ear—

If we succeed in this, I have a plan

Will free us ever from base servitude,

And we'll be masters in our turn, Bernardo.

Bern. Oh! worthy to deceive and awe the tailors!

I'll go this instant, (for I know their haunt,)

And, under fair pretence of reconciliation,

We'll drink together; just ere the tankard's out,

I'll mix the drug, and leave them to their fate.

[*Going.*]

Abr. A lucky thought. Yet, hear, Bernardo.

Bern. What dost thou say, my chief?

Abr. Full half an ounce!

Bern. Depend upon it they shall have enough;
It shall not be a thimble-full.

Abr. Oh! noble daring! Think on the reward:
If we succeed, we're masters for ourselves.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—Zachariades's Lodgings.

Enter ZACHARIADES and TINDERELLA.

Tind. Why, look you, Zachariades! 'tis vain
To talk to me; my children shall not starve.

Zach. I pr'ythee, woman, hold thy peace; no more! [speak.

Tind. I will not peace, while I have breath to
Oh! that my tongue were in the thunder's mouth!

Then would I rattle thee with such a peal,

Thou shouldst comply, or never shouldst have rest.

Zach. Nor have I now, or ever shall.

Tind. Oh! shame!

There's not a meeker-temper'd woman breathes

Than Tinderella, all the parish knows.

But 'tis enough to make a parson swear,

To see a man run headlong into gaol,

And starve his children, and as good a wife

(Tho' I declare it) as man ever had.

Zach. As good a wife! ay, and as gentle, too.

Tind. Ay, gentle, too! What, I suppose you'd have

Some meek, insipid thing with folded arms,

Would stand or curtsy, and say yes or no,

As you would have her? No, 'faith! not I.

I do my duty, you should think on your's.

Zach. Why, what the devil ails the woman now?

Is not three shillings better far, thou fool,

Than half-a-crown a day?

Tind. What's half-a-crown,

Or what's three shillings, if you go to gaol?

Who will maintain your wife and children, then?

Zach. Each friendly box will yield a weekly aid.

Tind. But what if you should be confin'd for years?

The box would soon be tired. See, hither come

Your masters with a warrant.

Enter HAGGLESTON and REGNIADES.

Zach. Let them come!

Hag. Well, Zachariades, to you we come,
As to a man whose regularity [lose

Has long been known. Say, wherefore, would you

Your reputation thus, to join with those

Whom gentle usage never can restrain? [acts

Reg. Why will you mingle with such men whose
Are all against the law?

Zach. Why should not I,

As well as others, have my wages rais'd?

My work's as good as theirs.

Hag. Suppose it is,

You know the price is fix'd; what is your due

Is duely paid. Whoe'er offends the law

Will feel, too late, the weight of all its pains.

Tind. Did not I say so?

Zach. Woman, hold your peace!

Tind. No, I will not. Sirs, give me leave to speak— [friends,

Hag. Hold! let me speak. We now are come as

Out of regard to your known worth, to save you

From all its penalties; for be assur'd,

Whoe'er is ta'en will most severely suffer.

Zach. I shall not more than others.

Tind. Yes, you will.

Reg. Ay, that you will: consider well, your wife,
Your children.

Tind. Think on that! your children, wife!

Zach. What would you have me do? If I comply,

The Flints will straight molest; nor wife nor child,

Nor e'en myself, were safe.

Reg. Oh! never fear

Those lawless rascals: we will safe protect

Both you, and all the rest that with you join.

Enter TIMOTHEUS.

Tim. Oh, Zachariades!

Zach. Well, what's the matter?

Tim. Poor Phillippomenos is almost dead!

Ere he arriv'd at home, a gold fit seiz'd,
And cruel vomits shatter'd all his frame.

Zach. Whence could it come?

Tim. I know not; but he fears

Some foul play shewn, when late he drank with you
And with Bernardo. I must run for help. [*Exit.*]

Zach. Foul play! we all drank; it cannot be.

Tim. Yes, on my life it can.

These are your Flints, your heroes! these the friends
You only trust; and when you are in gaol,
They'll poison you, to save their pension'd box.

Zach. Ay, that may be.

Reg. You see what faithless men

You are engag'd with: now consider well,

If peace, or safety, e'er can harbour there. [*ters,*

Zach. My very worthy and approv'd good mas-

With pleasure, to my duty I return;

And so would more, did not their fears prevent;

But since you promise us your firm support,

I'll seek the others, and consult them straight.

Hag. Continue firm, and doubt not our support.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—Covent-garden.

Enter ABRAHAMIDES, ISAACOF, BARTHOLOMEUS, CHRISTOPHORIDES, HUMPHRYMINOS, and others.

Abr. Welcome, ye Flints, deserving of the name!
Ye meet like men who would command success.

Say, gallant leaders of the eastern bands, [*ters?*]

Where are your troops, and how dispos'd your quar-

Bart. Mine are all ready, eager for the fight,

And my head-quarters fix'd with utmost care,

Up at the Goose and Gridiron, Paul's Church-yard.

Abr. Where thine, brave Christophorides?

Chris. Why, at the Bell, in Doctors' Commons.

Abr. Where thine, Humphryminos?

Hum. Safe at the Hog in Armour, in Chick-lane.

Abr. Right well dispos'd! Oh! gallant, brave

allies!

Matchless as will your glory be hereafter,
'Tis not for me—But see, who comes in haste!

Enter BERNARDO:

Bern. Oh! noble Abrahamides, this time
Calls loud for action, and admits no pause:

The Dungs are all in arms, and vow revenge

For murder'd Philoppomenos. Their troops

In Lincoln's Inn fam'd fields, in firm array,

Are led by Zachariades; who means

T' attack you here, before your forces join,

Unless prevented.

Abr. Ay, this looks like war!

By heaven, the news alarms my tailor's soul!

But say, which way do they direct their march?

Bern. I hear, thro' Serle-street they direct their

course,

Then thro' Shire-lane, and by St. Clement's Church.

Abr. By heav'n, all this falls out beyond my hopes!

Haste thou, Isaacos, with thy well-known cares,

March with thy small detachment thro' the Strand;

Watch well their motions, and straight send me

word. [*Exit Bern.*]

Should they attack you, you'll be well sustain'd.

Isaacos. Should they attack Isaacos, they'll meet

A welcome that will scarce deserve their thanks.

[*Exit.*]

Abr. I doubt it not, for thou'rt a Flint of fire!

You Christophorides, from Doctors' Commons,

In one small column, thro' those narrow courts

That from Blackfriars to the Temple lead, [*walks*

March on your troops; and in the King's-Bench-

Directly form, and wait for further orders.

[*Exit Chris.*]

• You, great Bartholomeus, from Paul's Church-yard

March in firm phalanx straight down Ludgate-hill,

And Christophorides at Temple-bar
Will join your troop. [*Exit Bart.*] While you,
Humphryminos,

Up Holborn-hill direct your secret march, [*while,*
And wait upon their rear. [*Exit Hum.*] Myself the
With the main body, will attack their front.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Oh, chief! the gallant Jack—

Abr. Eternal silence seize that vulgar tongue!

Harry sounds well; the warlike Harry, noble!

But Jack, vile Jack—degrading monosyllable!

Mess. What shall I call him, then, oh! chief?

Abr. Henceforth,

Jackides be his name.

Mess. Jackides, then,

With all his troops revolted from the Dungs,

Is now without, and waits your further orders.

Abr. Admit him instantly.

Mess. I will this moment.

[*Exit.*]

Enter JACKIDES, with a broomstick.

Abr. Oh! brave Jackides, welcome to my arms!

Hibernia's gallant son, thy happier isle, [*beer,*

Unhurt by luxury, its courage keeps; I rose,

While Britain's youth surcharg'd with beef and

Degenerate from their fathers, mourn in vain

Their antique spirit to Ierne fled.

Jack. Great Abrahamides, I cannot spake,

But I will tell you how the matter stands:

At three o'clock they call'd me out of bed,

At little Phalim's, where I lodge; I rose,

Went with M'Carty, and my Irish boys;

Each of us took a broomstick in our hands,

Thinking the masters were refractory;

But when he came—what do you call his name?

Fale—

Abr. Zachariades.

Jack. Ay, Zack; the same:

He prated much, and bother'd all our brains,

And said, at last, the masters would support us.

The devil burn the masters, and the Dungs!

Then straight M'Carty, little Phalim, I,

And all our Irish boys, came off to you.

Abr. M'Carty! Phalim! tell me, are they firm?

Jack. Firm! ay, as brick-bats: they're good fel-

lows both,

As ever trotted bog. Set them to work,

And then you'll see what pretty boys they are.

Abr. 'Tis not their courage, or their truth, I

doubt:

But wish to know their characters in war. [*same;*

Jack. Why, little Phalim from the White-boys

I and M'Carty, from our earliest youth,

Among the boys of Liberty and Ormond,

Were train'd to arms. (*A shout.*)

Enter a Messenger, in haste.

Abr. Well, what's the business?

Mess. The brave Isaacos demands your aid:

Close by St. Clement's church he stood, unhurt,

The shock of numerous Dungs, 'till, from the courts,

Numbers outnumbering number pouring forth,

O'erpower'd his little band.

Abr. Jackides, then,

Haste with Hibernia's legion to his aid.

Jack. Ay, that I will. Fear not; my Irish boys

Shall bring you presently a good account

Of all these bastard brats, these dastard Dungs.

Abr. Brothers, and partners in this glorious toil,

'Tis not for me to rouse your courage now:

Be but yourselves, and I can ask no more.

Consider well, no common cause demands

Your present aid, and forces you to arms:

The daily sixpence is no trivial point.

What are these timid Dungs, whom you oppose?

Are not their spirits by oppression broke?

And shall the Flints, like them, e'er sink to slaves?

Dishonour blast the thought! Remember, too,

Fame, fortune, honour, all are now at stake.
Oh! let these noble thoughts swell all your hearts,
New-string your arms, add weight to every blow.
Draw all your bludgeons, brandish them in air;
Huzza! the word, Newgate, or victory! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in Francisco's house.

Enter DOROTHEA and ISAACOS.

Dor. Must thou, then, go? Alas! how swiftly fly
The hours of love! Must I, then, be condemn'd
To the dull poison of a husband's arms?

Isaacos. Oh! I could ever gaze upon that form,
But cruel Fortune otherwise ordains;
It cannot, must not be! Oh! cursed fate,
That gave thy beauty to Francisco's arms!

Enter FRANCISCO, behind.

Fran. Either I dream, or, sure, I hear some man
Conversing with my wife. What do I see?

Dor. Curs'd, indeed! but, ah! what could I do?
Condemn'd to servitude, which suits but ill
With Dorothea's spirit; soon I found
The dotard lov'd; I watch'd his hour of weakness,
And, by a well-feign'd coyness, fix'd him mine;
Then made him what he is: you, from that hour,
Who always had my heart, have shar'd my joys.

Isaacos. Ay, joys, indeed! pleasures unutterable,
If not embitter'd by these anxious fears.

Dor. By fears embitter'd! What's thy meaning?
speak! [thee:]

Isaacos. Mistake me not; my fears are all for
Should it be known, thou art, alas! undone;
And much I fear Francisco should awake. [speed]

Dor. Why, that is true. Now, then, retire with
For morning dawns. Remember what I told thee;
Haste, and preserve thyself and friends. [me]

Isaacos. I will. But say, my fair, can you inform
Whose names, beside my own, are in the warrant?

Dor. Bernardo, Abrahamides.

Isaacos. 'Tis well.

Ah! generous mistress, doubly am I bound
By love and gratitude for ever to thee!
Farewell! may all good angels ever guard thee!

Dor. Retire, my love; and when the danger's past,
You shall not fail to hear from Dorothea. [*Exeunt.*]

Fran. (*Comes forward.*) 'Tis as I thought! why
did I ever marry?

Fool that I was, who vainly hop'd to find
That want of fortune might be well supplied
By love, and by obedience. Oh! vain hope,
To think that gratitude can ever bind

A servile mind! But what can now be done?
If I betray suspicion, she'll grow insolent.
What can I do with him? A beggar sued—
The proverb's stale! A cuckold! ha! a cuckold!
Cuckolded by a journeyman! Damnation!
Couldst thou not, partial fate, when thou ordain'd
I should be cuckolded, by a nobler hand
Inflict the shame? perhaps, I then had found
One drop of patience; and a verdict gain'd,
Had amply paid me for my loss and shame:
Instead of that, to be a fixed mark

For all the parish now to point and stare at!
By heav'n, I'll be reveng'd! but how? how? Right!
His name is now inserted in the warrant;
And when in gaol, I'll buy up all his debts,
And keep him there; and, to torment him more,
I'll bribe the gaoler. Beware, Isaacos!
Thou soon shalt feel the vengeance that awaits
An injur'd tailor's honour! [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—Tittillinda's Lodgings.

Enter TITTILLINDA and BLOUSIDORA.

Titt. 'Tis needless, Blousidora: while you darn
Those stockings, I will mend this ruffled shirt;

For well I know you have your hands full all,
In this so general wash. And now for thinking!
(*Sits down.*)

Perhaps, ere now, the fatal moment's past,
And either Abrahamides and I
Are doom'd to misery, or completely blest.
Fain would I hope, but still am check'd by fear;
And yet, who knows? Fortune, perhaps, may smile.
Then Tittillinda once again will shine;
Be ever clean, and ever smartly dress'd;
And fear no more those prudish, prying eyes,
Which smile contempt, yet envy me my joy.
Here comes my love!

Enter ABRAHAMIDES, hastily.

Abr. Oh! Tittillinda, all our hopes are lost!

Titt. Forbid it, love! what, could the Dungs
prevail?

Abr. Eternal curses seize their coward hearts!
Prevail they do; but not by valour's arm.
This is no time to tell thee now, my love;
For their fell blood-hounds hunt me at the heels.

Titt. What can I do?

Abr. Hast thou no secret place,
Where I may lay conceal'd till danger's past?
Home I can ne'er return.

Titt. Oh! yes, my love;
Within that room a secret closet stands,
That will escape the search of keenest eyes.
Thither retire.

(*Voices without.*) We must and will come in!

Abr. By heav'n, they're here!
The blood-hounds now have trac'd me to my lair.
[*Exit.*]

Enter Two Constables, &c.

Titt. Well, what's your business?

1 Con. Madam, we are come
In search of a fell murderer; who, we are told,
Has taken refuge here.

Titt. I know of none.

2 Con. Denying him is vain; for he was seen
To enter here.

Titt. Whom do you mean?

1 Con. Why, Abrahamides.
You know him well.

Titt. I do; and what of that.

For twice three days I have not seen him here.

2 Con. We cannot lose our time: if you refuse
To yield him up, why, then, we seize on you.

Titt. I yield him up! No! were he here, indeed,
My life should pay the forfeit ere I'd yield him.

2 Con. Then seize her!

Titt. Stand off!

Enter ABRAHAMIDES, and knocks him down.

Abr. Hell-hounds, stand off! Behold the man
you seek!

1 Con. Then seize on him!

Titt. Stand off! Barbarians, hold!
Let me once more enfold him in these arms,
And take one long, one last farewell!

Abr. Oh! cease;
Nor vainly struggle with our froward fate.
Lead to my dungeon.

1 Con. Bring him along!

Let's have no whimp'ring here.

Titt. Hold! one moment hold,
'Till I have caught him once more in my arms!

2 Con. Tear them asunder!

Titt. Oh, Abrahamides!

Abr. Oh, Tittillinda!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

Enter FRANCISCO, led by ROBIN.

Fran. Oh! I am grip'd! The working jalap runs,
Like thoro'-go-nimble thro' my twisted guts!

Robin. How fierce his fever is!

Fran. Oh! what a change of torments I endure!
A red-hot goose runs hissing thro' my bowels:
Oh! for a peck of cucumbers to cool it!

'Tis death's bare bodkin! Give—give me a chair,
And cover me all over, for I freeze;
My teeth chatter, and my knees knock together!

Robin. Have mercy, heav'n!

Fran. And now I burn again!

A tailor's hell! The war grows wondrous hot!
See, see the Flints! Isaacos, too! I know him
By his ragged coat and unmow'd beard. Avaunt!
I'll throw a cabbage at his head! With that
Last blow I've brought him down. Oh! for
A fire as big as at the Bedford Arms! [legg'd!
The shop board moves! the needles danco cross-
The thread's entangled! Oh! cabbage, cucumbers;
Cab—cab—bage—bage—Oh! (Dies.)

Robin. There fell the pride and glory of all
tailors! (Beckons on two Servants.)
Bear him off.

(As they prepare to carry him, he starts up.)

Fran. No, I won't trouble you; I'll walk off.

Robin. Then take the chair off. [Exit.

SCENE VI.—Newgate.

ABRAHAMIDES discovered.

Ab. Why, what is man? how vain are all his
schemes!

But now, the leader of a gulfan' band?
And now, condemn'd to ignominious death.
Hard fate! perversely hard! to be cut off
Just at the time when fortune was in reach.
So when, thro' life, some favourite plan's pursued,
With toil and perseverance down to age,
Just as we hope to reap the fruit of all,
In steps the fell anatomy, and breaks
The bubble. Be it so! Since I must die,
No dastard fear shall stain my honest fame.

Enter Gaoler.

Gaoler. A stranger, sir, without, desires to see you.

Ab. A stranger! Who can it be?

Gaoler. I know not;

But he will speak, he says, to none but you.

Ab. Admit him, then. [Exit Gaoler.] Who can
this stranger be?

But here he comes.

Enter Gaoler, and BERNARDO in a chaiman's coat.

Ab. Whence, and what art thou?

Bern. We are not alone.

Ab. Leave us, honest friend. [Exit Gaoler.]

Well, what's your business now? and say, who art
thou?

Bern. Hast thou forgot me, then?

(Discovers himself.)

Ab. How's this? Bernardo?

Welcome, thrice welcome, ever faithful friend!

But say, what urgent business brought thee here?

Death, instant death, attends discovery. [form,

Bern. Think'st thou, that death, in whatsoever
Could e'er detain Bernardo from his friend?

Ab. Oh! generous man! too generous Bernardo!

Much, much I wanted to behold my friend;

But still I fear, while danger hovers round thee.

What fit return can thy unhappy chief

E'er make for such fidelity as thine?

Bern. Thou wrong'st me, Abrahamides, to think
My friendship ever trod in interest's path.

Ab. Ah! well I know thy uncorrupted faith.

Yet, oh! my friend—

Bern. Why bursts that aching sigh?

Ab. Alas, Bernardo; is it sitting, he,

Who, by the general voice of all the Flints,

Was chosen chief, should be expos'd at Tyburn?

And at the gallows die a shameful death?

Bern. What means my gallant friend?

Ab. Does this become

Whom tailors follow'd, and the Flints have lov'd?

Bern. What's to be done? Shall I attempt a rescue?

Ab. No. If thou ever held'st me in thy heart,
Revenge my fall!

Bern. I would; but how for means?

Ab. Thou may'st remember, in a happier hour,
I told thee of a plan to free us both
From servitude.

Bern. Thou didst; but these late broils
Depriv'd me of the right.

Ab. 'Tis true, they did.

What dost thou think of me?

Bern. As of a man

I love and honour much.

Ab. Ill should I deserve

That character, if I could e'er permit
My friend to lose th' advantage I can't share.
Mark me!

Bern. I will.

Ab. Thou know'st, as well as I,
How many thousands, gaily dress'd, in town,
With aching hearts lament their dwindled purse.

Bern. Know it! ay, well.

Ab. Thou also know'st, my friend,
What blistering bills those tyrant masters bring.
Bern. Blistering, indeed! and the complaint is now
As general as just.

Ab. Now could you contrive

To undercharge them, as in other trades,
Would you not thrive?

Bern. Ay; but consider well

The length of credit they are forc'd to give.

Ab. I do. That plan you are not to pursue;

Low be your price, and ready cash your terms.

Bern. Ay, that may do. But how for capital?

Ab. For that I have provided. Well you know,

The tailor's trade no ample fortune needs:

Soon as the suit's bespoke, the cloth you buy;

When made, deliver'd, and the cash is paid.

Bern. I understand you. Yet some capital,

Though small, is wanting for the workmen's pay.

Ab. 'Tis true; nor shall you want.

Bern. But where to gain?

There lies the point.

Ab. I'll tell thee. Well thou know'st,

Ere cruel fortune sunk me thus to earth,

As chief, the box was ever at my nod:

This trust of right to every chief belongs;

And since a few short hours will close my fate,

Some future chief must then supply my place;

And who so fit as thou?

Bern. Oh! generous chief!

Thy partial fondness much o'er-rates my worth.

But, then, what envious rivals may oppose—

Ab. Oh! there are none that can deserve thy
fears;

The gallant leaders of the eastern climes,

Thou brave in war, in policy unskill'd.

Besides, I know they doubt, and turn their eyes

On me to fix their choice; thou art the man:

The public box supplies thy capital.

But, oh! my friend, remember, when you've reach'd

This envied pinnacle of tailors' greatness,

Never to violate the public faith.

On that firm base alone your power will stand:

The account is monthly; ere that time returns,

From the first profits you repay the box.

Bern. By heav'n, this plan exceeds my utmost

hopes!

Yet, oh! my heart recoils, when I reflect

My friend cannot enjoy the bright reward.

Ab. Revenge is all the recompense I ask.

Here is the plan digested into form; (gives a paper)

The different price affix'd to different suits.

In every paper quickly advertise;

You'll soon have custom. Ere few years are past,

You'll be establish'd firm in fortune's track,

And shake the tyrants' profit, drain their purses;

For ready cash will bear you thro' the world.

What says Bernardo? wilt thou advertise?

Bern. In every paper, morning, weekly, nightly,
Till it shall run like wildfire thro' the land.

Abr. Then Abrahamides contented dies!
Ye claret-drinking tyrants, ye shall feel me,
E'en from the grave! Your children yet unborn
Shall curse the day that injur'd Abrahamides!

Bern. By heav'n, they shall! and, to my latest
hour,

Thy wrongs shall in my memory live green.

Abr. Thanks, my Bernardo. One word, and then
farewell!

I charge thee, by our present common danger,
By our past friendship, by your future hopes,
By all that can affect a generous tailor,
If you should have success, preserve from want
The hapless Tittillinda! oh! remember,
Thy dying Abrahamides requests it. [hopes,

Bern. Oh! doubt it not. Should fortune blast my
By work, at least, I can preserve from want
Thy hapless fair.

Abr. Oh! thanks, thou generous friend!

For ever, and for ever, now farewell!

Bern. For ever, and for ever, oh! farewell,
Thou first of friends, of heroes, and of tailors!

[Exit.

Enter CHRISTOPHORIDES, HUMPHRYMINOS, BAR-
THOLOMEUS, and JACKIDES.

Hum. Oh! gallant man, chief pillar of the Flints!

Bart. Wapping will stand aghast, and Redriff
mourn

Thy lamentable fall.

Abr. Cease your vain griefs:

I won't forgive that friend who sheds one tear.

As Abrahamides has ever liv'd,

So he is now resolv'd to die—a Flint.

Jack. Upon my shoul, he is a gallant fellow!

Abr. I thank you for this last mark of your
friendship;

And now from each will take a last farewell.

But some I miss: where is Isaacos?

And where Bernardo?

Chris. They are both proscrib'd,
Therefore absconded. In this doubtful state,
(When thou shalt be no more) we know not where
To fix our choice; and, therefore, are we come
To know whom thou wilt name to fill thy place.

Abr. The worthiest.

Chris. Who can determine that?

Abr. Your own free choice.

Hum. That will be doubtful still,

Where merit's equal; and your voice alone

Will put an end to every private claim.

Abr. Consider well the task which you impose:

Where all are worthy of the name of Flints,

Whom can I name, but I affront the rest?

Bart. Oh! no: so much we rest upon your truth,

Your honesty, that we're determin'd all,

Both to obey and to support the chief

Whom you shall recommend.

Abr. 'Tis a hard task;

Yet, ere I speak, answer what I demand.

All. We will.

Abr. Have I e'er swerv'd from duty, or from [honour?

Hum. Oh! no.

Abr. Say, have I e'er deceiv'd you?

Chris. No.

Abr. Has private friendship ever bias'd me?

Bart. No.

Abr. Have I e'er violated faith?

Or with rapacious hand e'er wrong'd the box?

Hum. Oh! no: and, therefore, do we want thy
voice,

To nominate a chief.

Abr. Fain would I waive

This last hard task. What think you of Bernardo?

All. It is enough. Bernardo be the man.

Long live Bernardo! he's our future guide. [well.

Abr. And now, my friends, take each a last fare-

But, oh! remember, never let the Flints
Sink to base slavery. Tho' now oppress'd,
In happier days they yet may rise again.

In the meantime, with utmost industry,
Use every art to gail the tyrant masters. [find

Bart. We will. But, oh! brave chief, we grieve to
The last sepulchral honours are denied thee:

No friend can wait to close thy dying eyes,

Or lay thy clay-cold corse in hallow'd earth.

Jack. What, are the slaying rascals, then, to
have him?

Bart. Too sure, they must.

Jack. De'il burn me if they shall!

There's little Phalim, I, and all my boys,

Will rescue him from out their butchering hands.

Abr. Let them, then, do their worst; for where-
soe'er

One bone of Abrahamides shall hang,
Know, there still Abrahamides shall awe them.

Hum. Oh! gallant chief! worthy a happier fate!
For ever now we take our last farewell.

Abr. Live and be happy, and farewell for ever!

[Exeunt all but Abr.

Enter TITTILLINDA.

Titt. Stand off! hold off your hands! 'tis all in
vain;

See him I must. Oh, Abrahamides!

Abr. Ah! Tittillinda! wherefore art thou come?

Titt. Unkindly said! Canst thou deny me, then,
Once more to see, once more within my arms

To press thee close, ere yet we part for ever?

Abr. Mistake me not: still art thou rooted here.
Check those sad tears, lest they unman me, too.

Titt. Have not I cause? When thou art gone for
ever,

Oh! where shall hapless Tittillinda go?

No friend to sooth her sorrows, share her grief,

Or shield her from unfeeling bailiffs' hands.

Abr. Oh! cease; nor with vain fears disturb thy
breast;

Thy Abrahamides has taken care

At least from want to save his Tittillinda.

My friend Bernardo, when from danger free,

Has power and will to serve thee.

Titt. What of that?

What power, what will, can ever make me blest?

Since thou wert taken, sleep has fled my eyes.

Last night, I had a mack'el for my supper,

But, ah! whilst thou wert absent, could not eat.

This will it be, on each succeeding day;

At breakfast, dinner, supper, shall I miss thee.

Abr. Oh! cease, my love; nor with these fruitless
tears

Lament in vain what cannot be redress'd!

But since each moment I expect my fate,

Oh! let me be prepar'd. Say, hast thou brought

The linen with thee?

Titt. I had quite forgot.

Here is the cap; and here the shirt; a ruffled one.

But oh! what change has cruel fortune made!

What pleasing thoughts amus'd me while 'twas
mending!

I fondly hop'd, but, ah! I hop'd in vain,

This ruffled shirt had been thy Sunday's shirt,

And not a winding-sheet to shade thy corse.

Abr. Thanks to my love, for this last generous
care!

Undaunted, now, I will my fate defy.

Since I shall soon with kings and princes lie,

I with this shirt will make a shift to die. [Exit.

(Tittillinda faints.)

Enter Gaoler.

Gaoler. From these sad scenes this certain truth
you'll draw,

Great is the danger to offend the law;

Since nor his conduct, bravery, nor truth,

Could from the gallows save the tailor youth.

[Exeunt.

THE WOODMAN;

A COMIC OPERA, IN THREE ACTS.—BY HATE DUDLEY.



Act III—Scene 3

CHARACTERS

SIR WALTER WARIN
CAPTAIN O DONNFI
WILLOP
MEDLEY

FAITLOP
BOB
FILBERT
MISS DI CLACK

EMILY
DOLLY
POLLY
BRIDGET

ACT I

SCENE I—A Perspective Garden

Enter MEDLEY and FILBERT

Medley. What slaves are we men in office! Don't you wonder, Filbert, how I get through all my business?

Filb. Oh! it's your larning does it, Mr. Medley, that's certain.

Medley. Why, to be sure, Filbert, your men of parts are the fellows after all. But come, did you deliver the dresses, bows and arrows, last night, to the lasses who are to shoot for the heifer and ribbands, according to the forest charter?

Filb. Yes.

Medley. And did you tell 'em to meet me in good time, this afternoon, in the glade-way, near the old oak?

Filb. To be sure I did, and gave them a kiss all round into the bargain, that they might not forget ~~me~~.

Medley. That was done like a man, Filbert. Now take these to Goodman Fairlop's, the woodman, (giving him bows and arrows, &c.) and tell him I shall be down with them before the girls have untied their night-caps.

Filb. I will. (Laughing.) I fecks! Master

Medley, you think mayhap, I don't know who has a fancy to who, in that corner of the forest.

Medley. Come, jog away, jog away, I've no time now to crack jokes with you, Master Filbert. (Exit Filbert.) Like other great men, I, Matt Medley, am obliged, for the good of the state, to hold many offices. I am deputy ranger of the purlieu, keeper of the waifs and strays, tumbler to his worship, Sir Walter, and purveyor of morals in the absence of our vicar. I think I am employment enough cut out for the present day. Let me see I'm to find out who this little lass is at the Woodside, which I can't leave, for my life, from that hussy, Dolly. I'm to make love to her for my brother Bob, if she's good for any thing; and if not, I must prevent Sir Walter making himself the hamlet's talk about her. I'll keep peace through the day, if I can, between Sir Walter and his rantpole cousin Dunah; and, at night, to receive a smile from Dolly as a recompence for all my toils.

AIR.—MEDLEY.

*In the world's crooked path where I've been,
There to share of life's gloom my poor part,
The bright sunshines that soften'd the scene
Was a smile from the girl of my heart.*

*Not a swain, when the lark quits her nest,
But to labour with glee will depart,
If at eve he expects to be blast
With a smile from the girl of his heart.*

*Come, then, crosses and cares as they may,
Let my mind still this morn'g impart,
That the comfort of man's fleeting day
Is a smile from the girl of his heart.*

Sir W. (Without.) Medley! why, Matt Medley! where are you, I say?

Medley. Yes, yes; just as I thought; the old buck's noddle can't rest for dreaming of this little fawn at the Woodside.

Enter SIR WALTER WARING.

Sir W. Good morrow, Medley! How are you, Matt? Always chaunting with the first cock, eh! you rogue!

Medley. I love to be cheerful, and stirring betimes; but how comes your worship abroad so soon?

Sir W. I could not sleep, Matt, for the rheumatism, and so forth.

Medley. And I doubt whether your disorder will let you rest now you're up, and so forth. *(Aside.)*

Sir W. But did you think of what I was saying to you last night, Matt?

Medley. I'm going about it the first thing this morning. I have a good excuse for the inquiry, as my brother is desperately in love with this pretty stranger.

Sir W. What, Bob of the mill? A great fool! Why, it will be the ruin of the poor fellow. But how do you know it? have you evidence of the fact?

Medley. He told me himself; so I'm going to look into it.

Sir W. Ay, do; that's quite right. A silly numpskull! But you know, Matt, there can be no harm just in my having a little sort of a curiosity about her, and so forth.

Medley. Oh! none at all, sir. Nor of my satisfying that curiosity according to my mind, and so forth. *(Aside.)*

Sir W. Well, then, go, that's a good lad.

Medley. I will, your worship.

Sir W. That's right; now go about it directly, Matt, while I finish my morning's walk. *[Exit Medley.]*

SCENE II.—*A Wood-side; discovering Fairlop's cottage farm soon after sun-rise: EMILY and DOLLY sitting at a breakfast table near the door.*

Enter FAIRLOP and POLLY.

QUARTETTO.—FAIRLOP, POLLY, EMILY, and DOLLY.

*For all thy boons below,
Oh! ruddy health! to thee
Thus ever, ever flow
The grateful strains of industry.*

CHORUS OF WOODMEN.

*From labour's son around
The woodlands catch the sound;
While songsters blithe on e'ry spray,
Attune their voices to our roundelay.*

[Exit Polly.]

Fair. So much for the first portion of the day! and say, my girls, let us partake of the homely meal that Providence sets before us.

Dolly. No, father:—that Providence bestows, and I set before you.

Fair. You are a good girl, Dolly; but though his worship's clerk, Mr. Medley, does flatter your comeliness, mind, child, and never think of setting yourself before Providence.

Emily. There, sir; there's your breakfast ready for you; I had the pleasure of toasting your brown bread—

Dolly. And I of robbing the nutmeg over it.

Fair. Honest husbands to you both, for your kindness. But now, Miss Emily, for the rest of your story, which you promised us a month ago. Your aunt I remember well; and a fine straight woman she was in my younger days.

Dolly. Ay, father, you'll pity poor Emily, indeed, when you hear it; she told it me last night, and I did nothing but sob and cry till daylight.

Emily. I believe I told you that my widowed mother was a tenant to old Mr. Wilford, in a small farm near the park.

Fair. Yes, child, you did.

Emily. At her decease I was taken, when very young, to be a companion to their niece, Miss Wilford, and shared with her, while she lived, an education far beyond what my rank in life could entitle me to.

Dolly. I don't know that.

Fair. Well, and so—

Emily. Being the constant observer of her brother's increasing worth, my esteem for him insensibly grew with it; till, at length, I listened, too fondly, to his professions of regard, which, probably, I ought to have discouraged.

Fair. I don't know how that should have been: but that's all over, child.

Dolly. Lord! father, does not love always beget love, as I've heard my poor dear mother tell you a hundred, and a hundred times to that?

Fair. And so thou hast, Dolly: but go on, my dear.

Emily. In short, a mutual vow of inviolable affection was the consequence of this attachment.

Dolly. Well, and that was right.

Emily. His uncle, one moonlight evening, surprised us walking together on the terrace; the next morning, to the astonishment of every one, he hurried my Wilford off to the continent, without his being able to bid me a last adieu; and, by the most cruel vow, declared he would disinherit him if ever he beheld me more.

Dolly. Barbarous creature!

Fair. Hold your tongue a little, pray, Dolly.

Emily. He enclosed me a bill of a hundred pounds, the legacy bequeathed me by his lady's will, and informed me that I had permission to remain at Wilford Lodge till I could otherwise accommodate myself; which I did, the same day, at my aunt's in the adjoining parish.

Fair. I honour your spirit.

Emily. After three years' absence on his travels, during which time he has written to me in terms of unaltered affection, I learnt that Wilford was on his return to England. To prevent, therefore, the fatal effects to him of even a supposed renewal of our attachment, I resolved, unknown to any one, to retire in search of an asylum, which, from my aunt's description of you, I flattered myself I might find, and, heaven knows, have found under your generous protection.

Dolly. An't this very cruel and heart-breaking, father?

Fair. It is a little against the grain, to be sure, but let's make the best we can of it.

Dolly. And so the dear, constant-hearted man is soon expected back again?

Emily. He is, indeed, Dolly.

AIR.—EMILY.

*Zephyr, come, thou playful minion,
Greet with whispers soft mine ear;
Hence, each breeze of fuder pinion,
Tell me I hope nought to fear.*

*Gentle Zephyr, wing him over,
Tho' I ne'er behold him more;
With the breath of some young lover,
Waft him to his native shore.*

Fair. Well, child, the best way now is to reconcile yourself to a more humble lot: you will not fare so well, it is true, but you may be as safe under my lowly roof, as in the proudest dwelling.

Emily. Oh! the feelings of my heart!

Fair. I'm glad on't; they'll spare you the trouble of saying what I neither deserve, nor desire to hear. But come, girls, I'll now take a step into the hop-ground, while you finish dressing the garland-pole; and, in the evening, we'll all dance round it, and forget our sorrows.

AIR.—FAIRLOP.

*On freedom's happy land
My task of duty done,
With mirth's light-hearted band
Why not the lowly woodman one?
Tho' fortune's smile our groves forsake,
Mirth may be left behind;
For wealth can neither give nor take
This treasure of the mind.*

On Freedom's happy land, &c.

*Come, cheerfulness, with blithesome gait,
Trip by the peasant's side;
While care, in cold and sullen state,
Sits on the brow of pride.*

On freedom's happy land, &c.

SCENE III.—A Woodland view, near Fairlop's cottage.

EMILY and DOLLY discovered, decorating a hop-pole with ribbands.

Dolly. I've another bit of pink upon my best cap that will do for the top to a T. I'll run and fetch it. [Exit.]

Emily. Ah! my Wilford, had fate but fashioned thee for these humble scenes of life, I might then, perhaps, have aspired to thy love without presumption.

Re-enter DOLLY.

Dolly. Here it is: but, hold! this was given me, at our last fair, by Medley; and I should not like to part with it, though he is an audacious creature. But I'll pin it so high that nobody can reach it. There!

Emily. Well, this must be the smartest pole in the parish, to be sure.

Dolly. And, bless me, what kissing there'll be under it!

AIR.—DOLLY.

*There's something in kissing, I cannot tell why,
Makes my heart in a tumult jump more than breast
high:*

*For nine times in ten,
So teasing,
And pleasing,*

*We find those rude creatures, the dear, kissing men,
That we wish it repeated again and again.*

*Though a kiss stop my breath, oh! how little care I,
Since a woman at some time or other must die:*

*For nine times in ten,
So teasing,
And pleasing,*

*We find those rude creatures, the dear, kissing men,
That we wish it repeated again and again.*

(POLLY peeps in at the latter part of this air, and entering archly, sings.) "We wish it repeated again and again."

Dolly. Heyday; little Miss Nimble-tongue! who asked for your piping?

Polly. Dear sister, I thought I should always say and do everything after you.

Dolly. Indeed! but, come, miss, here take your basket, (giving her one) and pack off to school. Marry come up! I think we can find you out something else to mind, or I wonder.

Emily. Oh! she'll be a good girl, Dolly, I'll answer for her.

Dolly. And so she ought: mind and finish your task in your sampler before you come home, miss.

Polly. Well, so I will, if you don't snub a body. [Exeunt Emily and Dolly. Sings.] "There's a something in kissing, I cannot tell why." [Exit.]

SCENE IV.

Enter MEDLEY.

Medley. So, so! why, these girls are not up yet! by their lying in bed thum they fancy themselves married already.

Enter BOB.

Bob. Good morrow, brother Matt.

Medley. Good morrow again, Bob, if it's not too late: well, do you continue in the same mind?

Bob. Yes, I love her dearly.

Medley. Come, then, I'll try what's to be done for you.

Bob. Don't expect me to talk much at first, for when I see her, I know I shall be as dumb as my breast-wheel in a hard frost.

Medley. Leave it to me, and never you mind it. Halloo, halloo! why, house! are you all dead or fast asleep?

Enter EMILY and DOLLY, from the Woodside-part.

Dolly. As I hope to live, there's my spark, and his brother Bob, the miller, your intended lover.

Emily. How can you be so absurd, Dolly?

Dolly. Pray, gentlemen, or rather, middling kind of men, what may be your business here so early this morning?

Medley. Come, we'll to the point at once. May I crave your name, fair one?

Emily. If it can be of any service to you to know it—'tis Emily.

Medley. Emily! a pretty name enough for the top of a love-letter, an't it, Bob?

Dolly. I have no patience at his impudence, and neglect of me. (Aside.)

Medley. Why, then, Miss Emily, the long and short of the matter is this: my brother Bob here, as stirring a lad as any on the stream, has soured over head and ears, for you, into the mill-pond of affection—

Emily. Ridiculous!

Dolly. Impudent fellow!

Medley. And unless you take compassion on him, he is determined—what are you determined upon, Bob? (Apart.) Oh! he's resolved to knock down the hopper, and let the stream of life run waste with him the remainder of his days.

Emily. Lamentable, indeed!

Dolly. But that an't all?

Medley. Why, what the deuce would a reasonable woman have more?

Emily. I would save you and your brother the trouble of any further explanation, by assuring you that I can never listen to his addresses, though I feel myself honoured by his esteem.

Medley. Lord! miss, but his love—

Dolly. And lord! sir, don't be so meddling; it is enough for you to explain your own love.

Emily. Ah! Dolly, how few are there able to reveal to others this mystery of the mind!

GLEE.

What is love? An odd compound of simples most sweet,

*Cull'd in life's spring by fancy, poof! mortals to cheat;
A passion, no eloquence yet could improve,
So a sigh best expresses the passion of love.*

[*Exeunt Bob and Emily.*]

Dolly. Ha, ha, ha!

Medley. What is it you giggle at so, madam Dolly?

Dolly. At you, and your foolish brother.

Medley. Oh! you do?

Dolly. Yes, to be sure I do: I can't help it for my life. (*Laughs.*)

Medley. Then, since my brother is to be fobbed off by your companion in this pretty manner, I'll inquire a little into what's what, and who's who.

Dolly. Oh! pray do, Mr. Jack-in-office.

Medley. Yes, madam; and know how Miss Proud-airs came here? whether she gets an honest livelihood? and where's the place of her last legal settlement, madam?

Dolly. Pitiful spite! But I can save you all this trouble. She's a thirteenth cousin by the side of my mother's half-brother; she came on a visit to us from foreign parts; has been better brought up than either you or I, sir; and being, at this time, a little in adversity, why, my father has taken compassion upon her.

Medley. Taken compassion upon her?

Dolly. Yes, sir.

Medley. And, like an old fool, keeps her, I suppose?

Dolly. Well, and suppose he does.

Medley. What, after the fashion of the great folks above?

Dolly. For my part, I don't see that such an action is a disgrace to any one, gentle or simple.

Medley. You don't, upon your little wicked soul?

Dolly. No. And so, till you learn to behave yourself a little more like a man, I don't wish to see your spiteful face again. [*Exit.*]

Medley. Here's a pretty skit for you! Have I been fifteen months at a Latin school, two years hackney-writer to an attorney on Tower-hill, more than three years justice-clerk to Sir Walter, and to be outwitted, after all?

AIR.—MEDLEY.

Say, what kind of revenge shall I take?

Shall I quit her, and see her no more?

'Tis a pity at once to forsake

What we've learnt a long while to adore.

If I tell her, for life we must part,

Ten to one if it gives her much pain;

Should she feel it, my own rebel heart

Will fly to her succour again. [*Exit.*]

SCENE V.—The Forest.

Enter WILFORD and CAPTAIN O'DONNEL.

Captain. Upon my conscience, but you true

lovers are restless creatures! We will only have landed six days from the continent, and here are we again launched upon a more slippery element, in chase of your runaway mistress.

Wilf. Ah! my friend, O'Donnel, but what a treasure are we in pursuit of?

Captain. Well, but I wish you to be after giving me a more particular description of this same treasure; for which, I think, we will encounter a small number of difficulties.

Wilf. Oh! she will repay all my anxieties.

Captain. Yes, faith! and what's to become of mine into the bargain? but I see your's is a dashing kind of love, which my friendship is eager enough to follow; so order it upon any service you please, in search of your goddess.

Wilf. My dear O'Donnel, I cannot thank you as you deserve. My intelligence informs me, that Emily has, unaccountably, sought a retreat on the confines of this extensive forest. We must, therefore, vigilantly explore it, taking different directions. The guide told you where we should meet?

Captain. Not he, indeed; but what occasion for a rendezvous, when we are only going upon a foraging party?

Wilf. He directed our servants to the Rein Deer, near the famed oak; there, at least, we may have tidings of each other's success. Here let us part.

Captain. And see who starts the first doe on the forest. But, harkye! Wilford, how shall I be sure of her, so as not, by one of my confounded country mistakes, to take her for one of the little wild fawns of the chase?

Wilf. If you have no eyes, hear her but speak, and the mild melody of her accents will instantly convince you.

AIR.—WILFORD.

The streamlet that flow'd round her cot,

All the charms of my Emily knew;

How oft has its course been forgot,

While it paus'd, her dear image to woo.

Believe me, the fond silver tide

Knew from whence it deriv'd the fair prize,

For silently swelling with pride,

It reflected her back to the skies. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—A Garden.

Enter SIR WALTER WARING and MEDLEY.

Sir W. Did you ever hear such a persecuting clapper as cousin Di's?

Medley. A little out of tune now and then, to be sure, your worship: but how did this storm break out?

Sir W. Only, forsooth, because I good humouredly laughed at her a little for sashing herself off like a young girl, and telling her she would make a better patroness of beef-eaters than female archers. However, I'll see none of her prudish nonsense there; I'll ride ten miles first another way.

Medley. That's a pity; for it will be a fine sight.

Sir W. What signifies your finery and foolery, Matt, if a man can't be comfortable, and take a quiet peep at a pretty girl, and so forth? But when am I to see this little stray wood-nymph, Matt?

Medley. We can't too soon inquire into the merits of the case; you'll find her no better than I told you. We may take out orders of removal for her directly.

Sir W. But not without positive evidence of the fact.

Medley. Let me beg your worship to be a little upon your guard; if Miss Di gets hold of it, she'll prattle about it merrily, I warrant you.

Sir W. Yes, let her alone for that: she's squeamish enough about other people; but as to her fantastical self, you'll find her always upon the ogle, and fancying every man she sees in love with her, and so forth.

Medley. Suppose, some time or other, we were to humour this fancy of her's? I don't think, your worship, it would be of any disservice to her.

Sir W. My dear Matt, give me your hand: pr'ythee, don't forget it. Let me get her but once fairly on the hip, and then, at all events, I shall secure a good peace with the enemy I never can conquer.

AIR.—SIR WALTER WARING.

Surely, woman's a powerful creature

In every stage of her life;

So arm'd at all points, by dame Nature,

As maiden, miss, widow, or wife.

In her bloom, ev'ry glance she shoots thro' you;

Ever after her larum's well strung:

And sure is that force to subdue you,

Which shifts from the eye to the tongue.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.—*The Forest.*

CAPTAIN O'DONNELL *discovered.*

Captain. Upon my conscience, this is likely to turn out a very clever expedition of mine! A pretty account I'll be able to give poor Wilford! I marched out in search of his rivulet goddess, and the devil a human creature have I clapped my eyes on, except two huge bucks at a tilting-match under an oak. But, hold! what have we here? something nimble—cuddling along, and this is her track.

Enter POLLY.

Polly. Oh, la! what fine gentleman can this be? [*Aside.*]

Captain. How are you, my little innocent?

Polly. Very well, I thank you, sir. [*Courtesys.*] Pray, if I may be so bold, do you belong to our forest?

Captain. No, my little dear; I'm a roving buck from foreign parts. Where do you live? and what may be your little name?

Polly. I live hard by, and my name is Polly Fairlop. I'm going to school; but I think I'm too old for that, however.

Captain. Indeed, and so you are, my dear.

AIR.—POLLY.

When first I slipp'd my leading strings, to please her little Poll,

My mother bought me, at the fair, a pretty waxen doll;

Such deep-black eyes and cherry cheeks the smiling dear possess'd,

How could I kiss it oft enough, or hug it to my breast?

No sooner I could prattle it, as forward misses do,
Than how I long'd and sigh'd to hear my Dolly prattle too!

I cur'd her hair in ringlets neat, and dress'd her very gay,

And yet the sulky hussey not a syllable would say.

My head, on this, I bridled up, and threw the play-thy by,

Altho' my sister smubb'd me for't, I know the reason why:

I fancy she would wish to keep the sweethearts all her own;

But that she sha'n't, depend upon't, when I'm a woman grown.

Captain. Bravo, my little warbler! Though you are not tall enough, d'ye see! for a husband, I dare be bound you're cunning enough to tell me whether you have amongst you, such a thing as a stray young lady, almost as handsome as your own sweet self?

Polly. As true as anything this must be Miss Emily's hearthheart, that I've heard 'em talk and cry so much about. [*Aside.*] A stray young lady? what sort of one, sir?

Captain. Faith! an odd sort enough! one that run away from her lover, for fear of being married to the man of her heart.

Polly. Oh, dear! sir, we have no such girls in our parts, I can assure you. But here comes Mr. Bob, the miller; perhaps he can inform you better, and so, good b'ye, sir, for I ought to have been at school full half an hour ago. "But that she sha'n't, depend upon't, when I'm a woman grown."

[*Exit, singing.*]

Captain. Well done, little Whirligig!

Enter BOB.

Good day to you, friend Bob.

Bob. Why, how the dickens did he know my name to be Bob? [*Aside.*] The same to you, sir. [*Bowing.*]

Captain. Faith! honest miller, you will confer an obligation upon me, by telling me whereabouts I am.

Bob. By your question, sir, I should guess you a bit of a stranger in this forest.

Captain. Indeed, and you've hit it. What's more, I came upon a strange bit of business; and, to tell you the honest truth, I need not walk much further to be tired, as well as hungry.

Bob. Lord love you! say no more; the traveller that has lost his way shall never want a welcome at my mill so long as I am able to grind a grist in it.

Captain. Upon my conscience, but this honest fellow would soon make a man forget that he was out of his own country. What a fine thing is generosity! but what's it good for without a little gratitude?

AIR.—CAPTAIN O'DONNELL.

Oh! a French federation,

Or courtier's oration,

Is all botheration,

To you, Bob, and me.

But what's more inviting,

My own heart delighting,

Faith! better than fighting,

I'll tell you, d'ye see?

Why the snug little blessings that most men desire,
The girl we can love, and the friend we admire.
But the sight above all, would you feel, my lad, here
below,

Makes the warm flame of gratitude tenderly overflow.

Tho' drones heap with pleasure,

Wealth's mischievous measure,

Faith! that is no treasure

To you, Bob, and me.

But what's more inviting, &c.

Bob. But what might bring you into these out-of-the-way parts, if I may be so bold? and how did you know my name was Bob?

Captain. Because I take you to be the son of your father, whose name, I guess, was Robert.

Bob. Ifecks! that's no bad guess for a stranger, however. But now, sir, for your business.

Captain. Faith! I came only to inquire after a stray dappled fawn, the owner of which would recover it at any pains or price.

Bob. Oh! if that's all, set your heart at ease. When you have refreshed yourself I'll take you to

my brother Matt, who is all in all with Sir Walter, and looks after the waifs and strays: so if anybody can give you intelligence, he's the man. Besides, there's to be fine doings, this afternoon, round here; so you may as well tarry, and see the pastimes of the place.

Captain. With all my soul. Then, miller, I may peep at some of your woodland nymphs. You have a few pretty ones skipping among these gladeways, I suppose?

Bob. Oh! a mort! I'll shew you one among 'em shall make your mouth water if you're ever so nice.

Captain. Why don't you pick out one amongst them for a wife, Bob?

Bob. Because I can't choose the sample I like.

Captain. A little shy, eh! Bob, of the anthers that flourish so thick around you?

Bob. No, no; I understand your joke, sir; but I've no fears of that kind, I promise you.

AIR.—BOB.

*My heart is as honest, and brave as the best,
My body's as sound as a roach;
Tho' in gay fangled garments I ne'er were dress'd,
Nor stuck up my nob in a coach,
If fortune refuses to flow with my stream,
My sacks with her riches to fill,
Why, surely, 'tis fortune alone that's to blame,
And not honest Bob of the mill.*

*My breast is as artless, and blithe as my lay,
From my cottage content never flies;
She is sure to reward the fatigue of the day,
And I know how to value the prize:
Would the girl that I love, then, but give me her hand,
The world it may wag as it will;
I defy the first squire, or lord of the land,
To dishonour plain Bob of the mill.* [Exit.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—EMILY discovered, reading, near the cottage.

Emily. Why should the report of a stranger's arrival on the forest, so much alarm me? But may be not, by this time, have removed me as far from his memory, as his person? Oh! no: my Wilford is still the same; and, ill-fated as we are, my heart must dwell upon his fidelity with emotions of delight.

AIR.—EMILY.

*Sweet inmate, sensibility!
How pure thy transports flow,
When even grief that springs from thee,
Is luxury in woe.
Without thee, where's the sigh of love,
Or blush by grace refin'd?
Where friendship's sacred tear, to prove
The triumph of the mind?*
(*Emily continues reading.*)

Enter SIR WALTER WARING and MEDLEY with his clerk's bag.

Medley. Yes, yes; there she is upon the layer, as I expected.

Sir W. Why, she warbles as innocently as a little robin, Matt.

Medley. Oh! she can warble fast enough, if that's all; why, I dare say she'll turn out, upon examination, to be one of the little burdy-gurdy girls that grind music about the streets of London.

Sir W. But are you sure that my tenant, Fairlop, like a sly old fox, has picked up this pretty

chicken for himself? Have you evidence of the fact?

Medley. To be sure, your worship. I've his daughter Dolly's own confession of the whole.

Sir W. Well, I'll frighten her a little, but I cannot find in my conscience to hurt her; for every moment I perceive in her fresh beauties, and so forth.

Medley. Justice, you know, sir, should be blind on these occasions.

Sir W. What signifies that, Matt, when one can see such charms with half an eye? But what can she be reading?

Medley. No good, I'll answer for't.

Enter DOLLY, who seeing them, goes up to Emily.

Dolly. As I live, here's Sir Walter! We must make a courtesy to him. (*Emily rises, and modestly curtsies with Dolly.*)

Sir W. They observe us: what a pretty rogue! Hark ye! young, blooming damsel!

Dolly. Which of us, and please your worship?

Medley. Not you, Madam Forward-step. Here, Miss Scapegrace, walk this way. (*To Emily.*)

Sir W. Don't, Matt. I won't suffer you to be so harsh with her. How came you, child, into the limits of this forest?

Emily. Good heav'n! how shall I support myself? (*Aside.*)

Dolly. Why, pluck up a good spirit, and never mind it. (*Apart.*)

Medley. (*Apart to Sir W.*) As this may turn out a nice point at sessions, you should ask her where she was born; and then, how she got her bread from her youth up: that's the practice according to law.

Sir W. But not exactly, Matt, according to my nature.

Medley. Indeed, first of all she should be sworn. (*Takes out a book.*)

Sir W. Well, you may swear her; but I cannot be severe with her without positive evidence of the fact.

Medley. Take off your glove.

Emily. What can this mean? (*To Dolly.*)

Dolly. I'm sure I don't know; but I'll run and fetch my father. [Exit.]

Sir W. Come, come, pretty one, the law requires you should be sworn.

Emily. Pray, sir, inform me, against what rule of society have I offended, that my humble character should be thus scrupulously inquired into?

Medley. You hear his worship's commands, and that's sufficient.

Emily. (*To Sir W.*) I fear, sir, I know not the extent of so solemn an obligation.

Sir W. No? not an oath? Oh, fie!

Emily. No, indeed, sir. I intreat you will have the goodness to expound it to me.

Sir W. Why, child, an oath is, as one may say, a sacred kind of a—taking of a—

Medley. Lord! sir, I'd be above explaining it to her; besides here comes the old offender.

Enter FAIRLOP.

Sir W. Sirrah! how dare you? how durst you?—You may retire, child, for the present. (*To Emily, who goes out.*)

Fair. Mercy on us! what, and please your worship?

Medley. We are come in the king's name to demand, Master Fairlop, who and what that little coaxing mix is?

Sir W. Where she comes from? and how you came by her?

Fair. And please you, all I know your honour shall know.

Medley. Now for it.

Fair. I found this poor Emily, a friendless creature, that the world had turned its back upon; and so, your honour, I took her in—

Medley. And keep her, in the face of the whole forest?

Sir W. Why, your betters could have done no more. A'n't you ashamed of yourself, Master Fairlop?

Fair. No, indeed, your worship.

Sir W. No!

Fair. Why should a poor man be ashamed of an act that the great are so proud of?

Medley. There's impudence for you!

Sir W. Why, what will the world say of you?

Fair. So long, your honour, as I can lie down with a quiet conscience, and rise to work under a good landlord, I heed not the world and all its malice.

Sir W. What, have you no regard for your own precious soul, and so forth?

Fair. When my poor trunk is felled, and the knots hewn off, I hope that some sound plank will be found here, (*laying his hand on his breast*) as well as in finer sticks with a smoother bark.

Medley. Why, don't you know whose tenant you are?

Fair. Dear heart! what a question!

Sir W. Ay, answer him that.

Fair. To be sure, I am your honour's tenant for the hop-ground, the six-acre croft, and the little woodland plot, where I was born; and I always strove hard not to be behind-hand with my rent.

Sir W. Then, mark me: I'll let it all over your head to-morrow, if you don't discard that bewitching little baggage directly.

Fair. That's rather hard! I've lived under your worship three-and-fifty years—but if it must be so, I'll be content. I hope your honour will get a better tenant.

Sir W. What, you will be obstinate?

AIR.—FAIRLOP.

Good lack-a-day!

*I would not, for the land I hold,
Nor sacks brim-full of British gold,*

My trust betray:

I'll do such deed for no man.

My maxim is, to do my best,

*To make each creature round me blest,
Much more a helpless woman.* [Exit.

Sir W. What a sturdy old pollard this is, Matt!

Medley. Why, he'll corrupt the morals of the whole hamlet, his poor daughter Dolly and all.

Sir W. But still, Medley, as to the little warbler herself, I do not find, yet, that we have evidence of the fact.

Medley. You know, your worship, Burn says—

Sir W. Pooh, pooh! what signifies what Burn says? I question if he ever he met with so ticklish a case in the whole course of his life.

Enter BOB, who whispers to Medley.

Medley. A strange gentleman! glad to speak with me?

Sir W. Here, Bob! your brother Matt wants me to play the very deuce with the pretty little stranger at the woodside.

Bob. No, sure, your honour?

Medley. Your worship, to be sure, must act as you please.

Sir W. If I should commit her, you, as constable, Bob, must take the poor rogue to the house of correction.

Bob. I could not do it, your honour, for the

world. Lord love her little heart, what has she done?

Sir W. True, Robert; that's what I want to know: at all events, I'll do nothing further in it till I've re-examined her closely, and so forth.

Medley. I don't see, indeed, that there can be any harm in re-considering the case.

Sir W. No, none in the world; besides, we should hear all circumstances, *pro* and *con*, and so forth.

Bob. Ay, do, your honour. Why, brother Matt, you wa'n't used to be a hard-hearted fellow; particularly to the poor girls.

Medley. No, God forbid I ever should be; though this is a terrible example, Bob, for poor Dolly.

TRIO.—SIR WALTER WARING, BOB, and MEDLEY.

All. *Hard is the task, in one decree,
To blend*

Medley. *Law,*
Bob. *Love,*
Sir W. *And clemency.*

All. *But where they equally prevail,
Let soft compassion turn the scale.* [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—A Garden.

Enter DOLLY.

Dolly. Where can this cruel monster of mine be? I did not intend to let him see that I loved him this half year; but if I don't, he may still play poor Emily some ill-natured trick. Oh! here he is. As her ladyship, Miss Dinah, kindly takes our part, I'll be upon the high ropes a little now as well as be.

Enter MEDLEY.

Medley. Well, Madam Dolly, what may your business be with me? for I'm rather in haste—

Dolly. Lud! what a hurry some folks are in all of a sudden! If you must know, sir, I sent for you to tell you that you and Sir Walter are going to old Nick as fast as you can gallop.

Medley. Indeed! why, then, perhaps, you would not dislike to take a canter along with us?

Dolly. You may joke and jeer, Mr. Matt; but how can you find in your heart to colloque and plot against so innocent a creature?

Medley. I colloque? I scorn your words.

Dolly. What, could you learn nothing better in London, Mr. Medley, than to slander a poor, innocent girl, because she refused your brother Bob? Poor spite!

Medley. Why, if you come to that, didn't you tell me, with your own mouth, that—

Dolly. That what?

Medley. That your father had taken a fancy to her? and didn't he acknowledge it before his worship himself?

Dolly. Mercy upon us! what is this wicked world come to? I?

Medley. What! don't she—now mind me, Dolly—are you sure and certain that—

Dolly. What?

Medley. That Emily does not, now and then, by chance, tie your father's nightcap under his chin?

Dolly. I wonder you aren't ashamed of yourself to look me in the face after such a speech.

Medley. Faith! there may be some confounded mistake in this affair, after all. (*Aside.*) Why, Dolly, I only—

Dolly. My father may be poor, sir; but ask the whole hamlet whether they ever found him dishonest.

Medley. No, Dolly: but such a bewitching little

rogue, you know, might have done you no good: that was all my fear, I can assure you now, Dolly.

Dolly. I thought you more of a man: she's as innocent—

Medley. Are you in earnest?

Dolly. Earnest!

AIR.—DOLLY.

*When next you view the lily blow,
Or on wild heath the driven snow,
Toss'd rudely by the wind,
Tell me then, which you would compare
To her who, with a form that's fair,
Adds still a fairer mind.*

Medley. Poor thing! if that's the case, I have been sadly to blame. But I'm glad we stopped proceedings. No, the law must not take its course—to trample down innocence and humanity!

Dolly. My dear Matt, do you say so?

Medley. To be sure I do.

Dolly. Then heaven will bless, and I will kiss you for it. *(Runs and kisses him.)*

Medley. Methinks, Dolly, I like your blessing the best, at present; but did you give it me for yourself, or your friend?

Dolly. Oh! half one and half t'other.

Medley. Then let me have a whole one on your own account; *(kisses her)* and now, to make my happiness complete, give me your hand, and say you're mine for ever.

Dolly. Lord! you do tease a body so, Matt!

Medley. Come, come!

Dolly. Well, then, there; *(gives her hand)* but you must get my father's consent.

Medley. To be sure; and then, all's settled and done. I'll go and set Sir Walter right, and come to you both before we meet at the archery. But who the deuce is this pretty water-wagtail? come, surely you may tell me now.

Dolly. I can't, indeed; but you shall know all about it in good time.

DUETT.—DOLLY and MEDLEY.

Medley. *Having brought my suit to issue,
I may venture close to kiss you,
Lovely Dolt! dearest Dolt!
Ever singing toll-de-roll.*

Dolly. *Ay, but when my charms are falling,
Shall I then still hear you calling
Lovely Dolt! dearest Dolt!
Ever singing toll-de-roll?*

Medley. *You're a woman made for ever.*

Dolly. *You're a man, sir, made for ever.*

Both. *Hold your head up now, my dear,
Such a match for you how clever!
You'll be envied far and near,
Ever singing toll-de-roll.* *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE III.—A Garden.

SIR WALTER WARING discovered.

Sir W. Matt Medley promised to be with me an hour ago. I want to know how he has managed it, that I may see her out of the reach of my prying cousin. Hold, hold! suppose, after all, she should prove an honest, good girl—what's to be done then? Why, it will only be my care, as it is my duty, to protect her innocence. But if she turns out the little wanton baggage Medley suspects, it will be charity to take her out of the way myself, and thus prevent old Fairlop's ruin. Gads me! here she is, just at the nick. I must be cautious with her at first, till I learn how her pulse beats, and so forth.

Enter EMILY.

Emily. I hope you'll pardon me, sir, this bold intrusion—

Sir W. Make no apology, my little dear; I am happy to see you; I'll do all I can to serve you, depend on't.

Emily. Regardless of my own fate, I come not, sir, to ask indulgence for myself, but most humbly to solicit you in behalf of an amiable man.

Sir W. Ay; who can that be, child?

Emily. One, sir, who through life has enjoyed the cheering warmth of your benevolence, and is, therefore, less able, in old age, to bear up against the severity of your displeasure.

Sir W. What, old Fairlop, the woodman, you mean?

Emily. Yes, sir.

Sir W. A pretty amiable fellow, to be sure, child! but, come, they say you're very partial to him; now confess the truth, and I don't know what may be done.

Emily. Oh! sir, I do, indeed, regard him, beyond what even gratitude can express.

Sir W. That's strange! but what could you see, child, in such an old delving blockhead?

Emily. Everything that can render man worthy of esteem. I fear, sir, that I have been the cause of his present distress: restore him but to your protecting favour, and dispose of me and my sufferings in what manner you please.

Sir W. 'Gad! that's a significant hint I don't dislike, however. *(Aside.)*

AIR.—EMILY.

*Hear me, and comfort shall your steps attend;
Leave not the man of worth without a friend.*

Oh! the rapture of possessing

Power to dispense a blessing,

Or to raise a prostrate foe;

God-like he! the deed concealing,

Who, with sympathetic feeling,

Softens but one sigh of woe.

Sir W. Well, child, I'll consider of it. I won't detain you here any longer now, for fear of some inquisitive eye observing us; so, if you'll fix a time with my clerk, Medley, where I may see you again presently, I'll tell you a little more of my mind, and so forth. *[Emily curtsies, and retires.]* "Dispose of me as you please!" pretty soul! how innocently complying! Yes, yes; the case now is clear enough: but what puzzles me is, how that liquorish-toothed old woodman could come by her. Well, she's fair game now, Matt, or I wonder. Let me see, how shall I dispose of her? I'm too much enraptured to plan the scheme myself: Matt shall find out some sly corner where the little rogue may live as happily as the day is long; and then, how snug shall I be with so pretty a companion, to read me through a cold winter's night, and so forth.

AIR.—SIR WALTER.

*What mortal e'er saw such a creature?
How prettily turn'd ev'ry feature!*

A mouth chastely simple,

A chin deck'd with dimple,

A cheek that discloses

Full-blown damask roses,

*With a lip like a ruby that's brought from afar,
And an eye that out-twinkles the bright morning star.* *[Exit.]*

SCENE IV.—The Forest.

DOLLY and MEDLEY discovered.

Medley. But where's your innocent companion? I long to atone for my offence.

Dolly. She's gone up to Sir Walter's; for what purpose I know no more than you: but here she returns.

Enter EMILY, dejectedly.

Medley. Cheer up your little heart; nobody will harm you. I'm a whimsical fellow, and take the wrong end of a matter, now and then, as well as other folks; but I think I would go as many miles on foot to serve one in distress, as any man upon the forest.

Dolly. There! didn't I tell you Matt was honest in grain?

Emily. Oh! sir, but I dread the effects of Sir Walter's resentment.

Medley. Never you fear, leave him to me.

Emily. He directed me to consult you about a further interview with him to-day.

Dolly. What can his worship want with her again?

Medley. Some business, I fancy, that I only can settle properly between them; but, come, I've news for you: have you heard of the strange gentleman just come on the forest?

Dolly. We have, and wish mightily to see him; don't we, Emily?

Emily. We do, indeed; and mine is more than common curiosity.

Medley. My brother Bob first scraped acquaintance with him. I'faith! here they come together in search of me; you may now satisfy your curiosity while I examine him.

Emily. (To *Dolly*.) Let us retire awhile, for I feel an agitation I cannot describe.

Enter CAPTAIN O'DONNELL and BOB.

Bob. This is the strange gentleman I told you of, brother.

Medley. Good day to you, sir.

Captain. Sir, I'm your servant.

Medley. I am told you wanted to speak with me.

Captain. To be sure and I do. The short and the long of the business is, I have lost a little runaway damsel, and you, my dear, must be after finding her for me.

Medley. That's coming to the point, indeed!

Bob. Who knows but 'tis Miss Emily he's hunting for? (*Apart to Medley*.)

Medley. That we shall soon see. (*Apart to Bob*.) We have choice of waifs and strays on this forest. Now here, (*pointing to Emily and Dolly, who approach*.) here's a pair of pretty out-lying dwer, will either of these suit you?

Dolly. (*As the Captain turns*.) There, now you may see; is that anything like him? (*To Emily*.)

Emily. Oh! no.

Medley. Here, lasses, you must help this honest gentleman to find his sweetheart.

Dolly. I hope, sir, she's worth looking for.

Bob. For my part, I hope it won't turn out a wild-geese chase.

Captain. You all seem to think it a very good joke, but, as a stranger among you, let me hope for your good wishes, at least.

Emily. You have mine, sir, from a sympathizing heart.

Dolly. And I wish that you may recover your wandering mistress with all my soul.

GLEE.—EMILY, DOLLY, and BOB.

*Oh! Mistress Coy! where art thou roving?
Oh! stay and hear thy true-love coming,*

That can sing both high and low.

Trip no farther, pretty sweetest,

Journeys end in lovers' meeting,

Every wise man's son doth know.

*Seek for love, but not hereafter;
Present mirth has present laughter;*

What's to come is still unsure.

In delay there lies no plenty;

Flee not bliss, then, sweet, and twenty;

Youth's a season won't endure.

[*Exeunt Emily, Dolly, and Bob.*]

Medley. Well, but this is an odd kind of story, Captain. Come, as we are by ourselves, what sort of a damsel have you lost?

Captain. Now, 'faith! that's the very thing I came to learn of yourself. But I'm sorry the dear blue-eyed girl has left us so soon, without leave.

Medley. What the devil! don't you know your own mistress?

Captain. (*Laughing*.) Palliluh! but that's a good joke! Why, my dear, she's no mistress of mine.

Medley. Not your's?

Captain. Not at all. I'll tell you, as a secret: it's my friend's.

Medley. Oh! your friend's is it?

Captain. To be sure and it is.

Medley. What an opportunity for treating Miss Di with a specimen of my cousin Tipperary's courtship! unless her shape should mar the joke.

(*Aside*.) Well, but, Captain, let's know a few of the marks and colours: is she fair or brown, fat or lean?

Captain. Why, that, upon my conscience, I forgot to ask; but, as near as I can guess, by my friend's taste, she must be a clever, plumpish kind of creature; just about neither one thing nor t'other, d'ye see?

Medley. Come, then, Captain, to keep you no longer in suspense, your friend's lass is lodged not far off.

Captain. But are you in earnest?

Medley. To be sure I am. Now what will you say if I take you to her directly?

Captain. Oh! but will you now, my dear fellow? Give me your hand; and after that, I'll give you an opportunity of doing myself a little favour, if you please.

Medley. What's that, Captain? 'Twas lucky that I told Miss Di, this morning, she would be run away with. (*Aside*.)

Captain. Only to tell me where I may find that little blue-eyed fawn, as a recompense for my own pains.

Medley. And why not hamper Sir Walter with him a little at the same time, and so rescue poor Emily, who may be the lass he's in search of, after all? (*Aside*.)

Captain. But what are you prosing so much about to yourself, little fellow?

Medley. Why, I'm thinking that this may be a service of some danger, as well as honour.

Captain. So much the better.

Medley. You can talk big, and fight a little, upon occasion?

Captain. (*Sternly*.) Is it a laugh, sir, you are after putting upon a soldier?

Medley. Who, me?—don't look so fierce, Captain,—not I, upon my word.

Captain. I'd have you learn, sir, that, when necessary, I can fight a great deal, and say nothing at all about it.

Medley. Why, that's better still; then give me your hand, my dear friend, and now mind what I say to you.

Captain. Well, proceed.

Medley. You see that great house? (*Pointing to the mansion*.)

Captain. Very well.

Medley. That is Sir Walter Waring's, where she is to be found.

Captain. The devil she is now!

Medley. Our forest air has not disagreed with her; you'll find her as plump as a partridge. How Sir Walter came by her, that you must learn; but he has always been a devil of a fellow, from his youth, for fighting and wenching.

Captain. Oh! be easy: let me see whether he won't give her up to me. And a fighting fellow, too!

Medley. You'll be able to speak to her now, as he is riding in the park. Ask for the young lady; you can't mistake her, as she is the only one in the house.

Captain. To be sure, and I won't beat up the old buck's quarters. I perceive you've a little intrigue and frolic in this desert forest, as well as in Ireland's own self.

Medley. And why not?

AIR.—MEDLEY.

Oh! life's a gay forest, like merry Sherwood,

Tantarra, my boys!

Abounding with fish, flesh, and fowl, that is good;

These are your joys!

When the soft mountain-roe

Is skipping—soho!

Or tripping—teigho!

It will happen so!

This, this is the time, if it's well understood,

For the sport of that forest, dear merry Sherwood.

In such forests where game will for ever arise,

Tantarra, my boys!

We may chace ev'ry light-footed pleasure that flies;

These are your joys!

Slily, then, mark the doe,

That's skipping—soho!

Or tripping—teigho!

It will happen so!

For the well-flavour'd ven'son, dear me! is so good,

That is shot by an arrow in merry Sherwood.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—A Room in Sir Walter Waring's house.

MISS DI CLACKIT discovered.

Miss Di. I hope the archery will go off well; or my sweet cousin will never let me hear the last of it, never hear the last of it. He has been endeavouring to turn it into ridicule all through the hamlet, this morning. What woman of spirit, but myself, would endure the mortifying controul that I do? But I'll match him one day or other, when he least expects it. Where the deuce can this girl be? (*Rings the bell, and calls at the same time.*) Bridget, Bridget!

Enter BRIDGET.

Bridget. Did you call, your ladyship?

Miss Di. Call! to be sure I did call, and have called for you this half-hour. Is my archery dress ready? quite ready? for, let me tell you—

Bridget. Yes, your ladyship; and I think your ladyship will look more handsomer in it than ever I see you in all my born days—

Miss Di. There, there! now you are going to crack the drum of my ear with your eternal talking.

AIR.—MISS DI CLACKIT.

Young women should shun tittle-tattle;

Like sun-dials, never should prattle;

Just tell what they're ask'd, and be still.

But girls are so idle,

Their tongue they won't bridle,

So gallop it goes, like the clack of a mill.

*We gentry you never hear rattle,
Like furies engag'd in a battle:
Of talking we soon have our fill.
But girls are so idle, &c.*

You may go about your business—may go about your business. [*Exit Bridget.*] What the deuce is there in talking, that people are so excessively fond of it—excessively fond of it? For my part—

Re-enter BRIDGET.

Well, what's the matter? what's the matter now? how often have I told you—

Bridget. There's a gentleman in the hall wishes to speak with your ladyship: he says he came from Mr. Medley.

Miss Di. Wants to speak with me, child? wants to speak with me? What kind—what sort of a gentleman? Is the girl dumb? why don't you answer? why don't you—

Bridget. Oh! a comely, genteel person as you could wish to see, my lady; but he talks a little like a foreigner.

Miss Di. Came from Medley! Then, I find, there was something in his hint to me this morning, about a new admirer. (*Aside.*) Shew him in immediately: how like a stupid statue the girl stands! [*Exit Bridget.*] I like foreigners, and everything that's foreign. He must have heard of my situation, and, in the true spirit of foreign gallantry, wishes to release me from this hideous captivity. There's no resisting one's fate. But I fear he has caught me in a horrid deshabelle—horrid deshabelle. (*Arranging her dress in the glass.*)

Enter CAPTAIN O'DONNELL.

Captain. 'Faith! and I believe, Arthur, you have blundered into a small mistake here. (*Aside.*)

Miss Di. (*Curtseying low.*) Sir, you do me honour by this visit. But you seem a little surprised; you need not be alarmed, for Sir Walter—

Captain. Oh! madam, never fear me: I'm not to be alarmed by all the Sir fighting Walters on the forest. (*Looking at her inquisitively.*)

Miss Di. Well, Bridget was quite right; he is a fine, bold man, indeed; and sure enough—(*Aside.*)

Captain. (*Looking round.*) You've some agreeable female, I presume, as a companion about your person, madam?

Miss Di. Not a soul, sir: I'm confined here, as you see, by my solitary self.

Captain. Then there can be no mistake. This must be the little fellow's partridge; and a plump partridge she is, sure enough. (*Aside.*)

Miss Di. Pray, what may be the commands, sir, with which you have to honour me? You know, sir, that—

Captain. To be sure, and are you not the dear creature I have travelled so many weary miles to look after?

Miss Di. That's a question you, sir, can best resolve; it would ill become me to—(*Affecting bashfulness.*)

Captain. Oh! it's her own self, I perceive; though she's grown old enough for the lad's mother-in-law, at least: but that's his business, and not mine. (*Aside.*) Oh! miss, we were afraid we had lost you for ever.

Miss Di. Too long have I been lost, indeed, sir. Oh! the tedious moments that—

Captain. Three short years seem to have made a little alteration in you, miss, for the better.

Miss Di. Better, sir! I thought, for the last twelve months, my poor heart would have been broken: my grief of heart—

Captain. Well, then, under all your sorrows and concerns, miss, it's a pleasant thing to see you look so jolly.

Miss Di. Jolly, sir! My sighs and tears, at one time, had nearly worn me into a consumption.

Captain. Now, a cousin-german of mine, in the county of Sligo, by bottling up her tears too much in a hurry, fell, poor soul, into a devil of a dropsy.

Miss Di. You've heard—you've heard, no doubt, sir, of my deplorable fate?

Captain. To be sure; and of the old baronet's tricks, into the bargain; but how came you with him at all, my dear miss?

Miss Di. It was my cruel destiny: perhaps you have not heard how? I'll tell you the whole, sir; I'll tell you—

Captain. Oh! you may spare yourself all that trouble: little Mitimus, the justice's clerk, told me every syllable.—If these are her "mild melody accents," what a comical ear must poor Willford have for music! (*Aside.*) But come, madam, thank your stars that your faithful admirer is arrived; that old square-toes, our uncle, is gone to take a peep at the other world; and that you may now, if you please, be made a happy creature for your life to come.

Miss Di. Dear sir, you only flatter a woman's weak credulity—weak credulity. But to whom do I owe the honour of so agreeable a visit—this agreeable visit? for I blush to own—

Captain. My name, Miss, is Arthur O'Donnel, Esquire. I have the honour to command a company in Dillon's brigade; would lay down my life for my friend; and am arrived, with your leave, to take your sweet self to liberty, and the man you must love and adore.

Miss Di. But, surely, sir, you are rather too impatient—too impatient: besides, you know, sir, it requires time—

Captain. Time! oh! have as little to do with that old rap as you can help.

Enter BRIDGET, hastily.

Bridget. La! ma'an, Sir Walter's getting off his horse at the keeper's lodge, and will be within in a few minutes. [*Exit.*]

Miss Di. How unfortunate! but the wretch is, always in the way—always in the way. Dear sir, must beg the favour of you to retire; I am afraid that—

Captain. Oh! never fear me, madam. Let him come with his fighting face, and we'll see who has the best pretensions to you.

Miss Di. But I'm alarmed beyond measure for the consequence. I intreat you to leave me for the present—leave me for the present; and hereafter, you know—

Captain. Well, but if I file off, and suffer the enemy to re-possess the garrison, will you guarantee me another speedy interview, and hold yourself in readiness for a quick march at a moment's notice?

Miss Di. That requires a little consideration; but I'll talk with Medley on the subject, and from him expect to hear when and where you may see me again; but may I rely on your honourable protection for a poor, helpless virgin that— [*Exit.*]

AIR.—CAPTAIN O'DONNELL.

*Oh! fear not my courage prov'd over and over:
Your soldier will rout each impertinent lover;
With a row-dow! I'll guard you, the foe shall your
presence fly;
Who to fall in love here, must have tumbled, 'faith!
pretty high.*

With wide-spreading charms, like the Lake of Killarney.

*Dear creature, on! listen to none of their blarney.
With a row-dow, &c.*

*Your true-hearted lad is come galloping to you:
Oh! the salmon-leap's nought to his flight to pursue you.*

With a row-dow, &c.

*Your short date of beauty, your glib tongue contrasting,
Like our own Giant's-causeway, will prove everlasting.*

With a row-dow, &c.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE VI.—The Forest.

MEDLEY discovered.

Medley. So far, I fancy, this little noddle of mine has succeeded pretty well. Miss Di, I should hope, is by this time smitten with my cousin Tipperary; for I mistake my man, if, in this first visit, he made himself understood to be courting for any one but himself. Now must I contrive a few whimsical appointments, like so many cross-bills in chancery; but with this difference, that mine are not intended to create but to prevent mischief.

Enter CAPTAIN O'DONNELL.

Medley. Well, my friend, did you meet with her as I informed you?

Captain. To be sure, and I did; for which I heartily thank you, my dear fellow.

Medley. You found her well, I hope?

Captain. Yes, heartily enough, considering the poor creature has almost fretted herself into a consumption.

Medley. Alter'd a little, no doubt?

Capt. Indeed, and you may say that: why she's so plaguily altered, that she does not look like the same creature.

Medley. But how should you know that, Captain? I thought you had never seen her before.

Captain. But haven't I seen her lover paint her to me a thousand times over? though I now perceive, that he always took a very flattering likeness.

Enter BOB.

Bob. His worship wants you, brother, directly.

Medley. And I his worship; and I fancy on the same business.

Captain. Robert, you're an honest fellow; and I'm not a little indebted to you, my dear. (*Shaking him by the hand.*)

Bob. None in the least, sir.

Medley. You wished, Captain, to learn something further about the little nymph with the blue sparklers?

Captain. To be sure and I did; and you'll assist me. Upon my conscience, but it's a pleasant thing to be able to do a good turn, now and then, by one another, an't it, Bob?

Bob. Ay, that it is, for certain.

Medley. Well, then, go with my brother down to the Ball-faced Stag; call for a bottle of wine, and by the time you're sat down to it, I'll be with you, and give you the clue you want.

Captain. My dear little fellow, how friendly will that be? Come along, Bob! we'll soon draw the cork, boy, and drink to the lass we like best on the forest!

TRIO.—CAPT. O'DONNEL, MEDLEY, and BOB.

*Should mirth be observ'd by her sons to decline,
They recruit her bright lamp with a flask of good
wine;
When the glass circles round, and our spirits im-
prove,
How sweet flows the bumper to friendship and love!*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Forest.

WILFORD discovered.

Wilf. Which way can I shape my further course with any prospect of success? I have met with no one except a savagetrain of hunters, and they made but a sport of my distress. Yon track seems the most beaten, and may lead me to our appointed rendezvous: I'll explore my way thither, in expectation of some tidings from my friend's pursuit; but my heart at this moment misgives me, and tells me, that Emily is estranged from it for ever!

AIR.—WILFORD.

*'Tis in vain for succour calling,
Hope no more my bosom cheers;
Cruel fate that bliss appalling,
With her scroll of joyless years.
Come, despair, and distraction confound me!
Add still to my life's wretched load;
And while your mix'd horrors surround me,
This desert of wildness shall be my abode.*

Captain. (Behind.) Hilloho! hilloho! ho!
Wilf. That must be his welcome voice! Hallo! boy, hallo!

Enter CAPTAIN O'DONNEL.

My dear friend, how rejoiced am I to see you!

Captain. And you may thank the luck of it, Wilford, that I should make a blunder upon you so soon.

Wilf. Well, what success?

Captain. Faith! as to the success, d'ye see? why hasn't very well tell.

Wilf. Have you seen or heard anything of my Emily?

Captain. To be sure I have seen her; and for the matter of that, have heard a little about her into the bargain.

Wilf. Say, then, where, and how is she?

Captain. Oh! she's not far off; and, let me tell you, one of the plumpest and sleekest does on the forest.

Wilf. Spoke she not of me with passionate anxiety?

Captain. Not a great deal of that, though she talked pretty freely, too; but the poor creature, Wilford, has lost all the "mild, melody accents" that you told me so much about.

Wilf. Pooh! is this a time for jesting?

Capt. The devil a jest! However, you'll soon see her, and judge for yourself: beside, you'll have to learn something about her and an old fighting Sir Walter, where she's just gone on a comical kind of visit, which I can hardly make head or tail of!

Wilf. Visit to an old fighting Sir Walter! What can all this mean? Oh! fly with me instantly to relieve my impatience.

Capt. And that I will, my friend!—but I've a little impatience of my own to fly with first. Had

you ever the honour of a tête-à-tête, Wilford, with a pretty blooming damsel in a hop-ground?

Wilf. Indeed, I take this very unfriendly, O'Donnel.

Captain. What, that I won't give up the chance of my own little wild doe, to go immediately after your's, which I've got safe enough in the toils for you?

Wilf. Direct me but the way—

Captain. Well, then, if you are in such haste—you see that little crooked gladway straight before you; it leads to the village near which she lodges. Inquire for the sign of the Stag with the bald, white countenance; halt there; and, in half-an-hour, I'll be with you, and conduct you to your rivulet Emily.

Wilf. But may I depend upon you?

Captain. Oh! as sure as fate. [Exit Wilford.] Poor fellow! what a devil of a job will it be, if, after all this trouble, he should find his Emily so altered, that his own eyes and ears can't put a remembrance upon her! Give Arthur O'Donnel the girl neither quite so plump, nor so fond of changing. To be sure, and I'm not going to meet a little creature just after my own heart! and, oh! will I not love her as long as the frailty of my nature will permit! ay, that I will, by the—but be easy, Arthur; let me swear by something that will not disgrace her.

AIR.—CAPT. O'DONNEL.

*By her own lovely self, that's my choice and delight;
By that form I could gaze on from morning till
night;*

*By that bosom, so prettily veil'd from my sight,
I swear to adore the dear creature!*

*By the smiles on that cheek, I could ever caress;
By the stars, which her forehead so brilliantly dress;
By those lips, which my own pair would willingly
press;*

I swear to adore the dear creature!

SCENE VIII.—A Hop-ground.

Various parties of Hop-pickers working at the cribs;
men taking down the hop-poles, &c.

CHORUS.

*Hail to the vine of Britain's vale!
Whose stores refine her nut-brown ale,
Till that like nectar flows;
Whose virtues to this isle confin'd,
Are sent to cheer a Briton's mind,
Too gen'rous for his foes.*

Enter FAIRLOP.

Fair. Come, strike! strike, lads and lasses! you've done a fair morning's work; and now all hands to the kiln to dinner!

[Exeunt Hop-pickers, &c.]

Enter MEDLEY.

Medley. I have luckily nicked the time, I find. But where's my cousin Tipperary? Unless I trap this wild bird first, my whole plan will be destroyed.

Enter CAPTAIN O'DONNEL.

Captain. Well, my dear—

Medley. Ecod! I fear it's not so well.

Captain. Why, what's the matter, my little fellow?

Medley. Only your friend's damsel's about to be moved off, that's all.

Captain. What is't you mean? Is it game you're making?

Medley. Sir Walter hearing, I suppose, of your search after her, has, some how or other, prevailed upon her to be secretly conveyed to one of his tenants on the other side of the forest, and fixed this time and place to meet her for that purpose.

Captain. And after all her fine speeches and promises to me?—But where's my little grig? she won't slip through my fingers after this manner, I hope.

Medley. No, no; you're safe enough there; I was obliged, you know, to put off her coming for fear of a discovery.—But see, yonder appears one of the party; and the other, no doubt, will soon follow.

Captain. And Arthur O'Donnel will soon make another amongst them.

Medley. Suppose, then, we conceal ourselves hereabouts, and observe their motions?

Captain. With all my soul!

Medley. But see what a deuced black cloud there is coming up with the wind! (*The light gradually diminishes.*)

Captain. Well, and what of that?

Medley. Why, a'n't you afraid, Captain, that it will pepper your fine jacket for you?

Captain. Oh! not at all: a soldier's jacket is not made for sunshine; and mine, I know, won't turn its back to a flying shower.

Medley. If that is the case, step you behind that pile of hop-poles, while I get on the snug side of this tree.

Captain. Do so, little fellow. 'Faith, and I have hid myself in many a worse ambuscade before now. (*Concealing himself.*)

Medley. Here he comes, and the storm close at his skirts. (*Retires behind the tree.*)

Enter SIR WALTER WARING.

Sir W. I don't much like the looks of the weather—But here am I, snugly arrived first.

Captain. (*Peeping.*) To be sure, my old Cock-atoo, and you are not! (*Aside.*)

Sir W. The sun seems to put rather a black face upon it; but the hop-pickers are all out of the way. Surely, I can find a little shelter for her!—What a lucky opportunity to settle matters with the pretty rogue!

Captain. And with me at the same time, if you please. (*Aside.*)

Sir W. Didn't I hear somebody? No; 'twas only a rustling among the vines. Who knows, but the little bashful hussy may be half concealed amongst them? I'll take a peep, and so forth. (*Walks into the hop-ground.*)

Captain. There's an abominable old gander for you! (*Aside.*)

Medley. (*Peeping.*) Hush, hush! for the hen bird's now on wing!

Enter MISS DI CLACKIT in her archery dress.

Miss Di. How indiscreet to consent to this interview!

Captain. Indeed, miss, and you may say that. (*Aside.*)

Miss Di. He's a man of honour, no doubt.—But, bless me! how the sky lowers. What shall I do if I'm caught in a tempest?

Captain. Indeed, miss, and you deserve a good sopping for your pains! (*Aside.*)

Miss Di. I thought I heard a footstep this way!

Captain. Your own, my dear; for you tread none of the lightest. (*Aside.*—*Miss Di Clackit goes into the hop-ground. A tempestuous shower comes on. Captain O'Donnel and Medley laugh.*)

Medley. 'Faith, they've got a souser!

Captain. So much the better. To be sure, and I won't wing the old cock-bird for crossing upon my own sport. (*Storm ceases.*)

QUARTETTO.—MISS DI CLACKIT, SIR WALTER WARING, CAPTAIN O'DONNEL, and MEDLEY.

Capt. and }
Medley } *Mark how the cooing pair draws near!*

Miss Di *Why, Captain?*

Sir W. *Emily!*

Both. *I'm here!*

Where are you?—Here in half-drown'd state!

Capt. and }
Medley } *Hark! the old ring-dove calls his mate!*

Medley. And now, Matt, must you avoid an untimely explanation.

[*Exit.—Sir Walter and Miss Di return, and first discover each other with astonishment, as Captain O'Donnel advances between them, unbuttoning his lapels, and carelessly throwing the rain off his hat.*]

Captain. What a mighty pretty joke is love in a shower! (*Looking at them alternately.*)

Sir W. Upon my soul, madam, I can't say that—that I expected the honour of this ducking to—to meet you here.

Miss Di. (*Confused.*) Nor I, sir, the pleasure of catching my death for the—the felicity of seeing you here.—Provoking wretch! (*Aside.*) You may think, sir—

Captain. Oh, palliluh! I did not hope for the honour of expecting you here! nor I the pleasure of seeing you there! (*imitating them*) when you had both contrived the whole farce beforehand, except the happiness of seeing my own self anywhere.

Miss Di. This is very extraordinary behaviour in you, sir. (*To the Captain.*)

Sir W. And have I caught you out, cousin Prudery, at last? (*Exultingly.*)

Miss Di. What is it you mean, sir? I came—

Sir W. To learn to pick hops according to the articles of war: but you've got a good sopping for't, and so forth. (*Apart to her.*)

Captain. There's an honest fellow in the world, madam, who has reason to expect better usage at your hands.

Sir W. Excellent! What say you to that, coz? Though she has flushed my pretty game, I can match her, for now I shall be able to silence her clapper by positive evidence of the fact. (*Aside.*)

Miss Di. To you, sir, I hope I shall find time to explain myself; and as to my cousin Wiseacre—
[*Exit.*]

Captain. Oh! madam, the thing is bad enough without any further explanation.

Sir W. And pray, sir, who may you be, that come in this impudent, blustering manner, to poach after a part of my family?

Captain. Part of your family? That's a good joke, my old boy! (*laughing*) but I'll soon settle that. As you're such a devilish fighting fellow, d'ye see? why, you may be pleased to give me a little account of your own self, for daring to presume to seduce the mistress of my friend.

Sir W. I seduce! I a fighting fellow!

Captain. Come, come; make no more words about it: you'll meet me, my old buck, without

farther ceremony, on this very spot, to-morrow morning, at sun-set; that I may not be compelled to post you upon every pole in your own hop-ground.

Sir W. (Looking inquisitively at him.) D—e! if I think this fellow's anything but a bully, after all! I'll try him, however. *(Aside.)* Look ye! Captain Bounceabout, I have served three campaigns, in our country militia, with some credit; and, let me tell you, sir, I am no more afraid than you, or any other man, of fire, sword, and so forth.

Captain. So much the better, my dear.

DUETT.—*SIR WALTER WARING and CAPTAIN O'DONNELL.*

*The dreadful weapons choose, sir,
No, that I must refuse, sir;
We'll bring enough,
Then fight in buff,
'Twill make important news, sir.*

*Sword, pike, and hand-grenade,
Will prove us not afraid;*

*Captain. { With these try well }
Sir W. { With these you think } to hack me;
But being brave,
I'll only have*

*Captain. { My honour's self }
Sir W. { Twelve constables } to back me;*

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

MEDLEY discovered, in an archery dress, with a bugle horn.

Medley. (Laughing.) What would I give to know how they've settled their matters! but we shall have it piping hot when Miss Di comes on the forest, I'll warrant it. Now to muster my female troop. *(Winds his bugle.)*

Enter BOB.

Bob. Here they come, brother Matt; and a pretty shew they make, sure enough. [*Female Archers trip in, preceded by forest colours, and a pastoral band of music.*]

Medley. Well, my sprightly lasses! now fall in, and we'll soon march off to the oak, and see who's to win the pretty prize heifer.

SESTETTO.—MEDLEY, BOB, and Female Archers.

*Female Archers. { Oh! sweet }
But mind, } Mr. Medley, I say.
Come, dear }*

Medley. What the deuce is the matter?

Bob. How neatly they prattle!

Medley. If you keep such a clatter—

Bob. What sweet pretty prattle!

Medley. No game on the forest will stay—

F. Arch. & Bob. } Oh, fie!

Medley. But hence it will fly,
To old Nick, in a trice, to get out of
your way.

*Female Archers. { Oh! sweet }
But mind, } Mr. Medley, I say.
Come, dear }*

Medley. Now, don't stretch your lungs—

F. Arch. We mind not your sneers.

Medley. For to all your glib tongues,
Little kussies, you know,—

F. Arch. & Bob. } Come, pray, let us go.

Medley. I've only but one pair of ears.

Med. & Bob. Pretty dears!

Female Archers. (All talking together.) But I say, Mr. Medley! Now, dear Mr. Medley! &c.

Medley. Hallo! why, if you keep up this clatter, I tell you again, that all the game will break the bounds of the forest. Here, Betsy Blewit, stand by the side of her: very well. Sukey Wheatsheaf, and Jenny Whitethorn, you are next; now let the rest drop in, two and two. But where the deuce are the little woodside nymphs?

Bob. I'll go and fetch them, brother.

Medley. Do, Bob; tell them they'll be too late, if they don't put their best foot first. [*Exit Bob.*]

Kitty. Somebody, I see, thinks there'll be no sport if some folks aren't here. *(All laugh.)*

Medley. Smartly said, Kitty. I don't know how they may shoot an arrow, but you must take care, or some folks will hit as far with their sparklers as the best of you. Now, strike up, pipers.

AIR.—MEDLEY.

*Come, lasses, follow me,
With merry glee,
To sports of woodland archery.*

CHORUS OF FEMALE ARCHERS.

*With merry glee,
We'll follow thee,
To sports of woodland archery.*

[*Medley puts himself at their head, and they march off to the repeat of the Chorus.*]

SCENE IV.—The Forest.

DOLLY discovered, with her bow, &c.

Dolly. Dear, dear! what can I do? We shall certainly be too late. And you will not go? *(Speaking to Emily behind.)* How can you be so unkind?

Enter BOB.

Bob. Come, come, my pretty ones; they are all marched to the ground, with music and streamers; and by this time her ladyship, Miss Dinah, is there. Matt sent me to look for you. But where's Miss Emily?

Dolly. There she sits under that tree, and won't budge an inch for all I can say to her.

Enter EMILY.

Emily. I beg you to excuse me, Dolly: let me go back; say I am unwell.

Bob. Now, pray you, Miss Emily, come along with us; the sight will be worth nothing without you.

GLEE.

*Hark! the bugle's sylvan strain,
Calls us to the sportive plain:
Scene of artless love!*

*Shepherds faithful tales advancing,
Maidens' hearts in transports dancing,
Happy may they prove!*

*How blissful, then, the wood-nymphs' green retreat,
Where love and innocence enraptur'd meet!*

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*View of the Oak.*

Tents, targets, forest colours, &c. Female Archers, &c. ranged on each wing. A dance, in character, commences on MISS DI CLACKIT's entering, and taking her seat at the front of the forest. At the close of the dance, MEDLEY winds his bugle horn, and the Female Archers take their respective posts.

Miss Di. (Walking down through the ranks.) Are they all here? are they all ready?

Medley. We are all ready, quite ready, madam. Where the deuce can my little bussies be? *(Aside.)*

Miss Di. As they are all ready, you may sound the charge, and let the archery commence, though I don't know—*(Medley winds his bugle.)*

Enter EMILY, DOLLY, and BOB.

Dolly. (To Emily.) That's her ladyship, Sir Walter's cousin, sitting alone. *(Medley observes them, as the two first archers stand forth.)*

Medley. Oh! you're come at last! but you've lost your turns; so, stay here, Dolly, till I call you; for I must attend the targets. *(The shooting commences cross-ways at targets placed on each side of the oak. Medley holding in his hand a card, on which to mark the different shots.)*

Medley. (After the first shots.) Pretty well, Kitty, but levelled a little too high. Better, much better, Betsy Blewitt; just within the third circle: very well, indeed. *(After two other shots.)* Oh! bad, very bad! *(Two others.)* Excellent! well done, Jenny! within three inches of the bull's eye. Let me see who'll beat that.

Miss Di. Who's nearest, Medley? who's nearest? who's nearest?

Medley. Oh! madam, Jenny Hawthorn, hollow. *(Shows Miss Dinah the marked card; while the Female Archers march to music for their arrows, and return to different sides.)*

Medley. (Takes Dolly out to shoot.) Now for it, now, Dolly!

Miss Di. Don't rattle and talk so fast, Medley; you confuse them, you confuse them; besides, if they—

Medley. Oh! worst of all, Dolly! No heifer for you, Doll. But you think a good husband prize enough for one day, I suppose? *(Apart.)*

Dolly. Of all conscience, Matt; I am content.

Enter WILFORD and CAPTAIN O'DONNELL, near the oak.

Wilford. Where is the perfidious Emily?

Captain. Oh! there she sits, *(pointing to Miss Di.)* just as unconcerned as if nothing had happened at all.

Wilford. (Walking towards Miss Di, starts back, and turns to the Captain.) Why add mockery to my distress?

Miss Di. Oh! the Captain's here. I'll pretend not to observe him. *(Aside.)*

Medley. (On Emily advancing to shoot.) Don't be alarmed, there's a dear.

Captain. But here's a creature, Wilford! here's one *(beckoning to Wilford)* after my own choice. *(At this instant Emily shoots, and hits the centre of the target. Bugle sounds.)*

Medley. She's won it! she's won it!

CHORUS.

*To beauty's shaft the prize decrees,
In strains of ancient minstrelsy.*

(Wilford and Emily at this instant behold each other; she sinks on Dolly's arm; the Captain runs and supports her.)

Wilford. Can it be possible?

Captain. Oh! very possible: keep a little back. *(To Wilford.)* It's only a small frustration at seeing me; 'twill soon be over: see how she revives at the sound of my own voice! *(Emily recovers.)*

Wilford. Oh! my Emily!

Emily. And do I live again to behold my faithful Wilford?

Medley. Oh, oh! the pretty lost lamb's owned at last! the plot will unravel fast: I must to Sir Walter, and, by a full confession, secure a free pardon. *[Exit.]*

Miss Di. What is the matter? what is the cause of this confusion? Pray, sir, how have I deserved this usage? am I so altered that you don't recollect me—don't recollect me? Surely, Captain—

Captain. Faith and troth! for the matter of that, though you have forgot yourself, I know you well enough, Miss Emily, and all your pranks.

Miss Di. Miss Emily! all my pranks! What can he mean? what can he mean? You well know, sir, my name is Dinah; and that I am the nearest relation of Sir Walter Waring; though you are all conspiring against my honour: but justice, I hope—*[Exit.]*

Captain. Upon my conscience, I begin to fancy we are all as mad as wild geese. Harkye! Wilford, is it you or me that this bewitching rogue has plundered out of our senses?

Wilford. It is I, my friend, who have lost mine in love and admiration.

AIR.—WILFORD.

*Oh! tell me, memory, no more,
What woe in banishment was mine;
What pained this lab'ring bosom bore,
Compell'd its treasures to resign.*

*But tell me, memory, more kind,
The envied transports I regain;
Record them on my grateful mind,
That not a sorrow may remain.*

But where is the rustic guardian of my Emily?

Enter FAIRLOP.

Emily. Here. *(Pointing to Fairlop.)* My kind, disinterested protector!

Fair. Lack-a-day! what is all this?

Dolly. Oh! father, Miss Emily's sweetheart's found, and this is he.

Wilf. I wish I could express the obligations I owe to you.

Fair. Pooh, pooh! why do you give the gentleman all this trouble? May I be free enough to speak a word of my mind?

Wilf. By all means.

Fair. Then, set you, sir, as much store by this treasure through life, *(taking her hand)* as I have done but for three short months, and, trust a plain man, we shall all be sufficiently rewarded.

Wilf. Generous woodman! Emily, you must prevail upon your adopted sister to attend you to Wilford Lodge.

Emily. What say you, my dear friend, Dolly?

Enter MEDLEY.

Medley. Oh! that's impossible, madam; she may soon have a house full of children of her own to take care of. *(Conceitedly.)*

Emily. How is all this?

Dolly. The audacious wretch coaxed me into a kind of promise this morning; and I can't find in my heart to be worse than my word.

Captain. Why, then, give Dolly the prize-cow for a bride's portion. I think, Wilford, you'll not be after making a bull of that now.

Enter SIR WALTER WARING, followed by Female Archers, &c.

Sir W. Come, along, come along; and see how I administer justice among them. I arrest you all in my own name, and so forth.

Wilf. Pray, sir, what may be your charge against us? (*Smiling.*) It's a bailable offence, I trust?

Sir W. Yes, if you put in your appearance at my house, where, with your consent, we'll have a merry night on't, and so forth. (*Shaking Wilford by the hand.*)

Dolly. But, perhaps, Miss Emily—

Sir W. Won't resist my authority, when she knows I've a chaplain at hand, who can soon bind her over to good behaviour for life.

Captain. Upon my conscience, Sir Walter, but you may command Arthur O'Donnel, Esquire. Give me your hand, my old buck; it's a pleasanter thing to draw a cork than a sword, with an honest fellow, at any time. But, harkye! little Mitimus, there'll be no need for that snap-dragon, Miss Consumption there, to be one of the party.

Wilf. (*To Fair.*) But, my best of friends, with your permission, we'll transplant you to a larger farm, where you may acquire the means of extending your benevolence.

Fair. With thanks for your kindness, sir, as my landlord's ill will is blown over, I'll live and die by my native woodside. But, before you rob me and Dolly of our pretty companion, and depart, stop at our cottage by the way, and if you can break bread with a lowly man, you shall have his blessing into the bargain.

CHORUS.

*Tune the pipe, and strike the tabor,
Quickly join their faithful hands;
This is not a time for labour,
While young joy on tiptoe stands.*

SIR WALTER WARING to EMILY.

*Justice bids me now best you,
Blind to all your roguish charms;
So, I'll certainly commit you—
To an honest husband's arms.*

Tune the pipe, &c.

DUETT.—WILFORD and EMILY.

*Fearless now our vows are plighted,
Hence the clouds of sorrow fly;
Love and constancy united,
Thus restore a tranquil sky.*

Tune the pipe, &c.

DUETT.—DOLLY and MEDLEY.

Med. *Dolly, mind you love me dearly.*
Dolly. *Never fear, if you are true.*
Med. *Scolding, } I shall take but queerly,*
Dolly. *Chiding, }*
Both. *Sulky fits will never do.*

Tune the pipe, &c.

CAPTAIN O'DONNELL.

*Marriage, 'faith!' 's a pretty notion,
If you could but change a wife;
But a soldier loves promotion,
Not a warm campaign for life.*

Tune the pipe, &c.

FAIRLOP.

*Though my woodland thus you plunder,
Of the sweetest plant that grew,
At the loss I cannot wonder:
May it better thrive with you!*

FULL CHORUS.

*Tune the pipe, and strike the tabor,
Quickly join their faithful hands;
This is not a time for labour,
While young joy on tip-toe stands.*

[*Exeunt.*]

EDWARD, THE BLACK PRINCE;

OR, THE BATTLE OF POICTIERS:

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY WILLIAM SHIRLEY.



Act V.—Scene 5.

CHARACTERS.

EDWARD, PRINCE OF WALES	LORD CHANDOS	CARDINAL PERIGORT	LORD RIBEMONT
EARL OF WARWICK	ARNOLD	ARCHBISHOP OF SENS	LORD CHARNEY
EARL OF SALISBURY	JOHN, KING OF FRANCE	DUKE OF TOURAIN	MARIANA
LORD AUDLEY	DAUPHIN	DUKE OF ATHENS	LOUISA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Prince of Wales's Tent.*

PRINCE EDWARD *discovered, seated*; EARL OF WARWICK, EARL OF SALISBURY, LORD AUDLEY, LORD CHANDOS, *and others, standing.*

P. Edw. My lords, I summon'd ye in haste to Intelligence is brought me that our foes [council. Have levied, to oppose us, such a strength As almost staggers credibility.

What's to be done? To tarry longer here, And brave their fury in the heart of France, Would be a rashness that may hazard all. Consider, therefore, well, my fellow-warriors, And aid my judgment with your good advice; Speak, Warwick, your opinion.

War. Royal sir,

It is for marching back, with speed, to Bourdeaux. Our little army, harass'd with fatigue, And heavy-laden with the spoils of war, Should, like the careful bees, ere storm o'ertake us, Secure our treasures, and prepare for rest. Havock has wanton'd in our hard campaign, And manly daring won increase of glory: Then let not now presumption madly risk Reprisals from such force. Be timely prudent: The voice of wisdom urges our retreat, Obey it and be happy.

Aud. Shameful thought!

What, spirit dastards, by inglorious flight? No; never let it, mighty prince, be said, That we who, two succeeding summers,chas'd

From shore to shore of their extensive realm Collected armies, doubling each our own, Should here, at length, discover abject fear, And skulk for coward safety. What are numbers? Let all their kingdom's millions arm at once, And crowding, clust'ring, cram the field of fight! Such timid throngs, with multiply'd dismay, Would make confusion do the task of valour, And work out their destruction.

Sal. Audley's thoughts

Accord with mine: while Salisbury has breath, His tongue shall hurl defiance at their force. Remember, princely Edward, Cressy's field: Remember ev'ry battle we have fought, How much out-counted, yet how greatly victors! Loud were the calls that broke our sleep of peace, And bade us rouse and buckle on our arms: A throne usurp'd, your royal father's right; A violated truce, a vile attempt To filch away the fruits of painful conquest, By basely bribing servants from their duty. Assaults so infamous, such rank dishonour, At last awoke our monarch's high resentment; Oh! give it glorious scope. Unhinge, destroy Their very pow'r of doing future wrongs: So shall the rescu'd world pour forth its blessings, And kings and kingdoms thank our arm for safety.

Chan. If Chandos gives his voice for our retreat, 'Tis not from coward motives: all can witness I have met danger with as firm a spirit As any in our host. But as success Hath crown'd our arms with ample spoils and glory,

Why, when the season is so far advanc'd,
(Hopeless of profit,) should we longer stay,
By soothing pride, to brave adversity?
Consider, gracious prince, and you, my lords,
What difficulties clog a winter march
In hostile countries; parties harassing,
And want of all convenience and supplies.
I do confess, the wrongs that urg'd us hither
Were such as merited severe revenge:
And vengeance we have had. Their burning towns
Have lighted us on many a midnight march,
While shrieks and groans, and yellings echo'd round.
Fear and confusion were our harbingers,
And death and desolation our attendants. [paings,
Such have their suff'rings been through two cam-
And that a third may rise with added horrors,
And carry indignation to his goal,
Now homeward let us look; and wisely there
Recruit, in time, our vigour and our numbers;
Thence, with the cheerful spring, to issue forth,
Again to labour in the field of fame. [tongue,

P. Edw. True wisdom, Chandos, dictates to your
And modest, manly eloquence adorns it.
My lords of Salisbury and Audley, you,
Who cherish truth and candour in your minds,
Must yield to arguments so clear and strong.
Believe me, friends and brothers of the war, &
A momentary ruin may involve us:
Such mighty hosts are rais'd, and now in motion,
As well will task our utmost skill to 'scape.
Upon the plains of Poitiers are encamp'd,
Th' extensive plains that our retreat must skirt,
An army double ours.

Aud. And shall we pass?
Go tamely by? And give 'em cause for vaunting,
That Englishmen avoided once a battle?
No; never let us merit such a stain;
But boldly seek 'em, dare their double numbers,
And drive 'em, if a combat they decline,
To skip and wanton at a safer distance.

Sal. Give us, my prince, the pleasure but to spring
This gaudy flight of prating popinjays,
And we'll retire contented.

Chan. There my voice
Shall join ye, lords: to force them from their home
At such a juncture will be doubly glorious!
Or should they venture battle, their discomfit
Will render our retreat to Bourdeaux safe,
And end our labours with a noble triumph.

P. Edw. Then be it so: for Poitiers we'll pre-
pare. (Rising.)

Give instant orders, good my lords, for marching:
To-morrow's sun shall see us face our foes.
There, if they wait our coming, we once more
Will dress contention in her Gorgon horrors:
Drive fear and slaughter through their shudd'ring
ranks,

Stalk o'er their mangled heaps, and bath'd in blood,
Seize with red hands the wreath of victory.
Here break we off; go each where duty calls.

[*Exeunt Lords.*]

Now for an office is most grateful to me.
Who waits? Let Arnold know that I expect him.

(*A Gentleman appears and retires again.*)
How poor the pomps and trophies of the field,
The blaze of splendour, or that bubble praise,
Compar'd with what the sympathizing heart
Feels from a gen'rous action!

Enter ARNOLD.

Welcome, Arnold.

I ne'er behold thy face, but pleasure springs
With the remembrance of those sprightly days,
Which led through early youth our happy friendship.
Thou wert my brother then; familiar ease
Season'd our sports, and doubled each delight.
Thither my soul, from ceremonious pomp,
And all the heavy toils of high command,
Oft backward looks, with wishes to renew

Those lively transports, unallay'd by care,
Our boundless happiness, our bursts of joy.

Arn. So honour'd, gracious prince, as I have been,
From humble fortune rais'd to envy'd greatness,
And still with ev'ry grace each gift made precious,
Oh! what are words in payment of such blessings?
What, ev'n my life? were life itself laid down
In gratitude for such transcendent goodness.

P. Edw. If there's a transport low ring to divine;
If, in atonement for its load of cares,
One vast enjoyment is the gift of greatness,
'Tis that we can bestow where merit claims,
And with our favours cheer or charm the soul.
Thine is the vacant military post,
By Mountford's death reverted to my gift;
And keep thy office in my household still:
I must not lose the servant in the soldier.
Be henceforth both, and, what is more, my friend.

Arn. How shall I praise—

P. Edw. Arnold, I merit none.

If thou hast kindness done thee, I have pleasure:
There is no joy a gen'rous mind can know,
Like that of giving virtue its reward;
Nor ought such payment be esteem'd a bounty;
For to deserve and give is equal favour.
But let me ask thee of thy beauteous charge:
How has the noble Mariana borne
Captive calamity?

Arn. With resignation

Worthy her birth and dignity of spirit.
Forgetting her misfortunes, all her talk
Turns on the topic of your kind protection.

P. Edw. Let it extend to all that can relieve
The mind from harsh reflections on her state.
We're now preparing for the plains of Poitiers:
Accommodate her on the wearying way
With thy best care. Remember, I request it. [*Exit.*]

Arn. Rely, my royal master, on my duty.
Needless injunction: Mariana's charms
Have given her here such absolute command,
My very soul, my ev'ry pow'r, is hers.
But the cold maid, whene'er I plead my passion,
Chills me with sighs, and stifles all my flame
Of love with streaming tears. Benignant heav'n!
Bless'd as I am with royal Edward's favour,
And Mariana's charms: and all beyond
Let mad ambition grapple for and gain. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*The French Camp.*

*Enter LORD CHARNEY and the ARCHBISHOP OF
SENS.*

Char. My lord of Sens, I gladly give your grace
A joyful welcome to the plains of Poitiers.
You come the happy harbinger of comfort,
Returning to old Charney's woe-worn mind.
The king's approach revives my drooping spirits,
It feeds the dying lamp of life with hope
That I shall live to riot in revenge.
Those English locusts, who devour our wealth,
Who spoil and slaughter with so wild a fury—
Grant, ye good pow'rs! these eyes may see de-
And I shall die contented. [*stroy'd,*]

Sens. Ev'ry tongue

Joins that petition: your misfortunes, lord,
Most nearly touch the king.

Char. Oh! they are great:

The pride of ancient lineage treasur'd up,
Trophies of war and ornaments of pomp,
These won by valour, those with honour worn;
Favours of monarchs, and the gifts of heaven;
The relics of a glorious ancestry,
Are, with the mansion of my great forefathers,
A heap of ashes now; a wide-spread ruin.
My age's blessing, too, an only daughter,
Torn from her home to hard captivity,
The prey, the victim of a fell revenge.
Oh, matchless misery! Oh, Mariana!

Sens. Your sorrows have been wept by ev'ry
eye:

And all have wonder'd what should mark you out
For such peculiar vengeance.

Char. Nothing but
The service done our master, when I brib'd
Their governor to give up Calais to us:
Who, like a villain, broke his plighted faith,
And sacrific'd the gallant troops I led
To Edward's fury: slaughter'd all or taken,
I was amongst the train who grac'd his triumph.
There the proud king insulted me with taunts;
He call'd our undertaking vile and base:
With low'ring brow and bitterness of speech,
Adding, he hop'd the fortune of his arms
Would give him to reward my treachery.
The father's wishes hath the son accomplish'd:
For which, may all the rage of ev'ry curse,
Flames, famines, pestilences, slaughters, join
To root from nature the detested race.

Sens. Grant it, good heav'n! But see, the Duke
of Athens.

Enter DUKE OF ATHENS.

Char. Lord constable, most welcome to my arms.

Ath. I thank you, noble Charney.

Char. Are the train?

Of royal warriors, sir, arriv'd?

Ath. They are.

Char. Oh! joyful tidings! Sir, another hour
Shall speak, at large, my pleasure to behold you:
The present claims my duty to the king. [*Exit.*

Ath. My lord of Sens, these secret marches made
From different parts by our divided host,
May steal us on our unprepared foes,
And give our arms, at length, an ample vengeance.

Sens. I greatly hope it. As I think, to-morrow,
Or I mistook the king, they'll all be here?

Ath. With early day, the instant we arriv'd,

A numerous party, led by Ribemont,
Came up and join'd us. Those the dauphin brings,
Our last division, are to march by night;

We may expect them with to-morrow's dawn.

Sens. See, Ribemont is here.

Enter LORD RIBEMONT.

Rib. Why, this looks well!

Here's bustle, expedition! Once again
We shine in arms, and wear a face of war.

Sens. Oh! may they never be again laid down
Till England is repaid with all the plagues
Her sons have brought on France. My eager soul,
As does the fever'd lip for moisture, longs
To see destruction overwhelm that people.

Rib. Indulge no guilty hatred, rev'rend lord;
For fair report, and, let me add, experience,
Picture them lovely to impartial judgment.

The world allows they're valiant, gen'rous, wise;

Endow'd with all that dignifies our nature:

While for their monarch, we'll appeal to facts,

And, sure, they speak him wonderful indeed!

Did not Germania's ermin'd princes meet,

And, as the most renown'd, the first of men,

Elect great Edward to imperial sway?

While he, sublime in ever-conscious glory,

Disdaining rule but on his native throne,

Saw sovereigns offer vassalage in vain.

Then, to his court, from ev'ry peopled realm,

Ev'n from our own, did not the fam'd in arms,

The harness'd knights repair to fill his lists?

To take his judgment in all martial strife?

Submitting int'rest, honour, all was precious,

And ev'n beyond appeal: owning his voice,

Like that of heav'n, incapable of error.

Sens. It grates my soul to hear a Frenchman talk
Of greater glories than he finds at home.
Is not this monarch you would make a god,
Our master's enemy, our country's foe?

Rib. A foe he is, but he's a noble foe.

I know his worth, and therefore will I speak it.

At our attack of Calais, 'twas my fortune

To meet in fight this third king Edward's sword.

I found him all that breathes hold their gods,

Artful and mighty; (pardon the proud vaunt)

Too much for me to conquer. Long we stood

Buckler to buckler, clashing steel to steel,

Till by superior soldiership o'ercome,

I yielded to a monarch; but so well,

With hardy vigour, I sustain'd the combat,

That freedom, ransomless, was my reward.

The royal victor, when he bade me go,

Took from his brow this string of orient wealth,

Around my temples twin'd the glittering wreath,

And cry'd, "Shine there, my token of applause."

Oh! if his valour wing'd amazement high,

Where was its flight, when his heroic soul,

Forgetting that my sword had aim'd his slaughter,

O'erlook'd all low regards, all partial ties,

And gave a vanquish'd enemy renown.

Sens. Detested boast! Ambition's taint, my lord,

So warps, so biases the soldier's judgment—

Rib. Ah! biases! I tell thee, priest, ambition—

When was it wanting in a churchman's soul?

More odious there, and more pernicious far,

Than when it fires the warrior's breast to glory.

But, down my rage: your office should be peaceful;

Your habit's sacred—let your speech be suited.

Sens. Reproving sir, you think you rail secure,

And so secure remain—how'er your cause

Might bring ev'n your allegiance into question.

Rib. Said'st thou allegiance? what a vile resort!

And would thy jaundic'd malice stain my fame?

But loyalty, long prov'd, dares bid defiance

To all the base perversion of thy tongue.

I praise my foes, because they merit praise:

I'll praise them to the king—and after fight 'em.

My soul disdains such narrow-hearted spleen,

As owns no excellence beyond a tribe,

Or hates, from envy, all superior merit.

Ath. Forbear, my lord, consider you're eurag'd

With one whose function does forbid revenge.

Rib. Why does the meddling priest provoke

resentment?

Let him obey that function: preach repentance

To money-scraping misers, sordid slaves,

The cringing minions of corrupted courts,

The dregs of stewes and tyrants of the gown.

There let his zeal be vehement and loud,

But not come here to sap the soldier's honour,

And teach inglorious lessons in a camp. [*Exit.*

Ath. Forgive him, good my lord; brave Ribemont

Is all the warrior, bold above restraint,

Of nature noble, but unpublish'd manners.

Sens. I do forgive him. Yet a time may come—

(*Aside.*)

Ath. Sir, go we to the presence?

Sens. I attend you. [*procure*

The kingdom's safety, and its peace ensure:

In one brave action may our arms succeed,

And in their turn the daring English bleed. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The English Camp.

Enter EARL OF SALISBURY *and* LORD CHANDOS,
meeting.

Chan. Good-morrow, Salisbury; you rising sun,
As was your wish, beholds us here encamp'd
Upon the plains of Poitiers.

Sul. Noble Chandos,
It was my wish; a wish for England's honour.
To Frenchmen, whom so much we've aw'd and
humbled,

Methinks I would not give the least pretence
For arrogance and boasting.

Enter EARL OF WARWICK.

War. Valiant lords,
Wild consternation reigns! Our scouts have brought
Intelligence the enemy surrounds us.
By sudden, secret marches, they have drawn

Their troops from ev'ry fertile province hither,
And out off our retreat.

Sal. Why, then, we'll fight them.

War. Most fatal was our yesterday's advice;
But 'tis his highness' will we straight to council:
Haste, good my lords, for on a single hour,
Perhaps a minute, now our fate depends. [us,

Sal. I'll not believe the French will dare attack
How great see'er their numbers. But with words
We will not waste the time that may be precious;
Then to the prince's tent, my lords, away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A private Tent.*

Enter ARNOLD, leading MARIANA.

Arn. Now, lovely captive, wilt thou doubly
triumph:

The happier cause of France at length prevails,
And we are all undone.

Mar. What mean you, Arnold?

Arn. Encircled here by thy whole country's force,
Unable to sustain their fierce assault,
And all retreat out off, we have no prospect
But that of total slaughter.

Mar. Hear me, heav'n,
Who oft hast witness'd to the silent tears,
Stream'd down in gratitude for gen'rous treatment.
Now witness (spite of all my country suffers)
That these descend in pity for my woes.

Arn. The fatal accident again restores thee
To liberty, and safety, while from me
It cuts away all hopes of happiness.
I wish not to outlive the bloody hour
Must give thee to thy father, whose abhorrence
Of all that's English, soon will interpose,
And plunge my soul for ever in despair.
Let then thy fancy image what I feel!
Grief chokes the very passages of vent,
And I want utterance for—

Mar. There is no need.

I know thy heart, know all its tender feelings,
Know what sad tumults doubts and fears create,
Whose mingling agonies, in wounded minds,
Sharpen a torture poignant ev'n to madness.
If to thy eloquence of words and looks,
My virgin modesty and captive state
Have hitherto forbid my tongue to answer,
Yet sure my eyes have told my heart was thine.
But now, away with fears and forms; distress
Bears me above restraint, and I will own
To heav'n, to earth, to thee, my father, country,
That Arnold is most dear, most precious to me.

Arn. Hold, my transported heart! Thou heav'nly
maid!

What raptures rush at that enchanting sound!
Happy as I am now, destruction, come,
O'erwhelm me in this moment of my bliss;
Ne'er let me pine in hopeless anguish more,
But die thus clasp'd in Mariana's arms.

Mar. And will our fate—will cruel fate divide
us?

Arn. Oh! do not name it: with the very thought
Frenzy assaults me. No, we must not, cannot,
Will not be parted. No—

Mar. Alas! I fear

The choice will not be ours. A father's pow'r,
If France prevails, for ever tears thee from me.
And must they conquer? Oh! I find, I feel
I've lost already all regard for France:
England's my country; any country's mine,
That gives me but my safety and my love.

Inform me, tell me, is there no escaping? [*rest,*

Arn. Thou wilt need none. For me and for the
We have, alas! no prospect but of—

Mar. Stop!

Nor dare inflame a wild imagination,
Lest madness follow: 'midst relentless foes,
Methinks I see thee fall! Behold 'em strike!
I hear thy groans! I see thy gushing blood!
Thy writhing body trampled in the dust!

Oh! save me from the horror. Let us fly;
Let us away this moment: Let us—

Arn. Whither?

Where can we fly? All hope of flight is lost;
There is no possibility—

Mar. There is.

Let us, while yet occasion will permit,
Fly to my father.

Arn. Father!

Mar. He'll protect us.

Arn. Protect us! Dire protection! at the thought
My blood runs chill, and horror quite unmans me.

Mar. Think on the dangers that you brave by
staying. [*merit*

Arn. Think, rather, on the hell that I should
By such desertion—dire and damning guilt!
How dreadfully it shakes me!

Mar. Dost thou tremble?

Then what should I, a helpless woman, do?

Imagine that, and if thou art a man,

Feel for what I may suffer.

Arn. Suffer! Thou?

Mar. Yes, Arnold, I! The woes that I may suffer.
Amongst the deadly dealings of the field,
Some well-aim'd weapon, through a bleeding wound,
May set thy soul at liberty for ever.

While I, (of mortals though the most undone)
Wanting all means of honourable death,

Must suffer woes beyond description dreadful.

What are my friends, my father, or my country?

Cold are the comforts that they all can give,

When thou, dear darling of my heart, art lost.

Pleasure, and hope, and peace will perish with thee,

And this forlorn, this joyless bosom, then
Become the dreary mansion of despair.

Shall not I rave, blaspheme, and rend my locks?

Devote the hour that gave me birth? and curse

The sun and time, the world, myself, and thee?

Till frenzy prompting, 'gainst some dungeon wall

I dash my burning brains to finish torture.

Arn. Do not awake, thou lovely pleader, do not,

Such tumult-working thoughts within a mind

On madness verging.

Mar. Let us, then, away. [*me to it.*

Arn. Oh! not for worlds! Not worlds should bribe

Mar. And wilt thou urge thou lov'st me?

Arn. More than life! [*thee,*

Mar. By heav'n, 'tis false! The spirit that's within

Is not of worth to hazard aught so noble.

Arn. Will daring ev'n to die convince thee?

Mar. No:

Death is a coward's refuge. Dare to live;

Dare wretchedness, reproach—

Arn. No more, no more;

Tempt me no more in vain.

Mar. Art thou so fix'd?

Arn. As fate.

Mar. I've done.

Arn. Then why that angry look?

Mar. It is a curse entail'd upon the sex

To have our counsel scorn'd, our love despis'd.

Go to thy ruin; to my ruin go:

I give thee up—and all my hopes for ever. [*dew?*

Arn. Why wilt thou blast me with that baleful

Each tender tear that falls in sorrow from thee

(Like melted ore fast dropping on my heart)

Drives life before it with excess of pain.

Come, friendly slaughter, now my only hope,

Free me from sufferings not to be endur'd.

Mar. What, in the hour of trial wouldst thou

shrink?

Steal to the shelter of a timeless grave,

And leave me on the rack of dire despair?

Is this a proof of that superior spirit

Asserted by the lordly boaster, man?

Oh! shame upon thee!

Arn. Hear me—

Mar. Not the winds,

That hang the curling billows in the clouds,

Are more impetuous than the rage of scorn
That rises in my bosom.

Arn. Let but reason

Weigh the dire consequence of such a flight.

Mar. The consequence! Why, what do you for-
But certain slaughter? [sake

Arn. Horrid, damning thought!

Mar. I hop'd my risking wretchedness for love
Would have provok'd some emulation—

Arn. Oh!

Mar. But thou art poor, the hero of pretence;
And, therefore, thus, for ever—

Arn. Take me, lead—

No, stop! it surely was some syren's voice
Would lure me to destruction. Off! stand off!
Thou, thou art she that would ensnare my soul,
Ruin my peace, and sacrifice my fame.
But timely be advis'd: forbear to urge
A deed that all the earth would scorn me for,
All hell want plagues to punish.

Mar. Be undone—

Arn. Undone I am, whatever course I take.
Dreadful alternative! despair, or death,
Or everlasting shame.

Mar. I did not pause;

I chose for Arnold's love to hazard all:
To suffer, if misfortune were our lot,
And never once reproach him or repine.

But he rejects such truth, such tenderness.

Arn. Oh! hear me, help me, save me, sacred

Mar. Deserts a woman in adversity! [powers!
And seeks, in death, a rescue from the woes
Her fortitude encounters!

Arn. 'Tis too much—

It tears my brain—my bosom! oh!

Mar. Thou'rt pale! [me;

Arn. Dizzy and sick—the objects swim before
Reach out thy hand to save me ere I sink:

Oh! what a deprivation of all pow'rs!

Lead me to my tent, I beg thee lead.

Mar. I will.

Lean fearless on my arm, it can sustain thee.

Arn. Oh! boasted manhood, how I feel thy
weakness! [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—A magnificent Pavilion, in which KING
JOHN appears seated in state. On stools, below
him, sit the DAUPHIN, DUKES OF BERRY, AN-
JOU, TOURAIN, ORLEANS, and ATHENS, ARCH-
BISHOP OF SENS, LORDS RIBEMONT, and
CHARNEY, Attendants and Guards all standing.

K. John. At length, we've caught these lions in
our toils,

These English spoilers, who through all our realm
Have mark'd their way with rapine, flames, and
slaughter:

Now, by my sacred diadem, I swear,
Beyond a conqueror's joy my pleasure swells,
For that my foes have wrought their own confusion,
And found misfortunes where they meant to deal 'em.
What say you, lords, must soft'n'ing pity sway?
Or shall we glut our vengeance with their blood?

Char. Heav'n gives them up the victims of your
wrath;

Indulge it, then, to their destruction. Mercy
Would mark your majesty the foe of France.
Your bleeding country cries for retribution:

I join it, with a voice by woes enfeebled;
Hear, feel, and strike in such a moving cause.
The cause of wrongs, of wounds, of weeping age.
The widow'd wife, the childless father calls:

The helpless, parentless, unbelter'd babe!

Matrons, bewailing their whole race cut off;

And virgins pining from the recent rape!

Oh! hear, redress, revenge us, royal sir,

For vengeance now is in your pow'r to grant.

Rib. Anger and hatred are disgraceful motives;

Calm dignity should ever counsel kings,

And govern all their actions. When they strike,

It ne'er should be to gratify resentment,
But, like the arm omnipotent of heav'n,
To further justice; to create an awe
May terrify from evil; better minds,
And benefit society.

Ath. The nuncio,
Who follow'd fast your majesty to Poitiers,
Hath sent to claim an audience in behalf
Of yon endanger'd English.

Sens. Do not hear him. [we not?

K. John. Say, lord archbishop, wherefore should

Sens. Knowing your godlike and forgiving nature,

I fear 'twill rob you of much martial glory:

Else might your fame in arms, for this day's action,

Rival the boasts of Macedon or Rome.

And sure your valiant soldiers will repine,

To have the laurels, now so near their grasp.

Snatch'd from their hopes for ever.

Rib. Abject minion!

How shameful to that habit are such flatteries.

[Aside.]

K. John. Yes, I well know my soldiers pant, im-
patient

To seize this feeble quarry. But our foes,

I must remind you, are so close beset,

That famine soon will throw 'em on our mercy.

Princes and lords, what cause have we to fight?

Why should we waste a drop of Gallic blood,

When conquest may be ours on cheaper terms?

Dauph. But will it suit the glory of your arms

To wait their inclination to surrender?

Or ev'n to grant such parley, as might plume

Their saucy pride t' expect capitulation?

Oh! no, my royal father, rush at once,

O'erwhelm 'em, crush 'em, finish them by slaughter.

Rib. Think not, prince Dauphin, they'll e'er stoop

for terms:

Believe me, we have rather cause to expect

A fierce attack, to cut their passage through,

Or perish in the attempt. I know them well,

In many a field have try'd their stubborn spirit;

Have won some honour, by their king, though van-
quish'd;

And when I ponder their intrepid courage,

How much they dare to suffer and attempt,

I'm lost in wonder; and no Cressy need

To make me tremble to provoke their fury.

Dauph. Your tongue, the herald of your vanity,

Methinks, is loud in what were better lost

To all remembrance—a disgraceful tale.

To boast of honours from a victor's bounty,

Is stooping low; is taking abject fame.

If you have valour, give it manly sway,

Busy your sword, but let your tongue be silent.

Rib. My talent never 'twas to idly vaunt—

K. John. No more of this, presumptuous Ribemont,

My lords, we will determine yet on nothing.

I've sent a spy, of known abilities,

To find out the condition of our foes;

From whose report, in council, we'll resolve

On measures that may promise most success.

Meantime, do you inform the nuncio, Athens,

His audience shall be granted. Lords, lead on:

We'll make our morning's progress through the
camp. [Exeunt all but Athens and Rib.

Rib. What boasts made I?

I told the truth, and wherefore, then, this taunt?

Shame on such modesty! The king, just now,

Nice as he seems in breeding and in forms,

With patience heard a supple, fawning priest

Strip all the shrines of fam'd antiquity,

Ev'n make great Cæsar and the son of Philip

Resign their laurels to his nobler claim:

Nay, thought him sparing; doubtless, that he left

Great Hercules and Jove unspoil'd to grace him.

By my good sword, an oath with soldiers sacred,

I swear 'twould make an honest stomach heave

To see a throat, so squeamish for another,

Open and gulp a potion down, enough
To poison half mankind.

Ath. Brave Hibernont,
The king's distaste was that you prais'd his foes.
To talk of Cressy and of Edward's feats,
Was to remind him of our crown's disgrace:
'Twas to proclaim what we should wish forgotten,
Our slaughter'd armies, and our monarch's flight.

Rib. What, are our ears too delicate for truth?
If English valour has disgrac'd our arms,
Instead of mean forgetting, we should stamp
The hated image stronger on our minds;
For ever murmur and for ever rage,
Till thence eras'd by nobler feats of arms.
Such are my thoughts, and such my resolution:
I share our country's scandal, and would join
My sword, my blood, to purge away the stain.

Ath. Here, then, occasion meets that patriot-wish;

Here you may help to blanch our sully'd glory.

Rib. I differ, Athens, widely in opinion;
The harvest is too thin, the field too bare;
To yield the reapers honour. On my soul,
I pity the brave handful we enrolle,
And almost wish myself an Englishman
To share a fate so noble.

Ath. Gallant spirit!
Rib. Would our exulting king acquire renown,
Let him reduce his numbers down to theirs.
Then sword to sword, and shield to shield, oppose,
In equal strife, these wondrous sons of war.
There conquest would be glorious! but, as now,
With all our thousands and ten thousands join'd,
By heav'n! 'tis most infamous to fight.

Ath. I must away; my duty calls me hence.
I must applaud this generous regard
For a brave people that have done you honour;
Convinc'd, whene'er you face these fearless foes,
You'll fight 'em warmly as you've prais'd.

Rib. Farewell. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.—The English Camp.

Enter LORD AUDLEY and LORD CHANDOS, meeting.

Aud. You're well encounter'd, Chandos; where's the prince?

Chan. Directing the entrenchments: ev'ry duty
His active ardour leads him to engross.
Such heav'nly fortitude iullumes his soul,
That all beholders catch new courage from it,
And stifle with astonishment their fears.
From cool unruffled thoughts his orders issue,
While with the meanest soldier he partakes
In ev'ry toil; inspiring, by example,
A glorious zeal and spirit through the camp.

Aud. Yet feels he, as the father of our host,
For ev'ry man's misfortune, but his own.
Thrice have I seen him in successive rounds,
Kindle new courage in each drooping heart,
And drive all fear, all diffidence away.
Yet on the task would tenderness include,
As dangers stole and imag'd on his mind:
When, pausing, he would turn his head aside,
Heave a sad sigh, and drop a tender tear.

Enter EARL OF SALISBURY.

Chan. Well, what says Salisbury?

Sal. Why, 'faith! but little:

It is yon Frenchmen's place to talk at present.

Aud. How stand the troops?

Sal. Believe me, not so firm,
But our light-footed enemies, if dext'rous,
May trip up all their heels.

Chan. True to his humour:

My good Lord Salisbury will have his gibe,
Howe'er affliction wrings.

Sal. And wherefore not?

Will burial faces buy us our escape?
I wish they would: then no Hibernian hag,
Whose trade is sorrow, should out-sadden me.
But, as the business stands, to weep or laugh,

Alike is bootless; here is our dependence.

(Touching his sword.)

Aud. What are their numbers?

Chan. Full a hundred thousand. [renewing;]

Sal. Ours but some eight: great odds, my friends:
The more will be our glory when we've beat them.

Aud. What swells their host so mightily (I'm told)

The Earls of Neydo, Saltsburg, and Nassau,
Have join'd their troops. The Earl of Douglas, too,
Assist them with three thousand hardy Scots,
Their old and sure allies.

Chan. I hear the same. [our pris'ner.]

Sal. What! Scotchmen here? whose monarch is

Aud. Ta'en by a priest and woman; at the head
Of such raw numbers as their haste could gather,
When all our vet'ran warriors, with their king,
Were winning laurels on the fields of France.

Chan. And hither now, perhaps, his subjects come
To fight for captives to exchange against him. [get,
Sal. For captives! This poor carcass they may
When 'tis fit booty for their kites and crows:

But while this tongue can speak, I'd root it out
Ere Scot or Frenchman it should own my master.

Chan. The prince approaches, lords.

Enter PRINCE EDWARD, EARL OF WARWICK,
and Attendants.

P. Edw. Ah! saidst thou, Warwick,
Arnold gone over to the foe?

War. He is.

A trusty spy brought the intelligence,
Who saw him enter in the adverse camp,
Leading his captive charge.

P. Edw. Impossible; [there

War. I've search'd his quarters since, myself, and
Nor he or Mariana can be found. [bind

P. Edw. What has a prince that can attract or
The faith of friends, the gratitude of servants?
Blush, greatness, blush! Thy pow'r is all but poor,
Too impotent to bind one bosom to thee!
A blow like this I was not arm'd to meet;
It pierces to my soul.

Sal. All-righteous heav'n,
Reward the villain's guilt! Believe not, prince,
Throughout our host, another can be found
That worlds would buy to such a base revolt.

P. Edw. I hope it, will believe it, Salisbury;
Yet must lament that one has prov'd so worthless.

I lov'd him too: but since he has forgot
The ties of duty, gratitude, and honour,

Let us forget an Englishman could break 'em,
And, losing his remembrance, lose the shame.

My lords, I have despatches in my hand,
Advising that the nuncio cardinal,
Good Perigot, is now arriv'd at Poitiers,
And means to interpose in our behalf.

Aud. His interposing is a gen'rous office,
And I applaud it; but, believe me, prince,
Our foes will rate their mercy much too high.
I'd hope as soon a tiger, tasting blood,
Can feel compassion, and release his prey,
As that a Frenchman will forego advantage.

P. Edw. I've by the messenger that brought my
letters,

Sent him the terms on which I warrant treating.
The sum is, my consent to render back
The castles, towns, and plunder we have taken,
Since marching out of Bourdeaux; and to plight
My faith, that I, for sev'n succeeding years,
Will wield no hostile sword against their crown.

Sal. It is too much, my prince. It is too much.
Give o'er such traffic for inglorious safety.
Or let us die or conquer.

P. Edw. Salisbury,

Rely upon a prince and soldier's promise,
That caution shan't betray us into meanness.
Heav'n knows, for me, I value life so little,
That I would spend it as an idle breath,

To serve my king, my country, nay, my friend.
To call like these our honour bids us answer,
Where ev'ry hazard challenges renown.
But ~~some~~ the voice of heav'n, and cry of nature,
Are loud against the sacrifice of thousands
To giddy rashness. Oh! reflect, my friends,
I have a double delegated trust,
And must account to heaven and to my father,
For lives ignobly sav'd, or madly lost.
Till Perigort shall, therefore, bring their terms,
Suspend we all resolves; but those receiv'd,
Determination must be expeditious:
For, know, our stock of stores will barely reach
To furnish out the present day's subsistence.
Aud. If so, necessity, the last sad guide
Of all misfortune's children, will command.

Chan. We must submit to what wise heav'n
decrees.

P. Edw. Let that great duty but direct the mind,
And men will all be happily resign'd:
Accept whate'er th' Almighty deigns to give,
And die contented, or contented live:
Embrace the lot his Providence ordains,
If deok'd with laurels, or depress'd with chains,
Inur'd to labour, or indulg'd with rest,
And think each movement he decrees the best.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The French Camp.*

Enter DUKE OF ATHENS and LORD RIBEMONT.

Rib. Lord constable, I was not in the presence
When Perigort had audience with the king:
Inform me, for, I wish to know, does peace
Her olive-garland weave? or must the sword
Be kept unheath'd, and blood-fed vengeance live?

Ath. The king expecting me, I cannot tarry
To let your lordship know particulars;
But the good father, who ev'n now set forward,
Carries such terms as, from my soul, I wish
Young Edward may accept: for 'tis resolv'd,
If they're rejected, instant to attack 'em.
Yonder's the fugitive, I see, advancing,
Who left their camp this morning. If we fight,
And you have there a friend you wish to save,
This man may point you to his post. Farewell.

[*Exit.*]

Rib. This man—by heav'n, there's treason in his
aspect!

That cheerless gloom, those eyes that pore on earth,
That bended body, and those folded arms,
Are indications of a tortur'd mind,
And blazon equal villany and shame.
In what a dire condition is the wretch,
Who, in the mirror of reflexion, sees
The hideous stains of a polluted soul!
To corners, then, as does the loathsome toad,
He crawls in silence: there sequester'd chews
The foamy ferment of his pois'nous gall,
Hating himself, and fearing fellowship.

Enter ARNOLD, musing.

Arn. What have I done? And where is my reward?
Charney withholds his daughter from my arms,
My flatter'd recompense for—Hold, my brain!
Thought that, by timely coming, might have sav'd
Is now too late, when all its office serves [me,
But to awaken horror. (*Aside.*)

Rib. I'll accost him.

Are you an Englishman?

**Arn.* I had that name,

(Oh! killing question!) but have lost it now.

Rib. Lost it, indeed!

Arn. Illustrious Ribemont!

(For was your person less rever'd and known
By ev'ry son of Britain, on your brow
That splendid token of renown you wear,
Would be your herald,) pity, if you can,
A wretch, the most undone of all mankind.

Rib. I much mistake your visage, or I've seen
In near attendance on the Prince of Wales. [you

Arn. I was, indeed; (oh! ~~accost~~ to confess it!)
I was his follower, was his ~~friend~~ friend;
He favour'd, cherish'd, lov'd me—heav'nly pow'r!
How shall I give my guilty story attention?
Level your fiery bolts, transfix me here,
Or hurl me howling to the hell I merit.

Rib. Invoke no pow'r; a conscience such as thine
Is hell enough for mortal to endure.

But let me ask thee, for my wonder prompts me,
What bait affords the world, that could induce thee
To wrong so godlike and so good a master?

Arn. True, he is all, is godlike, and is good.

Edward, my royal master, is, indeed,
A prince beyond example. Yet your heart,
If it has ever felt the power of beauty,
Must mitigate the crime of raging love. [a fire

Rib. Love! Thou lost wretch! And could so frail
Consume whate'er was great and manly in thee?
Blot virtue out, and root each nobler passion
Forth from thy mind? The thirst of bright renown?
A patriot fond affection for thy country?

Zeal for thy monarch's glory? And the tie
Of sacred friendship, by thy prince ennobled?
Begone, and hide thy ignominious head,
Where human eye may never penetrate;

Avoid society, for all mankind
Will fly the fellowship of one like thee.

Arn. Heav'n! wherefore saidst thou that we must
And yet made woman? [not err,

Rib. Why accuse you heav'n?
Curse your inglorious heart for wanting fire,
The fire that animates the nobly brave!
The fire that has renown'd the English name,
And made it such as ev'ry age to come
Shall strive to emulate, but never reach.
There thou wert mingled in a blaze of glory,
Great—to amazement great! But now how fall'n!
Ev'n to the vilest of all vassal vileness,
The despicable state of female thralldom.

Arn. From letter'd story single out a man,
However great in council or in fight,
Who ne'er was vanquish'd by a woman's charms.

Rib. Let none stand forth, there is no cause they
Beauty's a blessing to reward the brave; [should:
We take its transports in relief from toil,
Allow its hour, and languish in its bonds:
But that once ended, dignity asserts
Its right in manhood, and our reason reigns.

Arn. Untouch'd by passion, all may ~~take~~ it well;
In speculation who was e'er unwise?
But appetites assault like furious storms,
O'erbearing all that should resist their rage,
Till vigour is worn down; and then succeeds
A gloomy calm, in which reflexion arms
Her scorpion brood—remorse, despair, and horror!

Rib. But could contrition ever yet restore
To radiant lustre a polluted fame?

Or man, however merciful, forget
That justice brands offenders for his scorn?
Truth, the great touchstone of all human actions,
The fair foundation of applause or blame,
Has ting'd thy honour with too foul a stain,
For all repentant tears to wash away.
All eyes 'will urge to dart their keen reproaches,
Each tongue to hiss, and ev'ry heart to heave
With indignation at thee.

Arn. All the pride,
That here should kindle into high resentment,
I find is gone. My spirit's sunk, debas'd;
My guilt unmans me, and I'm grown a coward.

(*Aside.*)

Rib. The trumpets may awake, the clarions swell,
That noble ardour thou no more canst feel,
Disgrac'd from soldier to a renegade.
Anon, while o'er the dreadful field we drive,
Or dealing deaths, or daring slaught'ring swords,
Do thou at distance, like the dastard hare,

All trembling, seek thy safety. Thence away,
As fortune, or thy genius may direct,
Thy conscience thy companion. But be sure,
Whatever land you burden with your weight,
Whatever people you hereafter join,
Tell but your tale, and they will all, like me,
Pronounce you abject, infamous, and hateful. *[Exit.]*
Arn. Abject and hateful! Infamous! I'm all!
The world has not another monster like me:
Nor hell, in all its store of horrid evils,
Beyond what I deserve. Already here
I feel the shafts, they rankle in my bosom;
And active thought anticipates damnation.

Enter, MARIANA and LOUISA.

Mar. He's here! I've found my heart's companion
Rejoice, my Arnold, for my father softens; *[out.]*
He half forgets his hatred to thy country,
And hears with temper while I praise thy virtues:
We soon shall conquer. Ah! what mean those tears?
Why art thou thus?

Arn. And canst thou ask that question?
Thou soft seducer, thou enchanting mischief,
Thou blaster of my virtue. But, begone!
By heav'n, the poison looks so tempting yet,
I fear to gaze myself in love with ruin.
Away, away! enjoy thy ill-got freedom.
And leave a wretch devoted to destruction.

Mar. Destruction! how the image strikes my soul,
As would the shaft of death, with chilling horror!
Hear me—but hear me! 'tis the cause of love!
Your Mariana pleads. For Arnold's peace,
For mine, for both—nay, do not turn away,
And with unkindness dash the rising hope,
That strives for birth, and struggles with despair.

Arn. Oh! yes, despair; it is most fit you should,
As I must ever do.

Mar. Wherefore? Why?
How are you alter'd, or myself how chang'd,
That all our blessings are transform'd to curses?
Have you not sworn (you did, and I believ'd you)
My flatter'd beauties and my faithful love,
Were all that Arnold wish'd to make him happy?

Arn. Curs'd be your love, and blasted all your beauties,

For they have robb'd me of my peace and honour.
Looks not my form as hideous as my soul,
Begrin'd like hell, and blacken'd to a fiend?
Go, get thee hence, thou blaster of my fame,
Bear thy bewitching eyes where I no more
May gaze my—but I've nothing now to lose,
Nought but a hated life, which any hand
Would be most merciful to rid me of.

Mar. If I am guilty, 'tis the guilt of love,
And love should pardon what himself inspir'd.
Oh! smooth the horrors of that anguish'd brow,
Thy tortur'd visage fills me with affright.
Look on me kindly, look as you were wont;
Or ease my bursting heart, or strike me dead.

Arn. Give me again my innocence & soul,
Give me my forfeit honour blanch'd anew,
Cancel my treasons to my royal master,
Restore me to my country's lost esteem,
To the sweet hope of mercy from above,
And the calm comforts of a virtuous heart.

Mar. Sure kindness should not construe into guilt
My fond endeavours to preserve thee mine:
Life, love, and freedom are before you all,
Embrace the blessings, and we yet are happy.

Arn. What! with a conscience sore and gall'd
like mine?

To stand the glance of scorn from ev'ry eye?
From ev'ry finger the indignant point?

In ev'ry whisper hear my spreading shame?
And groan and grovel, a detested outcast?

Taunting Frenchman, with opprobrious tongue,
To scorn'd me abject, infamous, and hateful,
And yet I live! And you yet counsel life.

The mean'd beneath might find or fancy ease,

And fear to lose existence soon as I!
No, die I must—I will—but how—how—how—
Nay, loose my arm, you strive in vain to hold me.

Mar. Upon my knees—see, see these speaking
tears—

Arn. Be yet advis'd, nor urge me to an outrage:
Thy pow'r is lost; unhand me! then, 'tis thus,
Thus I renounce thy beauties; thus thy guilt;
Life, love, and treason I renounce for ever. *[Exit.]*

Mar. Then welcome death, distraction, ev'ry
course! *[ders!]*

Blast me, ye lightnings! strike me, roaring thun-
Or let me tear, with my outrageous hands,
The peaceful bosom of the earth, and find
A refuge from my woes and life together.

[Flinging herself on the ground.]
Stand off! away! I will not be withheld;
I will indulge my frenzy. Loss of reason
Is now but loss of torment. Cruel Arnold!

Enter LORD CHARNEY.

Char. Whence is this voice of woe? This frantic
Why is my child, my Mariana thus? *[posture?]*

Mar. Thy flinty heart can best resolve the ques-
tion: *[Rising.]*

Thou that relentless saw'st my tears descend,
And, urg'd by stubborn haughtiness and hatred,
Hast given me up to endless agonies.
The man that merited thy best regard,
The man I lov'd, thy cruelty has made
Alike implacable. He's gone, he's lost.
Arnold is lost, and my repose for ever. *[ruins,*

Char. Why, let him go, and may th' impending
The hovering mischiefs that await their arms,
Him, them, and all of their detested race,
Involve in one destruction.

Mar. No, let ruin
Overtake the proud, severe, and unforgiving;
Crimes that are strangers to an English nature.
They are all gentle. He was mild as mercy,
Soft as the smiles that mark a mother's joy,
Clasping her new-born infant. Shield him, heav'n!
Protect him, comfort him. Thou cruel father,
Thou cause of all my sufferings, all my woes;
Give him me back, restore him to my arms,
My life, my lord, my Arnold! Give him to me,
Or I will curse my country, thee, myself,
And die the victim of despairing love. *[Exit.]*

Char. Follow her, watch her, guard her from
her fury. *[Exit Louisa.]*

Oh! dire misfortune! this unhappy stroke
Surpasses all the sorrows I have felt,
And makes me wretched to the last extreme. *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—*The PRINCE OF WALES discovered,*
seated in state in his tent; at the entrance to which
his standard stands displayed: the device, three
ostrich feathers, with the motto of "Ich Dien:"
EARLS OF WARWICK and SALISBURY, LORDS
AUDLEY and CHANDOS, Nobles, Officers, and
Guards standing.

P. Edw. I've sent my Lords of Oxford, Suffolk,
Cobham,

To meet the nuncio, and conduct him hither:
From whom we may expect to hear the terms
On which the French will deign to give us safety.

[Trumpets.]
Chan. Those trumpets speak the cardinal's ar-
rival:

And see, the lords conduct him to your presence.
[Trumpets.]

Enter three English Lords, preceding CARDINAL
PERIGORT and his retinue. On the Nuncio's
bowing, the Prince advances from his seat and
embraces him.

P. Edw. Lord cardinal, most welcome to my arms:
I greet you thus, as England's kindest friend,
Misfortune's refuge, and affliction's hope.
It is an office worthy of your goodness,

To step betwixt our danger and destruction,
Striving to ward from threatened thousands here
The blow of fate.

Per. Grant, gracious heaven, I may!

For from my soul, great prince, I wish you rescue;
And have conditions from your foes to offer,
Which, if accepted, save ye.

P. Edw. We attend. *(Takes his seat.)*

Per. No art for mild persuasion in your cause
Have I omitted: but imperious France,
Too fond of vengeance, and too vain of numbers,
Insists on terms, which only could be hop'd
From such a scanty unprovided host;
And prudence will direct, from many evils
To choose the lightest. Their conditions are,
"That, to the castles, towns, and plunder taken,
And offer'd now by you to be restor'd,
Your royal person, with an hundred knights,
Are to be added prisoners at discretion."

P. Edw. Ah! prisoners!

Aud. Oh! insolent, detested terms!

Sal. An hundred thousand first of Frenchmen fall,
And carrion taint the air! I cannot hold. *(Aside.)*

P. Edw. *(After a pause.)* My good lord cardinal,
what act of mine

Could ever usher to their minds a thought,
That I would so submit?

Per. Could I prescribe,

You should yourself be umpire of the terms;
For well I know your noble nature such,
That int'rest would be made the slave of honour.
But to whate'er I urg'd, the king reply'd,
Remember Cressy's fight! to us as fatal,
As that of Cannæ to the Roman state.

There fell two mighty kings, three sovereign princes,
Full thirty thousand valiant men of arms,
With all the flower of French nobility,
And of their firm allies; for which *(he cried)*
What can redeem the glory of my crown,
But to behold those victors in our chains?

It is a bitter potion; but reflect,
That royal John is noble, and will treat
Such foes with dignity; while fortune pays
Less than the stock of fame his father lost.

P. Edw. Yes, Philip lost the battle with the odds
Of three to one. In this, if they obtain it,
They have our numbers more than twelve times told,
If we can trust report. And yet, my lord,
We'll face these numbers, fight 'em, bravely fall,
Ere stoop to linger loathsome life away
In infamy and bondage. Sir, I thank you—
I thank you from my soul, for these, for me,
That we have met your wish to do us kindness:
But for the terms our foes demand, we scorn
Such vile conditions, and defy their swords.
Tell 'em, my lord, their hope's too proudly plum'd;
We will be conquer'd ere they call us captives.

Per. Famine or slaughter—

P. Edw. Let them both advance

In all their horrid, most tremendous forms; {die,
They'll meet, in us, with men who'll starve, bleed,
Ere wrong their country, or their own renown.
Sound there to arms! My pious friend, farewell.
Disperse, my lords, and spirit up the troops;
Divide the last remains of our provision,
We shall require no more; for who survives
The fury of this day will either find
Enough from booty or a slave's allowance.

Per. How much at once I'm melted and amaz'd!
Stop, my lords, and give a soul of meekness scope,
In minutes of such peril. By the host
That circles heav'n's high throne, my bleeding heart
Is touch'd with so much tenderness and pity,
I cannot yield ye to the dire decision.
Let me, once more, with ev'ry moving art,
Each soft persuasion, try the Gallic king:
Perhaps he may relent. Permit the trial:
I would preserve such worth, heav'n knows I would,
If hazard, labour, life, could buy your safety.

P. Edw. Lord cardinal, your kindness quite an-
nounces me,

My mind was arm'd for ev'ry rough encounter;
But such compassion saps my fortitude,
And forces tears. They flow not for myself,
But these endanger'd followers of my fortunes:
Whom I behold as fathers, brothers, friends,
Here link'd together by the graceful bonds
Of amity and honour: all to me
For ever faithful, and for ever dear.

The worth that rooted while my fortune smil'd,
You see not ev'n adversity can shake:
Think it not weakness, then, that I lament them.

Per. It is the loveliest mark of royal virtue,
'Tis what demands our most exalted praise,
Is worthy of yourself, and must endear
The best of princes to the best of people.
Till my return be hope your comforter:
If 'tis within the scope of human means,
I'll ward the blow.

P. Edw. Good heav'n repay you, sir: *[them*
Though acts of kindness bear such blessings with
As are their full reward. My lord, farewell.

[Exit Perigord, attended as he came in.]

Aud. Well, sir, how fare you now?

P. Edw. Oh! never better:

If I save frailty in me, heav'n can tell,
It is not for myself, but for my friends.
I've run no mean inglorious race, and now,
If it must end, 'tis no unlucky time.
As yon great planet, through its radiant course,
Shoots at his parting, the most pleasing rays;
So to high characters a gallant death
Lends the best lustre, and adorns all.

Aud. Why, there, my prince, you reach even
virtue's summit:

For this I love you with a sonder flame,
Than proud prosperity could e'er inspire.
'Tis triumph, this, o'er death.

P. Edw. And what is death,
That dreadful evil to a guilty mind,
And awe of coward natures? 'Tis but rest:
Rest that should follow every arduous toil;
Relieve the valiant, and reward the good:
Nor find we aught in life to wish it longer,
When fame is once establish'd.

War. That secure,

Our foes, who wait its loss, can ne'er recover
The glory ravish'd from 'em.

P. Edw. Who can tell?

Has fortune been so badly entertain'd,
That she should leave us? No, my noble friends;
Her smiles and favours never were abus'd:
Then what we merit we may yet maintain.

Cham. An hundred of us, with your royal person,
Deliver'd up their prisoners at discretion!
The French have surely lost all modesty,
Or the remembrance of themselves and us.

Aud. But here, in my mind's tablet, there remains
A memorandum, that might make 'em start
In this career of their presumptuous hope.
Nine times the seasons scarce have danc'd their
rounds,

Since the vain father of their present king,
Philip, who styl'd himself his country's fortune,
Gaudy and garnish'd, with a numerous host,
Met our great Edward in the field of fight.
I was one knight in that illustrious service,
And urge I may *(for 'tis a modest truth)*
We made the Frenchmen tremble to behold us:
Their king himself turn'd pale at our appearance,
And thought his own trim troops, compar'd with ours,
Effeminate cowards. Such they prov'd;
And since that day, what change in them or us
Can ground security on wondrous odds?
The same undaunted spirits dare the combat;
The same tough sinews and well-temper'd blades,
Again shall mow them down, like autumn corn,
Another harvest of renown and glory.

Cham. There the brave monarch of Bohemia
In vain, to kindle valour in their hearts: [strove,
He fought, he fell; when our victorious prince
Seiz'd his gay banner with yon boast, "I serve."
(*Pointing to the Prince's standard.*)

Which now more suited to his princely charge,
Triumphantly, as conqueror, he wears;
And in his honour England's eldest hope
Shall ever wear it, to the end of time.

Sal. Now as I live, I wish we were at work,
And almost fear the nuncio may succeed.
Methinks we should not lose the blest occasion,
Or for surpassing ev'ry former conquest,
Or gaining glorious death, immortal fame.

P. Edw. Then set we here ill fortune at defiance,
Secure, at least, of never-fading honour.

(*They all embrace.*)

Oh! my brave leaders, in this warm embrace,
Let us infuse that fortitude of soul,
To all but England's daring sons unknown;
Firm as the stately oak, our island's boast,
Which fiercest hurricanes assault in vain,
We'll stand the driving tempest of their fury.
And who shall shake our martial glories from us?
Yon puny Gauls! They ne'er have done it yet,
Nor shall they now. Oh! never will we wrong
So far ourselves, and our renown'd forefathers.
Here part we, lords; attend your sev'ral duties.
Audley, distribute through the camp provisions;
Keep ev'ry soldier's spirits in a glow,
Till from the French this final message comes:
Then if their pride denies us terms of honour,
We'll rush outrageous on their vaunting numbers;
And teach them that with souls resolv'd like ours,
Ev'n desperation points the way to conquest.
When (in defiance of superior might)
Plung'd in the dreadful storm of bloody fight,
Shall ev'ry Briton do his country right. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The French Camp.*

Enter LORD RIDEMONT.

Rib. The troops array'd, stand ready to advance.
And this short pause, this silent interval,
With awful horror strikes upon my soul;
I know not whence it comes, but till this moment,
Ne'er did I feel such heaviness of heart.
Fear! thou art still a stranger here; and death
Have I not seen in ev'ry form he wears?
Defy'd him, fac'd him, never fled him yet:
Nor harp my conscience since contracted guilt,
The parent of dismay: then whence is this?
Perhaps 'tis pity for yon hopeless host.
Pity! for what? the brave despise our pity;
For death, encounter'd in a noble cause,
Comes, like the gracious lord of toiling hinds,
To end all labours and bestow reward.
Then let me shake this lethargy away.
By heav'n, it wo't not off! The sweat of death
Is on me! a cold tremor shakes my joints!
My feet seem riveted! my blood congeals!
Almighty pow'rs! Thou ever awful form!
Why art thou present! Wherefore—what, a sigh!
Oh! smile of sweet relief! if aught from heav'n
A mortal ear be worthy to—again
That piteous action, that dejected air!
Speak out the cause; I beg thee speak—'tis gone!
Yet would I gaze, by such enchantment bound—
Thou pleasing, dreadful vision! Oh! return,
Unfold thy errand, though I die with hearing.

Enter DUKE OF ATHENS.

Ath. You're well encounter'd, Ribemont; the
Ere this, has Edward's answer; as I past [king,
The boundaries of our camp on yonder side,
In this my progress to equip the field,
I saw the nuncio posting like the wind;
He and his train, on horses white with foam,
Their course directed to our monarch's tent.

What means this, Ribemont? thou'rt lost
thought.

Rib. Athens, I am unsoldier'd, I'm unmann'd!
Wonder you may, my noble friend, for see,
I shake, I tremble.

Ath. Say, at what?

Rib. Why, nothing.

[*battle,*

Ath. Should the vast host that here are rang'd for
(Warm with impatience, eager for the fray,)

Behold that Ribemont alone has fear,
What wonder would it cause! for thou, of all,
Art sure deservingly the most renown'd.
Come, be thyself—for shame!

Rib. Believe me, Athens,
I am not stricken with a coward's feeling:
Not all yon army to this sword oppos'd,
Should damp my vigour, or depress my heart:
'Tis not the soldier trembles, but the son.
Just now a melancholy seiz'd my soul,
A sinking, whence I knew not, till, at length,
My father's image to my sight appear'd,
And struck me motionless.

Ath. 'Twas only fancy.

Rib. Oh! no, my Athens, plainly I beheld
My father in the habit that he wore,
When, with paternal smiles, he hung this weapon
Upon my youthful thigh, bidding me use it
With honour—only in my country's cause.
Within my mind I treasur'd up the charge,
And sacred to the soldier's public call
Have worn it ever. Wherefore, then, this visit?
Why in that garb in which he fix'd my fortune,
And charg'd me to repay his care with glory?
If 'tis an omen of impending guilt,
Oh! soul of him I honour, once again
Come from thy heav'n, and tell me what it is,
Lest erring ignorance undo my frame.

[*brala,*

Ath. Nought but a waking dream—a vapour'd
Rib. Once his pale visage seem'd to wear a smile,
A look of approbation, not reproof.

But the next moment, with uplifted hands
And heaving bosom, sadly on the earth
He turn'd his eyes, and sorely seem'd to weep:
I heard, or fancy'd that I heard a groan,
As from the ground his look was rais'd to me;
Then, shaking with a mournful glance his head,
He melted into air.

Ath. Pr'ythee, no more;

You talk'd of melancholy, that was all;
Some sickness of the mind: occasion'd, oft,
Ev'n by the fumes of indigested meals.
To-morrow we will laugh at this delusion.

Rib. To-morrow! Oh! that mention of to-mor-
row—

There are opinions, Athens, that our friends
Can pass the boundaries of nature back,
To warn us when the hour of death is nigh.
If that thy business was, thou awful shade,
I thank thee, and this interval of life,
However short, which heaven vouchsafes me yet,
I will endeavour as I ought to spend.

Ath. See, through yon clouds of dust, with how
much speed

The nuncio hastens to the English camp!
Perhaps the terms for safety are agreed,
Then where's a meaning for thy fancy'd vision?

Rib. No matter where, my spirits are grown light:
Returning vigour braces up again
My nerves and sinews to their wonted tone.
My heart beats freely, and, in nimble rounds,
The streams of life pursue their ready course:
Lead on; our duty calls us to the king. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Prince of Wales's Tent.*

*Enter PRINCE EDWARD, LORD CHANDOS, and
Attendants, meeting LORD AUDLEY.*

P. Edw. Well, Audley, are the soldiers all re-
fresh'd?

[*meals,*

Aud. Ath. and although, perchance, their fast of

It seem'd so cheerful as surpass'd my hope;
Still joining hands, as off they drain'd the bowl,
Success to England's arms was all the cry.
At length a hoary vet'ran rais'd his voice, [thers!
And thus address'd his fellows: "Courage, bro-
The French have never beat us, nor shall now.
Our great third Edward's fortune waits our arms;
And his brave son, whose formidable helmet
Nods terror to our foes, directs the fight;
In his black armour, we will soon behold him
Piercing their throng'd battalions. Shall not we,
At humble distance, emulate his ardour,
And gather laurels to adorn his triumph?"
Then did they smile again, shake hands, and shout,
While, quite transported at the pleasing sight,
I wept, insensibly, with love and joy. [there,
P. Edw. I too could weep! Oh! Audley, Chandos,
There rest I all my hope. My honest soldiers,
I know, will do their duty.

Enter a Gentleman.

Gent. Royal sir,
A person muffled in a close disguise,
Arriv'd, this instant, from the adverse camp,
As he reports, solicits to receive
An audience of your highness, and alone.

P. Edw. Retire, my lord. Conduct him straight-
way in. [Exit Gentleman.

Chan. Your highness will not trust yourself
unguarded:

It may be dangerous. Consider, sir. [soon:
P. Edw. Caution is now my slave, and fear I
This is no hour for idle apprehensions.

[Exit Lords, &c.]

Enter ARNOLD in a disguise, which he throws off.
Your business, sir, with—Arnold! Get thee hence.

Arn. Behold a wretch laid prostrate at your feet,
His guilty neck ev'n humbled to the earth;
Tread on it, sir; it is most fit you should.
I am unworthy life, nor hope compassion,
But could not die till here I stream'd my tears
In token of contrition, pain, and shame. [move,

P. Edw. Up, and this instant from my sight re-
-ere indignation urges me to pay
Thy horrid treasons with a traitor's fate. [ther;

Arn. Death if I'd fear'd, I had not ventur'd hi-
Conscious I merit all you can inflict:
But doom'd to torture, as by guilt I am,
I hop'd some ease in begging here to die;
That I might manifest, where most I ought,
My own abhorrence of my hated crime.
Thus, on my knees, lay I my life before you;
Nor ask remission of the heavy sentence,
Your justice must pronounce. Yet, royal sir,
One little favour let me humbly hope:
(And may the blessings of high heav'n repay it:)
'Tis, when you shall report my crime and suffering,
Only to add, he gave himself to death,
The voluntary victim of remorse.

P. Edw. I shall disgrace my soldiership, and melt
To woman's weakness, at a villain's sorrow.
Oh! justice, with thy fillet seal my eyes;
Shut out at once, his tears, and hide my own. [Aside.]

Arn. Am I rejected in my low petition
For such a boon? Nor can I yet complain;
Your royal favours follow approbation,
And I of all mankind have least pretence
To hope the bounty of a word to ease me.

P. Edw. Rise, Arnold. Thou wert long my chosen
servant;

An infant-fondness was our early tie:
But with our years (companions as we liv'd)
Affection rooted, and esteem grew love.
Nor was my soul a niggard to thy wishes:
There set no son but saw my bounty flow,
No hour scarce pass'd unmark'd by favour from me.
The prince and master yet I set apart,
And singly here arraign thee in the friend.
Was it for thee, in fortune's first assault,

Amidst these thousands, all by far less favour'd,
To be the first, the only to forsake me?
Was it for thee, for thee to seek my foe,
And take thy safety from the means that sunk
The man of all the world that lov'd thee most?
In spite of me my eyes will overflow,
And I must weep the wrongs I should revenge.
Arn. Tears for such guilt as mine! Oh! blast-
ing sight!

Cover me, mountains! hide me and my shame!
A traitor's fate would here be kind relief
From the excessive anguish I endure.

P. Edw. Having thus fairly stated our account,
How great's the balance that appears against thee!
And what remains? I will not more reproach thee.
Love thee I must not, and 'twere guilt to pity.
All that with honour I can grant is this:
Live—but remove for ever from my sight.
If I escape the dangers that surround me,
I must forget that Arnold e'er had being:
I must forget, in pity to mankind
(Lest it should freeze affection in my heart,)
That e'er such friendship met with such return.

Arn. Oh! mercy more afflicting than ev'n rage!
That I could answer to with tears and pray'rs;
But conscious shame, with kindness, strikes me
mute.

Great sir, (forgive intrusion on your goodness,)
My boon you have mistaken, life I ask'd not;
'Twas but to witness to the deep remorse,
That with a harpy's talons tears my bosom.
Love's the pernicious poison of my honour;
In poor atonement's sacrifice'd already;
And life, devoted as the soul I've left,
I'm ready now and resolute to pay.

But as my miseries have touch'd your soul,
And gain'd remission of a traitor's fate,
Oh! add one favour, and complete my wishes.
To the dear country that must scorn my name,
(Though I still love it as I honour you,)
Permit my sword to lend its little aid,
To pay a dying tribute. Grant but that,
And I will weep my gratitude with blood. [thee,

P. Edw. Stain'd and polluted as my eyes behold
Honour no longer can endure thy sight.
If 'tis in valour to accomplish it,
Redeem thy reputation; but if not,
To fall in fight will be thy happiest hope.
Away, nor more reply.

Arn. Exalted goodness! [Exit.
P. Edw. If passions conquer'd are onr noblest
Misruling anger, ever mad revenge, [boasts,
And thou, too partial biass, affection;
Confess I once have acted as I ought. [Trumpets.]
Ah! by those trumpets, sure, the nuncio's come!

[A Gentleman appears and retires.]
Who's there? Acquaint the lords I wish to see 'em.
Now does the medley war begin to work:
A thousand hopes and fears all crowd upon me!

*Enter EARLS OF WARWICK and SALISBURY,
LORDS AUDLEY, CHANDOS, and other, and
Attendants.*

Oh! welcome, friends! But see, the cardinal.
[Trumpets.]

Enter CARDINAL PERIGORT, attended.
Well, gen'rous advocate, we wait our doom.
Per. Prepare, prepare, for an immediate battle:
Inflexible is France in her demands,
And all my pray'rs and tears have prov'd in vain.
P. Edw. Lord Cardinal, may righteous heav'n
reward

The pious charity of soul you've shewn.
If France insists so high, it shall be try'd;
The desperate chance of battle shall be try'd.
The fates attend, the balance is prepar'd;
And whoso'er shall have the lot to mount,
May heav'n stretch wide its everlasting doors,
And give them happy entrance all.

Per. Amen!

Illustrious prince, and you his noble followers,
Remains there aught that I can do to serve ye?
My function suits not with a field of slaughter;
In Poitiers, therefore, must I seek my safety.
There, while the battle rages, round and round
My beads shall drop to pray'rs, that ev'ry saint
Will succour and support the English arms.
But should the fortune of your foes prevail,
And leave ye victims to immortal honour,
The pious offices I'll make my own,
O'er ev'ry grave to breathe a thousand blessings,
And water all your ashes with my tears.

P. Edw. My gentle friend, such goodness will
renown you.

Per. Take from my hand, my heart, my very soul,
My amplest benediction to you all. *(They bow.)*

I now can stifle in my tears no longer—

Oh! gallant prince, farewell. Farewell to all.

Heav'n guard your lives, and give your arms success!

*[Exit with his Attendants. On the Cardinal's
going out, the Prince and Lords continue for
some time fixed and mute.]*

Aud. You loiter, sir; our enemies advance,
And we're in no array.

P. Edw. Away, despatch;
Marshal the army by the plan I gave;
Then march it straight to yonder eminence:
Whence I'll endeavour to inflame their zeal,
And fit them for the toils this day demands.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—Another part of the English Camp.

Enter MARIANA and LOUISA.

Lou. Thus, madam, has obedience prov'd my
The hurry and confusion of the field' *[duty]*
Giving us opportunity to 'scape,
We've reach'd the English camp. But whither now?
Where would you bend your course? Behold,
around,

How the arm'd soldiers, as they form in ranks,
Dart from impassion'd looks ten thousand terrors!
The scene is dreadful!

Mar. Then it suits my mind,
The seat of horrors terrible to bear.
On—let us find him.

Lou. Dearest lady, think;
Nor follow one that rudely spurn'd you from him.

Mar. It was not Arnold spurn'd me, 'twas his
guilt,

The guilt I plung'd him in. *Louisa*, thou
Hast ne'er experienc'd passions in extremes,
Or thou wouldst know that love, and hate, and scorn,
All opposites together meet, and blend
In the wild whirl of a distracted soul.

Lou. Behold, he comes!

Mar. Support me, gracious pow'rs!

Enter ARNOLD.

Arn. Ah! Mariana! When will torture end?

Mar. How shall I stand the shock of his re-
proaches? *(Aside.)*

Arn. Why art thou here? Oh! why, unhappy
maid? *[ruin]*

Mar. Since my too fatal rashness wrought thy
'Tis fit, at least, that I should share it with thee.
Therefore, my friends, my father, and my country,
I have forsook for ever; and am come
To claim a portion here in all you suffer.

Arn. Return again, I beg thee; I conjure thee,
By all the wondrous love that fir'd our hearts,
And wrought—but let not that be more remember'd.
Nay, hast wish for happiness or peace,
Go to thy father back, and think no more
Of a lost wretch who hastens to oblivion.

Mar. Request it not; I never will forsake thee:
One fortune shall conduct, one fate involve us:
I'll shew the world that my unhappy crime
Was neither child of treachery or fear,

But love, love only! and the guilt it caus'd,
As I inspir'd, I'll share its punishment.

Arn. You cannot, nay, you must not think of it:

You broke no faith; I only was to blame:

And, to engage thee to secure thy safety,

Know the dire state of my determin'd soul:—

Heav'n and my prince permitting, I have sworn

To brave all dangers in the coming fight;

And when my sword has done its best for England,

To lay my load of misery and shame,

Together down for ever; death I'll hunt

So very closely that he sha'n't escape me.

Be timely, then, in thy retreat; and heav'n

And all good angels guard thee! On thy lips

I'll seal my fervent pray'rs for blessings on thee.

(Kisses her.)

Oh! what a treasure does my soul give up
A sacrifice to honour!

(Going.)

Mar. Stop a moment:

One single moment, Arnold: let me gather

A little strength to bear this dreadful parting.

And must it be—hold, hold, my heart—for ever?

Oh! bitter potion! kind physician, pour

One drop of hope to sweeten it a little. *[give,*

Arn. Hope ev'ry thing: hope all that earth can
Or heav'n bestow on virtues such as thine.

(Trumpet.)

That trumpet summons me: I must away!

Oh! measure by thy own the pangs I feel. *[Exit.]*

Mar. Then they are mighty; not to be express'd,
Not to be borne, nor ever to be cur'd.

My head runs round! my bursting brain divides!

Oh! for an ocean to ingulf me quick;

Or flames capacious as all hell's extent!

That I might plunge, and stifle torture there.

Lou. Hence, my dear lady; for your peace, go
hence. *[eyes]*

Mar. I'll dig these eyes out; these pernicious
Enslaving Arnold, have undone him.—Ah!

(Trumpet.)

That raven trumpet sounds the knell of death!

Behold, the dreadful, bloody work begins!

What ghastly wounds! what piteous, piercing

Oh! stop that fatal falchion! if it fall, *[shrieks]*

It kills my Arnold!—Save him, save him, save—

Exit, running; Louisa follows.

SCENE IV.—A rural Eminence, with the distant
prospect of a camp.

Enter PRINCE EDWARD.

P. Edw. The hour advances, the decisive hour,
That lifts me to the summit of renown,
Or leaves me on the earth a lifeless corse.
The buzz and bustle of the field before me,
The twang of bow-strings, and the clash of spears,
With ev'ry circumstance of preparation,
Strike a tremendous awe!—Hark! Shouts are
echo'd

To drown dimay, and blow up resolution
Ev'n to its utmost swell! From hearts so firm,
Whom dangers fortify, and toils inspire,
What has a leader not to hope! And yet
The weight of apprehension weighs me down.
Oh! Soul of nature! great eternal Cause! *(Kneels.)*
Who gave and govern'st all that's here below;
'Tis by the aid of thy Almighty arm

The weak exist, the virtuous are secure.
If to your sacred laws obedient ever,
My sword, my soul, have own'd no other guide;
Oh! if your honour, if the rights of men,
My country's happiness, my king's renown,
Were motives worthy of a warrior's zeal;
Crown your poor servant with success this day,
And be the praise and glory all thy own. *(Rises.)*

Enter LORD AUDLEY.

Aud. Now, royal Edward, is the hour at hand,
That shall, beyond the boast of ancient story,
Enoble English arms; forgive, my hero,

That I presume so far, but I have sworn
To rise your rival in the common fight.
We'll start together for the goal of glory,
And work such wonders that our fear-struck foes
Shall call us more than mortals! As of old,
Where matchless vigour mark'd victorious chiefs!
The battl'd host, to cover their disgrace,
Cry'd out the gods assum'd commanders' forms,
And partial heav'n had fought the field against them!

P. Edw. Audible, thy soul is noble: then toge-
(Safe from the prying eye of observation) [ther
Let us unmask our hearts. Alas! my friend,
To such a dreadful precipice we're got,
It giddies to look down. No hold, no hope,
But in the succour of Almighty Pow'r!
For nothing but a miracle can save us.

Aud. I still apprehensions as they rise,
Nor e'er allow myself to weigh our danger.

P. Edw. 'Tis wisely done: and we'll at least en-
deavour

(Like the brave handful at Thermopylæ)
To make such gallant sacrifice of life
As shall confound our enemies. Oh! think
On the great glory of devoted heroes,
And let us emulate the godlike flame,
That dignify'd the chiefs of Greece and Rome!
Souls greatly rais'd, above all partial bonds,
Who knew no tie, no happiness distinct,
But made the general weal their only care:
That was their aim, their hope, their pride; the end
For which they labour'd, suffer'd, conquer'd, bled!

Aud. Exalted, great incitement!

P. Edw. What may happen,
Since none can say, prepare we for the worst.
Then as a man whom I have lov'd and honour'd,
Come to my arms, and take a kind farewell:

(*They embrace.*)

If we survive, we will again embrace,
And greet each other's everlasting fame;
If not, with him whose justice never errs,
Remains our fit reward.

Aud. You melt me, sir!
I thought my nature was above such weakness;
But tears will out.

P. Edw. They're no reproach to manhood:
But we've not leisure now for their indulgence.

Aud. True, glorious leader; to more active duties
The several functions of our souls are summon'd.
Safety and honour, liberty, renown!
Hope's precious prospect, and possession's bliss!
All that are great and lovely; urg'd together,
The arm of valour in their dear defence.

P. Edw. And valour well shall answer the de-
mand;

Our foes, to wear the trophies of the day, [tell
Must wade through blood to win 'em. Heav'n can
How many souls may pay the fatal price,
Or whose may be the lot: if mine be one,
Say, Audley, to my father, to my country,—
Living, they had my service; at my death,
My pray'rs and wishes for eternal welfare.

Aud. Request not that which, if the day be lost,
I ne'er shall execute.—I have to ask
A favour, which I hope you'll not refuse.

P. Edw. Nothing that suits my Audley to solicit.

Aud. It is that I may be the first to charge:
I think I can rely upon my courage
To set a good example.

P. Edw. Be it thine.—

And see, the troops approach! (*Trumpets.*)

Aud. Each upright form
Darting defiance, as they move, to France!
Where is the pow'r can cope with souls like these?
Resolv'd on conquest or a glorious fate!
Unmoveable as rocks, they'll stand the torrent
Of rushing fury, and disdain to shrink:
But let yon panting wasps discharge their stings,
And then in clusters crush 'em. (*Trumpets.*)

Enter EARLS OF WARWICK and SALISBURY,
LORD CHANDOS, and other Commanders. Parties
of Soldiers appear between all the side scenes, with
Officers leading them, so seeming as if the whole of
the army was drawn up.

P. Edw. Countrymen,
We're here assembled for the toughest fight
That ever strain'd the force of English arms.
See yon wide field with glittering numbers gay,
Vain of their strength, they challenge us for slaves,
And bid us yield their pris'ners at discretion.
If there's an Englishman amongst ye all,
Whose soul can basely truckle to such bondage;
Let him depart. For me, I swear by heav'n,
By my great father's soul, and by my fame,
My country ne'er shall pay a ransom for me,
Nor will I stoop to drag out life in bondage,
And take my pittance from a Frenchman's hands:
This I resolve, and hope, brave countrymen,
Ye all resolve the same.

Soldiers. All, all resolve it.

Sal. Conquest or death is ev'ry Briton's choice.

P. Edw. Oh! glorious choice! And know, my
gallant soldiers,

That valour is superior far to numbers,
There are no odds against the truly brave:
Let us resolve on conquest, and 'tis ours.
But should the worst that can befall us—death,
'Twill be a fate to envy more than pity.
And we have fathers, brothers, sons, or friends,
That will revenge our slaughter.

Soldiers. On, lead on.

P. Edw. I see the gen'rous indignation rise,
That soon will shake the boasted pow'r of France:
Their monarch trembles midst his gaudy train,
To think the troops he now prepares to meet,
Are such as never faint'd yet with toil.
They're such as yet no pow'r on earth could awe,
No army baffle, and no town withstand.
Heav'n's! with what pleasure, with what love I gaze,
In ev'ry face to view his father's greatness!
Those fathers, those undaunted fathers, who
In Gallic blood have dy'd their swords.
Those fathers who in Cyprus wrought such feats,
Who taught the Syracusians to submit,
Tam'd the Calabrians, the fierce Saracens,
And have subdu'd, in many a stubborn fight
The Palestinian warriors. Scotland's fields,
That have so oft been drench'd with native gore,
Bear noble record; and the fertile isle,
Of fair Hibernia, by their swords subjected,
An ample tribute and obedience pays.
On her high mountains Wales receiv'd their laws,
And the whole world has witness'd to their glory.

Aud. Lead us to action, and each Briton here
Will prove himself the son of those brave fathers.

P. Edw. View all yon glitt'ring grandeur as your
spoils,

The sure reward of this day's victory.
Strain ev'ry faculty, and let your minds,
Your hopes, your ardours, reach their utmost
bounds.

Follow your standards with a fearless spirit;
Follow the great examples of your sires;
Follow the noble genius that inspires ye;
Follow this train of wise and valiant leaders,
Follow, in me, your brother, prince, and friend.
Draw, fellow-soldiers; catch th' inspiring name!
We fight for England, liberty, and fame!

[*They draw their swords and go out. Trumpets
sounding.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*An extensive Plain, with the distant view
of a Town.*

Enter PRINCE EDWARD, EARL OF WARWICK,
LORD CHANDOS, and Attendants.

P. Edw. Haste to my Lord of Oxford, and re-
He ply his archers with redoubled vigour: [quest

[*An Attendant bows, and goes out.*]

And. There lifeless lies the arm that gave the
A braver soldier never press'd the earth. [wound:
On his remains let due distinction wait,
To dignify the dust that once was noble.

[He is led off.]
P. Edw. The valiant Ribemont! Take hence
his corpse,
And see that every solemn rite be paid:
With honours suited to his high renown,
Conduct the body to its peaceful grave.

[Ribemont is carried off.]
Chan. The field is thinn'd! And now, far off re-
The dying voice of tumult faintly sounds, [mov'd,
Like the hoarse thunder in a distant sky;
Or hollow roarings of subsiding waves,
After their conflict with a furious storm. [us,

P. Edw. An awful horror! The sad scene before
Pompous with desolation! as declines
The glow and ardour of our martial flame,
Softens the mind to mournful meditation.
How many souls have ta'en eternal flight,
Who, but this very morning, on the wing
Of expectation, look'd through years to come!
So have the bubbles of their hopes been broke;
So may it fare with us—And such is life!

Enter LOUISA, and falls on her knees.

Lou. Oh! mighty prince, whose matchless vir-
tues charm
The many realms your victories have aw'd,
Lend your compassion, your protection lend,
To wretched, bleeding, dying penitence.

P. Edw. What wouldst thou say?

Lou. Unhappy Mariana,
At once the victim of distressful love,
And deep remorse for treachery—

P. Edw. Go on.

Lou. Frantic and weeping, ran o'er all the field,
Till chance directed her to Arnold's corpse,
That well'ring lay in blood. She kiss'd it oft,
Bath'd it with tears, tore her dishevell'd locks,
Smote her poor bosom, sobb'd, and sadly groan'd,
Till snatching from his clay-cold hand his sword,
She plung'd it sudden in her side! sunk down,
And call'd on death to lock their last embrace:
I (but too late to save her) interpos'd,
And cry'd for help—alas! in vain. But now,
Plac'd by some passing soldiers from the body,
They force her, raving and reluctant, hither.

P. Edw. Oh! Chandos, what a moving sight is
here!

*Enter Soldiers, forcing in MARIANA, distracted and
bleeding.*

Mar. Off, let me go! I will not be torn from him:
Relentless monsters! Let us mingle blood,
And die together. What do I behold!
Oh! hide me, friendly earth! for ever hide me
From that offended face. *(Sinks down.)*

P. Edw. Look up, fair mourner,

(Kneeling by her.)
And gather comfort from my friendly tears.

Mar. Comfort from thee! Thou injur'd godlike
hero,

Lead me with curses! Stab me with reproaches—
Thy sweetness cannot! but the hand of heav'n,
That strikes for injur'd virtue, heavy falls,
And crushes me beneath it.

P. Edw. Weep not thus.

Mar. What art thou made of, heart, to bear all
That grow'ling in the dust—abandon'd—

P. Edw. Nay,

Do not be so wilful—And—

Mar. Indeed, great prince,
The dear, departed Arnold was ensnar'd,
Seduc'd, betray'd by me. But heav'n can witness,
My only motive was his preservation.
Danger, despair, provok'd the guilty deed,
Which horror, death, and infamy reward.
Forgive the breathless soldier that rever'd,
And servant that ador'd you, sir! On me

Heap all your indignation; scorn, detest,
Despise, and hate my memory for ever.

P. Edw. No; both have my compassion, my for-
giveness.

Mar. Forgiveness, said you? Oh! celestial
Catch it, ye angels, hov'ring on the wing,
To waft me to the bar of heav'n's high justice!
Offended virtue pities and forgives!
Chant it aloud, and cheer with this forebaste
Of goodness infinite—my drooping—Oh!—*(Dies.)*

Chan. She's breathless!

P. Edw. Heav'n, I hope, will think their crime
Enough was punish'd by affliction here.
Lay them together.—Well, my Lord of Warwick—

Enter EARL OF WARWICK.

War. I've view'd the adverse camp, as you com-
manded;

Where all the wealth of France was sure collected,
To grace the ruin of that wretched people:
Each tent profuse! like those of Pompey's host,
When on Pharsalia's plain he fought great Cæsar,
And lost the world, his life, and Rome her freedom.

P. Edw. All-righteous heav'n! thy hand is here
conspicuous:

Pride and presumption finish thus their shame.

(Shout.)

Chan. 'Tis a train of pris'ners; bring hither.
*Enter EARL OF SALISBURY, with Officers and Sol-
diers, conflating KING JOHN, the DUKE OF TOUR-
RAIN, ARCHBISHOP OF SENS, and several French
Noblemen, prisoners.*

P. Edw. Brave Salisbury, you're welcome to my
The field is ours! [arms.

Sal. And nobly was it fought!
[ted
Behold, my noble prince, how well we have acquit-
The claims our adversaries made on us.
Your veteran swordsmen, Sir John Pelham, sends
This royal trophy to adorn your triumph.

P. Edw. Most wise and valiant of all Christian
kings,

Rever'd for virtues, and renown'd in arms!
That I behold you thus, dissolves my heart
With tender feeling; while I bend the knee
In humble praise of that good Providence,
Which gives so great a victory to England!
For you, great monarch! let your godlike soul
Strive with adversity, and still preserve,
As well you may, your royal mind unconquer'd.
Fortune is partial in her distributions:
Could merit always challenge its reward,
In other lights we might this hour have stood,
Perhaps the victor you, and I the captive:
But fear no wrong, the good should never fear it.
This land, from whence my ancestors have sprung,
By me shall not be injur'd: for yourself,
And this illustrious train of noble pris'ners,
My care shall be to treat you as I ought. [sin,

K. John. My gracious conqueror, and kindest cou-
This goodness more than victory renowns you!
That I'm unfortunate is no reproach,
I brav'd all dangers as became a king,
Till by my coward subjects left and lost. [riv'd,

P. Edw. Lead to my tent; when we are there ar-
Prepare a banquet with all princely pomp,
At which I'll wait, and serve my royal guests.
My noble lords, and brave companions all,
I leave your praise for the wide world to sound:
Nor can the voice of fame, however loud,
Out-speak the merit of your matchless deeds.
Oh! may Britannia's sons, through every age,
As they shall read of this so great achievement,
Feel the recorded victory inspire

An emulation of our martial fire,
When future wrongs their ardour shall excite,
And future princes lead them forth to fight;
Till, by repeated conquests, they obtain
A power to awe the earth, and rule the main;
Each tyrant fetter gloriously unbind,
And give their liberty to all mankind. *[Exeunt.]*

THE WATERMAN;

OR, THE FIRST OF AUGUST:

A BALLAD OPERA, IN TWO ACTS.—BY CHARLES DIBDIN.



Act I.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

BUNDLE
TUG

ROBIN
GARDENERS

MRS. BUNDLE
WILELMINA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Garden, where several Gardeners are at work; some digging, &c.; others, together with several Women, tying up bundles of asparagus. BUNDLE and TUG seated under a tree, at breakfast upon cold roast beef; a tankard of beer upon the table.*

*Labour, lads, ere youth be gone,
For see apace the day steals on.
Labour is the poor man's wealth;
Labour 'tis that gives him health;
Labour makes us, while we sing,
Happier than the greatest king.
Then labour, lads, ere youth be gone,
For see apace the day steals on.*

Bundle. This, now, is my delight; to sit at breakfast while the men work. Come, honest Tom, let us make an end of our tankard before my wife gets up: her raking so in London, (where, between you and I, she stays a devilish deal longer than while she sells the sparrow-grass,) keeps her abed woundy late of a morning.

Tug. Why, Master Bundle, I have oftentimes thought to myself, that it was, a wondrousome kind of thing how it came to pass, that you two agree so badly; when out of all the four-and-twenty hours, you are hardly ever above two of them together.

Bundle. Ah! Thomas, Thomas! 'tis very hard that a man like me can't be allowed to get drunk once a-day, without being called to an account

for it; but, between you and I, she is the arrantest—

Mrs. B. (*Within.*) What are you all about there? Where's your lazy, idle master?

Bundle. You hear she has begun to sing her usual peal. This is the way, the moment she is up!

Tug. And I believe she seldom leaves off till she goes to bed. Does she, Mr. Bundle?

Bundle. No, nor then neither. Everything must be her way, or there's no getting any peace. As soon as the marketing's over in town, away she and her favourite Robin trudge to the two shilling gallery of one of the play-houses, where they have picked up such a pack of d—d nonsense, about sentiments and stuff, that I am not only obliged to put up with her scolding me all the time I do see her, but I am scolded in a language, I don't understand.

Tug. Why, I should like that best now; for, then, you know, one has no right to take it for scolding at all.

Bundle. Oh! when once she raises her voice, you never can take it for anything else.

Tug. Why then, mayhap, it is all concerning this same play-house business that she's so stout against me, and does all she can to serve Master Robin with Miss Wilelminy.

Bundle. Ay, there was another of her freaks: she was then as fond of romances as she is now of plays; and though my father, who was as plain a man as myself, swore he would not leave us a farthing, if we did not call the girl Margery,

nothing would satisfy her, forsooth, but we must give her the name of Wilelmina. 'Tis such a d—d, confounded, hard name, that I was a matter of three years before I could pronounce it right.

Tug. Well, stand to your oars; for here she comes!

Enter MRS. BUNDLE.

Mrs. B. Is it not a most marvellous thing, Mr. Bundle, that I must be such an eternal slave to my family, in this here manner, while you and your cologhting companions are besotting and squandering away your time with your guzzling, and everything goes to rack and manger! I that am such a quiet, well-bred, easy, tame creature; that never scolds, nor riots, nor dins your faults in your ears; but am always as gentle and as patient as a lamb.

Bundle. You are a very good wife to be sure, my dear, only a little inclined to talking. If you now had no tongue, or I had no ears, we should be the happiest couple in the world.

Mrs. B. What a provoking creature!—Tongue!—But this comes of marrying such a scamp of a fellow? one that you may throw away all the tenderness in the world for, before it makes any impression upon him. But it serves me right; for 'tis very well known what great offers I refused upon your account!

Bundle. I don't know how it should be otherwise than well known, my love; for I generally hear of it about six times a-day!—But, my dear, don't you think it will be necessary to give orders about loading the cart against you go to London?

Mrs. B. Sir, I shall not go to London to-night at all. Robin, Miss Wilelmina, and I, are invited to go with a party to see the rowing-match this afternoon, and afterwards, there is to be a hop at Mr. Wick's, the tallow-chandler's, where I intend to settle the preliminaries about my daughter's wedding: and I desire you to take care, that the pines are not all gone before next week; for I intend to invite the whole party to a hop here.

Tug. But, Madam Bundle, hen't you some how or other afraid, that, what with one thing and what with another, you'll hop all the money out of your husband's pocket?

Mrs. B. I don't direct my discourse to you, sir; but 'tis my husband that encourages you to behave in such a brutish and outrageous manner. He has promised you, I know, that you should have my daughter; but I'll make him to know who's at home, I will! I'll assure you, indeed!—Such a fellow as you!—a nasty, idling, scurvy rapscallion, that leads a filthy, drunken, lazy life; setting in one ale-house, and setting in another! And shall such a low brute dare to expire to the honour of marrying Miss Wilelmina Bundle?

Tug. I'll tell you what, Ma'am Bundle, I should not care much for marrying your daughter, if she was not of a little better temper than yourself.

Mrs. B. Oh! the villain!—Why, you vile, wicked—

Bundle. My dear, how can you put yourself in such a passion? you, you know, who are such a tame creature; one that never scolds nor riots.

Mrs. B. I'll riot you all to some tune, I will; therefore, Mr. Bundle, unless you would have me sue for a separate maintenance—mind what I say—next time I go to London, I shall take Robin with me to Doctors'-Commons, and nothing but your consent to his marrying your daughter, shall ever make me look upon you again.

AIR.—MRS. BUNDLE.

*My counsel take,
Or else I'll make
The house too hot to hold you;
Be rul'd, I pray,
I'd something say—
Did I e'er rout or scold you?
But spite to wreak,
On one so meek,
Who never raves or scies out;
On me, who am
Like any lamb—
Oh! I could tear your eyes out. [Exit.]*

Tug. Well, and what say you to all this?

Bundle. Why, I'll tell you what, honest Thomas; for me to contradict her, would be much the same thing as for you to row against wind and tide.

Tug. Why, then, that would be bad enough. Master Bundle.

Bundle. But I'll try what I can do with my daughter for you; and all I can say to put you in heart is, that if I find her as headstrong and as perverse as her mother, I shall advise you to have nothing to do with her, and so save you from hanging yourself in a month.

Tug. But, Master Bundle, if I marries miss, I expect to be a little happier than you are.

Bundle. Ah! Tom, Tom! the wisest of us may be deceived.

Tug. I don't know but you are in the right of it. A waterman would be a confounded fool, that would put up a sail with the wind and tide both in his teeth—But here comes Miss Wilelminy. If she marries me, I'll see if I can't get her to change her name.

Enter MISS WILELMINA.

AIR.

*Two youths for my love are contending in vain;
For do all they can,
Their sufferings I rally, and laugh at their pain.
Which, which is the man
That deserves me the most? Let me ask of my heart,
Is it Robin who smirks, or who dresses so smart?
Or Tom, honest Tom, who makes plainness his plan?
Which, which is the man?*

*Indeed, to be prudent, and do what I ought,
I do what I can;*

Yet surely papa and mamma are in fault;

*To a different man
They each have advis'd me to yield up my heart:
Mamma prizes Robin, who dresses so smart;
Papa honest Tom, who makes plainness his plan:
Which, which is the man?*

*Be kind, then, my heart, and but point out the youth,
I'll do what I can*

His love to return, and return it with truth:

*Which, which is the man?
Be kind to my wishes, and point out, my heart,—
Is it Robin who smirks, and who dresses so smart?
Or Tom, honest Tom, who makes plainness his plan?*

Which, which is the man?

Tug. Take my advice, miss, and let it be honest Tom.

Wilel. Oh! you brute, did you hear me?

Tug. Why, miss, suppose if I did, you aren't afraid of speaking your mind, be ye?

Wilel. My mind! Why you have not the assurance to pretend that I said anything in favour of you?

Tug. Why, no, I can't say directly that you said as how you'd have me; but I'm sure you

can't help saying yourself, that it sounded a little that way.

Wilel. And do you imagine that I could prefer you to Robin, sweet Robin! as the song says, that's all over a nosegay, and the very pink of good breeding.

Tug. For my part, I makes no comparisons, as a body may say; but I'd be sorry, miss, if there was not others as agreeable and well-behaved as he, however.

Wilel. What, yourself, I suppose? Do you know, you odious creature! that he can spout Romeo by heart, and that he's for ever talking similies to me?

Tug. I know he's for ever talking nonsense to you.

Wilel. Oh! hold your filthy tongue! Did you but hear him compare my cheeks to carnations, my hands to lilies, my beautiful blue veins to violets, my lips to cherries, my teeth to snow-drops, and my eyes to the sparkling dew that hangs upon the rose-trees in the morning,—what would you say, then?

Tug. Ah! but you know, miss, that's all in his way.

Wilel. Then he writes verses! Oh, dear me! the author of the opera book in the parlour window, is a fool to him for writing. Oh! he is a very Ovid's Metamorphose!

Tug. Why, for the matter of that, miss, there are other folks that can write as well as he. What would you say now, if I had wrote something about concerning my falling in love with you?

Wilel. I should then begin to have some hopes of you.

Tug. Should you?—Why, then, I have.

Wilel. Oh, dear! let's see it.

Tug. It's a song, miss: I'll sing it to you, if you please.

AIR.—TUG.

And did you not hear of a jolly young waterman,

Who at Blackfriars Bridge us'd for to ply?

And he feather'd his oars with such skill and dexterity,

Winning each heart, and d-lighting each eye:

He look'd so neat, and row'd so steadily,

The maidens all flock'd in his boat so readily,

And he ey'd the young rogues with so charming an air,

That this waterman ne'er was in want of a fare.

What sights of fine folks he oft row'd in his wherry,

'Twas clean'd out so nice, and painted withal;

He was always first oars when the fine city ladies

In a party to Ranelagh went or Vauxhall.

And oftentimes would they be giggling and leering;

But 'twas all one to Tom, their gibing and jeering,

For loving or liking he little did care,

For this waterman ne'er was in want of a fare.

And yet but to see how strangely things happen;

As he row'd along, thinking of nothing at all,

He was ply'd by a damsel, so lovely and charming,

That she smil'd, and so straightway in love he did fall:

And would this young damsel but banish his sorrow,

He'd wed her to-night before to-morrow.

And how should this waterman ever know care,

When he's married, and never in want of a fare?

Well, miss, how do you like it?

Wilel. Like it! why it's the very moral of yourself! If you had not passed half your time between Wapping and the Tower-stairs, you could never have written such a song.

Tug. Didn't I tell you as how it was the thing? Well, now, I hope you will consent?

Wilel. Consent to what?

Tug. Why, to marry me. To be sartain, you won't find me like your Mr. Robin, an inconsiderative puppy, that will say more in half-an-hour than he'll stand to in half-a-year. I am a little too much of an Englishman, I thank you, miss, for that: my heart lies in the right place; and, as we say, 'tis not always the best-looking boat goes the safest.

Wilel. And so, Mr. Thomas, you really think, by all this fine talking, to make me dying for love of you?

Tug. Why miss, for the matter of that, I don't see why I should not.

Wilel. Well, then, I'll tell you what, if you ever expect to have anything to say to me, you must kneel at my feet, kiss my hand, swear that I am an angel, that the very sun, moon, and stars, are not half so bright as my eyes; that I am Cupid, Venus, and the three Graces put together.

Tug. Why, to be sure, all this may be very fine; but why should I speak to you in a lingo, I don't understand?

Wilel. This, as my dear Robin says, is the only language of true lovers; and if you don't understand it already, you'll learn it for my sake.

Tug. I'll tell you what, miss; if you don't marry me till I make such a fool of myself, 'tis my mind you'll never marry me at all. I love you, to be sartain; there's nobody can say to the contrary of that; but you'll never catch me at your Cupids and Wenises: I am plain and downright. I'd do all that is in my power to make you happy, if you'd have me; and if you won't, I have nothing to do but to cast away care, and go on board a man-of-war; for I could never bear to stay here, if you was married to another.

Wilel. What, then, you'd leave England, and all for the love of me?

Tug. That's what I would, miss.

Wilel. Well, that would be charming! Oh! how I should doat upon it, if I were to hear them cry through Battersea streets—"The unfortunate Sailor's Lamentation for the Loss of his Mistress!"

Tug. I'll stick to my word, I assure you; if you won't have me, I'll go on board a man-of-war.

AIR.—TUG.

Then farewvell my trim-built wherry.

Ours, and coat, and badge, farewvell;

Never more at Chelsea sorry

Shall your Thomas take a spell.

But, to hope and peace a stranger,

In the battle's heat I'll go;

Where, expos'd to ev'ry danger,

Some friendly ball shall lay me low.

Then, mayhap, when homeward steering,

With the news my messmates come,

Even you, the story hearing,

With a sigh, may cry—"Poor Tom!"

[Exit.

Wilel. Well, 'tis a most charming thing to plague these creatures. Die for me! if I had not given myself some airs to him, he never could have thought of such a thing; but that's the way, if one does not use them like dogs, there's no getting anything civil from them.—But here comes Robin: I must plague him in another way.

Enter ROBIN.

Robin. Miss Wilelmina, may I have the unspeakable happiness to tell you, how much words fall short of the great honour you would prefer

upon me, if you would grant me the request of favouring me with your hand, this evening, at the hop.

Wilel. Why, Mr. Robin, what particular inclination can you have to dance with me?

Robin. What inclination, miss! Ask the plants why they love a shower? Ask the sun-flower why it loves the sun? Ask the snow-drop why it is white? Ask the violet why it is blue? Ask the trees why they blossom? the cabbages why they grow? 'Tis all because they can't help it; no more can I help my love for you.

Wilel. Lard! Mr. Robin, how gallant you are!

Robin. Oh! my Wilemina, thou art straighter than the straightest tree! sweeter than the sweetest flower! Thy hand is as white as a lily! thy breath is as sweet as honey-suckles! and when you speak, grace is in all your steps, heaven in your eye, in every gesture—Oh, dear!

Wilel. Lard! Mr. Robin, you have said that so often—

Robin. Well, you never heard me say this in your life. Now, mind: my heart is for all the world just like a hot-bed, where the seed of affection, sown by your matchless charms, and warmed by that sun, your eyes, became a beautiful flower, which is just now full blown; and all I desire, miss, is, that you'll condescend to gather it, and stick it in your bosom.

Wilel. And what pretensions have you to think I shall ever consent to such a thing!

Robin. Pretension, miss! Because my love is as boundless as the sea, and my heart is as full of Cupid's arrows, as a sweet-briar is full of thorns.

Wilel. But I am afraid, if I were foolish enough to believe you, you would soon forget me.

Robin. Forget you, miss! 'tis impossible! Sooner shall asparagus forget to grow, seed forget to rise, leaves to fall; sooner shall trees grow with their roots in the air, and their branches buried in the earth, than I forget my Wilemina.

Wilel. Well, I do declare there's no resisting you.

Robin. Resisting, me, miss! no, I don't know how you should; my heart is stocked with love, as a flower-garden is stocked with flowers. The Cupids that have fled from your eyes, and taken shelter there, are as much out of number as the leaves on a tree, or the colours in a bed of tulips. You are to me what the summer is to the garden; and if you don't revive me with the sunshine of your favour, I shall be over-run with the weeds of disappointment, and choked up with the brambles of despair.

Wilel. That would be a pity, indeed.

Robin. So 'twould, indeed, miss.

Wilel. Do you really love me, then?

Robin. Love you!

AIR.—ROBIN.

*Bid the blossoms ne'er be blighted,
Birds by scare-crows ne'er be frighted,
From the firm earth the oak remove;*

Teach the holly-oak to grow,

Trees bear cherries,

Hedges berries;

But, pr'ythee, teach me not to love.

Grass shall grow than cedars higher,

Pinks shall bloom upon the briar,

Lilies be as black as jet,

Roses smell no longer sweet,

Melons ripen without heat,

Plums and cherries

Taste like berries,

When Wilemina I forget.

[Exit.

Enter BUNDLE.

Wilel. Oh! papa, are you there?

Bundle. Hush, hush! speak softly! You have not seen your mother, have you?

Wilel. No.

Bundle. Because I wanted to talk with you, Wilemina, my dear.

Wilel. What, upon the old subject, I suppose.

Bundle. Yes; but I would not have her hear us.

Wilel. Oh! she is safe enough, scolding the men in the garden.

Bundle. Oh! that will take her some time.—Well, have you seen, Thomas?

Wilel. Yes, I have seen him, and a most deplorable figure he cuts. I believe by this time he has entered himself on board a man-of-war; that so as the history-book says, he may put an end to his existence and my cruelty together.

Bundle. Why, did he say he would?

Wilel. Don't I tell you I was cruel to him; and how could he do any less?

Bundle. Why, the girl's distracted! But this comes of gadding about with your mother. If you had listened to my advice, I would no more have suffered you to put on such ridiculous conceited airs—Why, you and your mother are the laughing-stock of the whole place: I never pop my head into the Black Raven to get my pennyworth in a morning, but a' the folks are full of it.

Wilel. Why, papa, we are only a little genteeler than the rest of the people of Battersea, that's all.

Bundle. Genteeler! Do you call it genteel, then, to take a pleasure in being pointed at? But I'll not bear it; therefore, hear what I have to say, or—

Wilel. Why do you tell me all this? Why don't you speak to my mamma? 'Tis no wonder she does what she pleases with me, when you know you don't care to contradict her yourself.

Bundle. Not dare to contradict her!

Wilel. No, papa; you know she will have her own way; and since she has desired me to have Robin, what can I do but be dutiful?

Bundle. What, then, you owe no duty to me, I suppose?

Wilel. Indeed I do; and if I could see that you owed a little to yourself, I would oblige you willingly.

Bundle. But, as it is, you won't marry Thomas?

Wilel. I can't, indeed.

Bundle. And for no other reason, but because your mamma insists upon your marrying Robin?

Wilel. No other.

Bundle. Very well; I'll settle the matter: she shall do as I please; and if she were to come across me now—

Enter MRS. BUNDLE.

Mrs. B. What then, Mr. Bundle?

Bundle. My dear?

Mrs. B. What could have conduced you to raise your voice to such a pitch? I hope you had not the assurance to be tampering, and plotting, and undermining my daughter's infections; and, above all, I hope you was not hatching up any vile schemé to impose my authority.

Wilel. Poor papa, how he looks! (Aside.)

Bundle. Why, my dear, I did intend to say something to you on that subject, but as my tongue does not go quite so fast as a water-will, I am afraid it would be but to little purpose.

Mrs. B. Scarry creature!

Wilel. If you don't speak, papa, I shall be obliged to marry Robin.

Bundle. I can't help it.

Wilel. 'Tis all your own fault, now; don't blame me; I must marry Robin; you have perfectly given me your consent.

Bundle. So thou couldst but unmarry me, I'd

consent to your marrying whoever you pleased.

[Exit.

Mrs. B. Well, my dear, what has he been saying to you? nothing, I hope, to discourage you in your infections to Robin.

Wilel. Indeed he has; and I can't think of being undutiful.

Mrs. B. Undutiful, indeed! I say undutiful! Which will reflect most upon you, do you think? to obey a mean, poor-spirited drone of a father, who has nothing but low, mechanical ideas, or a mother who is acquainted with Shakspeare, goes to all the sentimental comedies, can play at cards, dance kittellions and allemandes, and knows every particle of puritanness and high breeding?

Wilel. Very true, madam; but then, Mr. Thomas is such a sweet young man.

Mrs. B. He!

Wilel. So good-natured!

Mrs. B. The Vandil!

Wilel. So honest!

Mrs. B. Low creature!

Wilel. Such an immensity of love!

Mrs. B. The Hottenot! I'll tell you what, Wilelmina, your father has put all this into your head. I'll go and give it to him heartily while my blood's up, for daring to be beforehand with me; and then, I have but one word to say to you, either comply and marry Robin, or else I'll disinherit you from any share in the blood of my family the Grogams; and you may creep through life with the dirty, pitiful, mean, paltry, low, ill-bred notions which you have gathered from his family, the Bundles.

[Exit.

AIR.—WILELMINA.

*Too yielding a carriage
Has oft before marriage
To run and misery pointed the way:
You're shunn'd, if complying,
But you're lov'd once flying,
How eager he'll follow, and beg you to stay.*

*A coquette ne'er proclaim me,
Ye maids, then, nor blame me,
If I wish to be happy whene'er I'm a wife;
Each lover's denial
Was only a trial
Which is he that's most likely to love me for life.*

[Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The same.

BUNDLE discovered.

Bundle. What shall I do with this perverse girl? I have but poor comfort for my friend Thomas. However, all things considered, I don't know whether I should not have done him a more unfriendly office by marrying him than by keeping him single. For my own part, were I to choose whether I would keep my wife or have the plague, on my conscience I should run the risk of the last. But, mercy on us! here she comes: 'tis a strange thing that I never mention the word plague but she's at my elbow.

Enter *MRS. BUNDLE.*

Mrs. B. Mr. Bundle—I shall be very cool, sir.

Bun. I hope so, my dear.

Mrs. B. What the devil is the reason that you have been making all this here piece of work?

Bundle. My dear!

Mrs. B. I say, sir, how comes it to pass, that in spite of all my conjunctions to the contrary, you will behave so monstrously shameful as to oblige me to put myself in these here passions?

Bundle. Why, my dear, are you ever in a passion?

Mrs. B. Don't provoke me: you think, I suppose, because you have got your daughter on your side, to carry all before you; but, Mr. Bundle, though you have been coaxing and wheedling her to marry that low, dirty—I won't bemean myself by repeating his filthy name; though, I say, she has been undutiful and wicked enough to suffer such a low, unpolite clown as you, to persuade her to marry a fellow as vulgar and as mean as yourself; yet, if I have any authority, you shall no more carry it off in the manner you think—

Bundle. My dear—

Mrs. B. I won't hear a word.

Bundle. Have a moment's patience now, and I'll convince you.

Mrs. B. I won't have patience; nor I won't be convinced: 'tis a shame, and a scandalous thing; and whoever tells me to be patient, or wants to convince me, it shall be the worse for them.

Bundle. Go on, my dear.

Mrs. B. Oh! how I am used! I could hang myself for vexation. (*Crying.*)

Bundle. My dear, if you had but about half as much reason as you have passion, how very easily could all these matters be settled; for you are wrang from the beginning to the end in this affair. In the first place, I don't think it would be very undutiful in a girl to do what her father desires her, was it as you say; in the next, I desired her to give her consent to marry Thomas, 'tis true, but she refused me.

Mrs. B. Why, this is worse than t'other; first use me ill, and then resolve me: for the girl told me, with her own mouth, that she promised you to marry Thomas.

Bundle. And she told me, with her own mouth, she had promised you to marry Robin.

Mrs. B. What am I to think of this?

Bundle. Even what you please, my dear; you know I never dictate to you.

Enter *WILELMINA.*

Mrs. B. Here she comes herself, we shall know the truth of all this. Come here, child, speak ingenuously now: did not you tell me that you would not marry Robin?

Wilel. I did, madam.

Mrs. B. There, Mr. Bundle! And, pray, what reason did you give me for it?

Wilel. Because papa had persuaded me to marry Thomas.

Mrs. B. And have you the confidence to look me in the face after all this?

Bundle. Pray, hear me one word.

Mrs. B. I won't hear a syllable.

Bundle. Nay, let me speak in my turn. Wilelmina, come here, child, speak ingenuously: did not you tell me you would not marry Thomas?

Wilel. I did, sir.

Bundle. There, Mrs. Bundle! And, pray, what reason did you give me for it?

Wilel. Because my mamma had persuaded me to marry Robin.

Bundle. And have you the confidence to look me in the face after this?

Mrs. B. Why, you little dirty trollop, have you been making a jest of us both?

Bundle. Indeed, my dear, there is something—

Wilel. Hear me, my dear papa and mamma: when first you proposed Robin to me, and you Thomas, I determined to have neither, till one or the other had given me some proof beside telling me so, that he would make me a faithful and affectionate husband; the first that does shall have me; and though I would not wish to have either of you think me undutiful, on that alone shall depend my giving my consent to be a wife.

AIR.—WILELMINA.

*In vain, dear friends, each art you try,
To neither lover's suit inclin'd;
On outward charms I'll ne'er rely,
But prize the graces of the mind.
The empty casket which you chose,
Just like the flower of a day,
Shook by each wind that folly blows,
Seems born to flutter and decay.*

*Your choice an honest aspect wears;
To give him pain I oft have griev'd,
But it proceedeth from my fears;
Than me much wiser are deceiv'd.
I thank you both, then, for your love;
Wait for my choice a little while;
And he who most shall worthy prove,
My hand I'll offer with a smile.*

[Exit.]

Bundle. Well, my dear, what do you say to all this?

Mrs. B. Say! why, that I am perfectly in a quandary; the confidence of the baggage goes beyond all—one would think she had never been educated by me.

Bundle. Oh! I am afraid it's her having been educated by you, as you call it, that has taught it her.

Mrs. B. What do you stand muttering there about? 'Tis you she may thank for all these mean notions: if she would but suffer me to teach her a little of the bone-tone, she would despise the idea of consulting her heart about marrying; such low mechanical stuff has been out of fashion a long time since among people that know how to bemean themselves.

Bundle. Well, but, I suppose, you intend to let her do what she pleases.

Mrs. B. No, sir; do you think I am so tame as to be ruled by my daughter? I believe you can witness for me that I seldom let anybody rule but myself.

Bundle. You never let anybody rule but yourself, my dear; and you really do it so well, it is a pity to hinder you.

Mrs. B. None of your sneers, sir: but I see into the bottom of all this: 'tis a scheme between you and your daughter to make a fool of me, but I'll after her, and cure her of her ridiculous notions of love, and a pack of stuff; and she shall marry the man I have chosen for her, or—in short, I have determined what to do, and let me hear you, or her, say a single word against it, if you dare.

[Exit.]

Enter TUG.

Tug. Master Bundle, how fares it? I wanted to speak to you, but I never likes to interrupt people when they are in agreeable company.

Bundle. What, you saw my wife with me? she is the most agreeable, it must be confessed.

Tug. Why, she did not seem to be cantankerous with you now.

Bundle. No; her anger was levelled at her daughter; but 'tis all the same, I feel the good effects of it, let her be cantankerous, as you call it, with who she will.

Tug. But, Master Bundle, how comes it to pass that she should be angry with Miss Wilelmina? she has not refused to marry Robin, has she?

Bundle. But she has, though; and refused to marry you, too.

Tug. Ay, ay? why, I never heard she had any other sweetheart.

Ben. I don't know what the girl has got in her head, not I: a parcel of absurd stuff! she has a mind to make fools of us all, I believe; but there was

something well enough too in what she said, if she's sincere; but the Lord help those that trust too much to them, say I.

Tug. Why, what does she say?

Bundle. Why, that she does not know which she shall have yet; but that she'll marry the first that does anything to deserve her.

Tug. Does she? why, then, 'tis my opinion she'll marry me.

Bundle. Why so?

Tug. I know why well enough; but could not a body speak to her now?

Bundle. I am going in, and I'll send her to you; but I would not have you depend too much upon her.

Tug. I'll run the risk, Master Bundle.

Bundle. Only see the difference between us: you are all agog to be married and I would give the world to be rid of my shackles.

Tug. Why, I believe if a man were to take up the trade of unmarried folks, he would get more money by it than you or I do by ours.

Bundle. More money! [Exit.]

Tug. Yes; but I hope I sha'n't have such a crank and humoursome piece of stuff to deal with as you have: I don't know, not I, but, for my share, I can't see why married people mayn't be as happy as well as others: 'tis my mind, miss, here, is trying, which is the most loving of us two; and if so, I would not give my little Robin three-pence for his chance, for I know as well as can be that he has no more notion of making a woman happy than nothing at all: but here she comes.

Enter WILELMINA.

Wilel. Heyday! why, I thought you were gone on board a man-of-war before now.

Tug. Why, no, miss, I ain't yet gone; I am in hopes there will be no occasion; if there should, I am always one of my word.

Wilel. Oh! you unkind creature! to disappoint me so. I was in hopes by this time to have received a long letter from you, upbraiding me with my cruelty, and telling me that you were gone abroad with a broken heart at being disappointed of me.

Tug. Why, miss, as to breaking my heart, to be sure, I should go well nigh to do that if I could not persuade you to have me; but I have been thinking that it would be better to try if I can't stay at home and do something to obtain your consent; for, to be sure, the pleasure of having you is not what everybody deserves.

Wilel. Oh! till I hear you have been venturing your life for me, I shall never relent.

Tug. Well now, miss, I, for my part, think you will.

Wilel. Indeed you have a great deal of confidence to think any such thing.

Tug. I hope you won't be angry if I do my best to make you—

Wilel. And what do you call doing your best?

Tug. Why, 'tis not my way to brag, and so I won't say anything about it now; but I have a favour to beg of you, if you please.

Wilel. What is it, pray?

Tug. Why, you know that the young watermen are to row for a coat and badge this afternoon; and so I have made bold to bespeak a room at the Swan for you and your friends to go and see the sight.

Wilel. That's very gallant, indeed, Mr. Thomas! but you talk of trying to deserve me; why did you not make one among the watermen, and so win the coat and badge yourself?

Tug. Well, never you mind anything about that: will you accept of my proffer of the room?

Wilel. Why, I think I will.

Tug. And do you think, now, if ever I was to

do anything with an intent to please you, that you could bring yourself to look upon me with kindness?

Wilel. Why, I don't know but I might.

Tug. Why, then, I assure you, if ever you should be agreeable to marry me, you should be as happy as ever love and an honest heart can make you.

AIR.—TOM TUG.

*Indeed, miss, such sweethearts as I am,
I fancy you'll meet with but few;
To love you more true I defy them,
I always am thinking of you.
There are maidens would have me in plenty,
Nell, Cicely, Priscilla, and Sue;
But, instead of all these, were there twenty,
I never should think but of you.*

*False hearts all your money may squander,
And only have pleasure in view;
Ne'er from you a moment I'll wander,
Unless to get money for you.
The tide, when 'tis ebbing or flowing,
Is not to the moon half so true;
Nor my oars to their time when I'm rowing,
As my heart, my fond heart, is to you.* [Exit.

Wilel. There's great honesty about this poor fellow—Here comes t'other: I see I must choose soon, or there will be no peace for me.

Enter ROBIN.

So, Mr. Robin, what news have you?

Robin. News, my angel! news that will make your heart dance with joy, and clear away the clouds and mists that hang on thy beautiful face, just for all the world as the sun clears away the showers in the month of April.

Wilel. Indeed! I should be glad to hear it.

Robin. You can't think how you will be overjoyed.

Wilel. Shall I? Why don't you tell it me, then?

Robin. Well, then, miss, I'll keep you no longer in suspense: your mother is determined that we shall be married to-morrow morning.

Wilel. What, whether I will or no?

Robin. Whether you will or no! How can you help it? don't I love you better than the ivy loves oak? better than cucumbers love heat, or birds love cherries? I love you better—

Wilel. Hold, hold, Mr. Robin; 'tis necessary, in this case, I should love you a little.

Robin. And don't you? Hear this, you blooming jonquils, and lose your sweetness! turn white, you roses; and you lilies, red! each flower lose its fragrance and its hue, and nature change, for Wilelmina's false!

Wilel. Indeed, Mr. Robin, you have such winning ways! that pretty speech has half persuaded me to consent.

Robin. Has it?

Wilel. It has, upon my word.

Robin. Jonquils smell sweet again! roses and lilies keep again your colour! and every flower look brighter than before, for Wilelmina's true!

Wilel. How dearly do you love me, Mr. Robin?

Robin. Why, miss, the passion which is planted in my heart has taken root, as like as can be to a great elm, which there is no grabbing up; but it spreads farther and farther, and you can't for the life of you destroy it till you saw down the trunk and all.

Wilel. That's as much as to say that you'll love me as long as you live.

Rob. The very thing. Lord! how sensible you are, miss!

Wilel. Really, Mr. Robin, you are so gay and agreeable—

Robin. An't I, miss? So everybody says: only think, then, how you will be envied! Well, then, I'll step to your mamma, and tell her what has passed; and then I shall have nothing to do but to go down to-morrow for the ring and licence.

AIR.—ROBIN.

*Cherries and plums are never found
But on the plum and cherry tree;
Parsnips are long, turnips are round,
So Wilelmina's made for me.*

*The scythe to mow the grass is made,
Shreds to keep close the straggling tree;
The knife to prune, to dig the spade;
So Wilelmina's made for me.*

Enter MRS. BUNDLE.

Mrs. B. Well, Robin, have you reformed her what I ordered you? What, I suppose you have been a fool now: there never was such a tiresome fellow in the world! I tell you what, Wilelmina, if I find you have been imposing upon this poor bashful creature, you will put me in a passion; and you know when I am once in a passion I am not easily pacified.

Wilel. Let me understand you, madam.

Mrs. B. Why, I sent this blockhead to let you know that I am dissolved to see you married to-morrow morning, and I know you have been giving yourself some confounded airs or other, and so he has been afraid to tell you.

Wilel. I wonder, madam, you should be uneasy on that account: he told me, and in very plain terms.

Mrs. B. Well, and I hope you had not the conference to say anything against it?

Wilel. So far from it, madam, I now plainly see the great absurdity of attempting to oppose your will.

Mrs. B. And have you consented to have him, then?

Robin. She has, madam.

Mrs. B. Then thou art my child again. Mr. Wick's family will be in raptures at this. Run, Robin, and tell them we shall call at their house in our way to the rowing-match.

Wilel. And will you forgive my former disobedience, madam?

Mrs. B. Oh! it was all your father, my dear; but I'll now take the pains to instruct you how to behave yourself.

Wilel. I am obliged to you, madam; but I don't think I shall ever be so accomplished as you are.

Mrs. B. Why, I don't think you will ever get my genteel air; but as for other matters they are easily understood. [Exit.

SCENE II.—A Room at the Swan.

MRS. BUNDLE, ROBIN, and Company discovered.

Mrs. B. Do, Robin, step and see after Wilelmina: what can become of the girl?

Enter WILELMINA.

Robin. She's here, madam.

Mrs. B. Come, my dear, you'll lose the sight; they tells me that the rowers have set out from the Old Swan some time.

Wilel. They are very near, surely; for see what a number of boats are come in sight!

Mrs. B. Oh! I can see them very plain. How many is there?

Wilel. One, two, three, four; I think I can count five.

Mrs. B. That smart young man will certainly win it; how clean and neat he looks!

Wilel. Here he comes; his boat perfectly flies.

Mrs. B. Oh! he'll win it.

Wilel. He has won it already, madam; he's past the stairs.

Robin. See, he jumps on shore!

Wilel. And see, he's coming this way! Surely, 'tis not—

Enter BUNDLE, TUG following.

Bundle. Here's your Thomas for you! he's coming! I told you he'd be the first to do anything to deserve you. Here he is.

Wilel. And was it you that won the coat and badge?

Tug. 'Twas, indeed, mis'.

Wilel. And what made you—

AIR.—TUG.

*I row'd for the prize,
To receive from those eyes*

A kind look, from those lips a sweet smile:

But lest I should lose,

And you, for that fault, your poor Tom should refuse,

My heart it went pit-a-pat all the while.

When we came to the pull,

How I handled my scull!

'Twould have done your heart good to have seen us;

There was never a boat's length between us,

But the Swan once in view,

My boat how it flew!

And verily believe 'twas all thinking of you.

Wilel. Thus, then, I reward you. (*Gives him her hand.*)

Robin. What is all this?

Tug. Why, all this is, that I am a happy fellow, and you are knocked out of your chance.

Wilel. Is not he a sweet fellow, mamma? How neat and clean he looks!

Mrs. B. Wilelmina, don't put me in a passion.

Wilel. I have no intention, madam, to do any such thing.

Mrs. B. Why, you impudent slut! have not you deceived me? deposed upon me? promised me to marry this young man, and now—

Wilel. Indeed, madam, you must excuse me; but, in so serious a matter, I thought it of much more consequence to consider myself than you. Besides, I was so situated that I must have disobliged either you or my papa; for whenever I gave you a promise I gave one to him; and had your choice appeared to me the most likely to make me happy, I should not have hesitated a moment in refusing his.

Robin. My hopes are all blighted, then, I find.

Mrs. B. I said all along that it was a contrived thing between you; but, Mr. Bundle, you shall smart for it.

Bundle. My dear, you know I am a man of an easy temper and few words; but I am pretty firm in keeping a resolution. I have suffered you to expose me at home pretty well; but if you are resolved to carry your folly to such a height as to expose me abroad, I am resolved it shall not be for nothing: therefore, either promise, before this company, to bid adieu to scolding for the future, or before this company I will do what you threatened me this morning—be separated from you.

Mrs. B. Why, I am thunderstruck!

Bundle. I expected little less; but am resolved, depend upon it: however, to let you see that you are very welcome to be mistress of your own house, manage your concerns as you like; do what you please, so you let me be quiet: in short, do nothing to give me uneasiness, and I make an agreement, from this moment, for you to govern while I smoke.

Wilel. Dear mamma, it is impossible for anything to be fairer.

Bundle. Come, come, she must have a little time to think of it; but she'll agree to the terms, I'm sure of it: and now let us think of nothing but pleasure: and as this is the happiest day I ever saw in my life, I say, let us make it the merriest.

QUARTETTO.—TUG, BUNDLE, MRS. BUNDLE, and WILELMINA.

Tug. Ne'er let your heart, my girl, sink down,
That I am true, believe me;
Or, next time that I row to town,
May wind and tide deceive me!
By this here breeze
My heart's at ease,
Now dances at high water;
My labour's o'er,
I've gain'd the shore,
And, free from fear,
Am landed here,
With my dear gard'ner's daughter.

Mrs. B. I see, my dear, 'tis all in vain,
Since thus you think expedient;
If of the past you'll not complain,
Henceforth I'll prove obedient.
Folks us'd to cry,
A tartar I
Had prov'd, and you had caught her;
But now shall raise
Each voice in praise,
Through all her life,
Of the gard'ner's wife,
As well as of his daughter.

Bundle. My child, you've fairly won my heart,
You took no counsel from us;
But, prizing love, and scorning art,
'Referr'd your honest Thomas:
'Twas wisely done,
Shake hands, my son,
Love's lesson you have taught her:
And now, my dear,
Be but sincere,
I do not fear
There'll e'er appear
So good a wife and daughter.

Wilel. And now, good friends, pray take my part,
I kept them to their tether;
For I had sworn my hand and heart
Should always go together.
From fops and beaux
A maiden chose
An honest heart that sought her;
See her appear
On trial here;
This very night,
If she was right,
Applaud the gard'ner's daughter.

[Exeunt.]

THE ROMP;

A COMIC OPERA, IN TWO ACTS:

ALTERED FROM "LOVE IN THE CITY," BY ISAAC BICKERSTAFFE.



Act II.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

CAPTAIN SLIGHTLY
OLD COCKNEY.
BARNACLE

YOUNG COCKNEY
MISS LA BLOND
PRISCILLA TOMBOY

PENELOPE
NEGRO GIRL
ATTENDANTS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Grocer's Shop with a counting-house, to which there is an ascent by steps; a glass door with curtains, which opens to a back parlour.

YOUNG COCKNEY discovered in the counting-house, writing, and men behind the counter weighing tea, &c.; near the front. PRISCILLA TOMBOY and PENELOPE are seated at work.

CHORUS.

*Hail, London, noblest mart on earth,
Unrival'd still in commerce reign;
Whence riches, honours, arts have birth,
And industry ne'er toils in vain.*

Young C. (Comes forward.) Come, pray, ladies, go somewhere else with your work; is not there the parlour for you, but you must bring your litter into the shop? Who do you think can come into the shop when you take up the room in this way?

Pen. I wish, brother, you would let us alone.

Pris. Ay, mind your figs, and your raisins, and your brown sugar, and let us alone, will you? Now, Miss Penny, if you'll go in for your work-

basket, we will take out the canvas, and begin the flowers immediately.

Young C. Come, Miss Prissy, get off that stool; I want to put it behind the counter.

Pris. I won't give it you.

Young C. If you won't, miss, I'll call my papa, and let him what he'll say to you.

Pris. There, take your stool; you nasty, ugly, conceited, ill-natured—(Throws it at him.)

Young C. Look here now, did you ever see anything so unmannerly? Miss Prissy, I wonder you are not ashamed of yourself; but this is the breeding you got in the plantations. You know you was turned out of Hackney boarding-school for beating the governess and knocking down the dancing-master. I believe you think you have got among your blackamoors. But you are not among your blackamoors now, miss.

Pris. Indeed, Miss Penny, it is very hard he could invent such stories of me; if you believe me, I never touched the governess in all my life.

Pen. Upon my word, I wish you two would never squabble together; you are always fighting and squabbling.

Young C. Then why does she play such tricks?

Pris. Then why do you ever come near me? I neither love you nor like you; nor never shall, that's more; I have told you so a hundred times.

Pen. I swear one would think you were husband and wife already.

Pris. I his wife! I would as lief be married to the old-clothes-man; indeed I should not like to be called Mrs. Cockney.

Young C. Why not? Mrs. Cockney is as good a name as Miss Tomboy, I hope.

Pris. No, it is not as good a name.

Young C. Yes, it is; but that's not as you please, that's as my uncle Barnacle pleases. He is to be in town to-day; I can tell you that for your comfort; and see what he'll say to you about the boarding-school.

Pris. I don't care for him, nor you, nor the boarding-school neither.

Young C. There, by Gog and Magog, she says she does not care for my uncle Barnacle. By Jove, there's a rod in pickle for you, miss.

Pris. I tell you what, Master Watty, if you say much more, eood! I'll throw something at you.

Pen. Nay, nay; kiss and be friends.

Pris. I won't kiss him: I would spit in his face first.

Pen. Pr'ythee, pr'ythee!

Pris. I will not, Miss Penny; he never lets me alone: but I'll tell his uncle Barnacle of him; and if he is not well thumped for his impudence, I won't stay in the house; that's what I won't.

Young C. Look there again now. Well, 'tis all over then; I won't say nothing no more. See how she frowns! Lord! there's no such thing as jesting with you: I was not in earnest; I was not, upon my honour and credit.

AIR.—YOUNG COCKNEY.

Come, Miss Prissy, deal sincerely;

Faith and troth, I love you dearly:

Psha! nay, never look so queerly,

But at once let's kiss and friends.

For the future we'll endeavour

To deserve each other's favour.

Zooks! shake hands: why, now, that's clever;

And here all our quarrel ends.

[Exeunt Young C. and Pen.]

Pris. Quasheba, Quasheba! bring down my work.

Enter QUASHEBA.

Why don't you make haste?

Quas. Is, missy; here, missy. (*Lets the work bag fall.*)

Pris. See how she lets it fall! take it up again. Here, thread my needle. Where are you going now? Stand behind my back. (*She's down to work, and sings.*)

AIR.—PRISCILLA TOMBOY.

Ye maidens, all, come listen to my ditty,

And consider well the words which I shall say;

A damsel once there dwell in London city,

Whose tender heart a young man stole away.

Her guardian cross, would fain have had her marry

A grocer's prentice living in Cheapside;

But he with her his point could never carry,

For sooner than consent she would have died.

Ye maidens, by this damsel take example,

And never fickle nor false-hearted prove;

Nor let old folks on your affections trave;

For what's the world compar'd to me's true love?

Enter PENNY.

Pen. Observe you are always singing that song.

Pr'ythee, where could you pick up such stuff? It seems to be a great favourite of your's.

Pris. Why, so it is: for what do you think? I made it myself; I did, upon my—

Pen. Oh, fie! miss, don't swear.

Pris. Lard! you are mighty percrive! Quasheba, get out; I want to talk with Miss Penny alone:—no, stay, come back; I will speak before her: but if ever I hear, hussy, that you mention a word of what I am going to say to any one else in the house, I will have you horsewhipp'd till there is not a bit of flesh left on your bones.

Pen. Oh! poor creature!

Pris. Psha! what is she but a neger? If she were at home in our plantations, she would find the difference; we make no account of them there at all: if I had a fancy for one of their skins, I should not think much of taking it.

Pen. I suppose, then, you imagine they have no feeling?

Pris. Oh! we never consider that, there. But I say, Miss Penny, I have a secret to tell you: I hate your brother worse than poison; I know very well your uncle Barnacle has a mind to marry me to him; but if he is left my guardian, and I am sent over to London for my education, I don't see any right he has to choose me a husband though.

Pen. And, pray, what is it you dislike in my brother?

Pris. Why, I don't know; I don't like him at all; there's nothing gay or agreeable in him: besides, you know, he will be but a grocer; and why should I marry a tradesman, when I can have a gentleman?

Pen. Can you?

Pris. Yes, faith! can I; and one of the sweetest, prettiest gentlemen you ever set your two good-looking eyes on: quite another thing from your brother, with a fine bag and sword. I dare swear the lace of his coat alone would burn to a matter of two guineas.

Pen. And, pray, what is th'r gentleman?

Pris. You saw him once; yes, you did. Don't you remember the young captain that came into Miss La Blond's shop the other day, when you were buying your pompadour and green ribbons; and I asked you if you did not think him a handsome man, and you said you did? Don't you remember?

Pen. I believe, remember something of it.

Pris. Well, I got acquainted with him there; and now the whole affair is settled between us; and we are to be married immediately.

Pen. This is a secret, indeed.

Pris. Ay, and I can tell you a secret about you, too. You are to be married to some very great lord your cousin Molly has got acquainted with at the other end of the town. But shall I tell you now, who I take as bad as your brother? I hate your cousin, Molly Cockney, with her conceit and her hoarse voice. She's always at me: "Miss, hold up your head; miss, that is not polite; miss, don't lope." Eood! last Sunday, if we had not been church, I would have hit her a slap in the face.

Pen. Well, but, my dear, how are you to marry this gentleman? You don't design to run away with him?

Pris. No, I don't; I have written a letter to him to let him know my guardian will be in town to-day; and I have desired him to come here, and propose for me.

Pen. I am sure my uncle will not consent.

Pris. Why, then, I will run away with him. I don't think, Miss Penny, but if he were to stand with his arms open to receive me, but what I could leap out of the two pair of stairs window, without being hurt the least bit. Besides, I would not

marry your brother on another account. There is poor Miss La Blond, the milliner over the way; he has been courting her a matter of a twelvemonth, and though she's come of French distraction, there is not a more friendlier girl this day in all England.

Pen. Well, once more, I say, take care of my uncle.

Pris. Miss Penny, it does not signify talking to me; I am neither in leading-strings nor hanging-sleeves; and I don't want him to leave me anything, and why should not I please myself? and, what's more, I will, too.

AIR.—PRISCILLA TOMBOY.

*Perhaps he may take it in dudgeon;
So let him—the peevish curmudgeon!*

*Egad! if you mind me,
As stout you shall find me,
As he is bluff.*

*The captain has won my heart,
And who shall my humour thwart?*

*I like him, and love him;
And, since I approve him,
I'll have him, and that's enough.*

*I'm sick when I think of your brother,
And was there on earth ne'er another,
He should not my mind subdue;*

*To wed him they may force me,
But then he'll soon divorce me;
For, 'faith! he shall sing cuckoo.* [Exit.

Enter YOUNG COCKNEY and BARNACLE, meeting.

Young C. Oh, la! papa, here's my uncle Barnacle.

Old C. Odso! is he, indeed! Brother, you are welcome to town. Son Walter, run in, and desire your uncle's chamber to be got ready directly.

Barn. Stay, hold, young man. Who do you belong to?

Young C. La! why, don't you know me, uncle? I am your nephew.

Old C. Ay, don't you know Watty? my son Walter?

Barn. Why, this is not your son Walter?

Young C. Yes, but I am, upon my honour and credit, uncle.

Barn. Upon your honour, sirrah! And who told you you had any honour? What has a shopkeeper to do with honour? I had no honour when I was a shot-keeper. I knew you were always a conceited, idle young rascal. But who taught you to swear, and put all that flour and suet on your head?

Young C. Oh, lord! uncle, don't spoil my hair.

Old C. Don't, brother, don't; he is going among young ladies.

Barn. He's going to the devil. But you had better not provoke me, brother Nic Cockney; you had better not provoke me. I desire he may go and take off that coat and waistcoat directly.

Old C. Well, well; he shall: don't be in a passion. Step in, child, and take off your things, do; there's a good boy.

Young C. La! papa, upon my honour—

Barn. Again, sirrah! Bring his every-day clothes and his fustian sleeves here into the shop; I will have him strip before my face.

Old C. Go, child, do as your uncle bids you.

[Exit Young C.]

Barn. Upon his honour, indeed! Why, Nic, I hear you are going to set up your coach, and marry your daughter to a don't know who. Tradespeople are out of their senses now-a-days; no sooner are they a little above the world but they must have

town-house and country-house; every night running junketting to gardens and play-houses; and, in a year or two, there is eighteen-pence in the pound for their creditors.

Enter YOUNG COCKNEY with an apron on.

Young C. Well, now, uncle?

Barn. Ay, now you are something like; but why a ruffled shirt? I never wore a ruffled shirt but on a Sunday; and, come here, what's that I see at your knees? a pair of paste buckles? Why, sirrah, you must rob the till, or go upon the highway for all this. Give them me out directly; I will have them. (*Young C. delivers them up.*)

Young C. But you'll let me have them again, I hope.

Barn. No, I won't. And now let his frippery be sold at Rag-fair, I should like to see it swinging under an old-clothes-man's penthouse.

[Exit Old C.]

Young C. Pray, uncle, give me my buckles.

Barn. I will not, sirrah. And look at yonder door: how can you expect to have customers come into the shop, while you keep your door in such condition? When I was 'prentice, the first thing I did every morning was to scrape the door. Here, Richard, have you never a shovel in the house? Give him a shovel. (*Servant brings a shovel.*) There, sirrah, take this shovel, go to work; and, when I come out again, let me see the steps clean enough to dine upon.

AIR.—BARNACLE.

You silly old ass,

To come to this pass:

At fifty you follies begin you!

At mud, or in drink?

For my part, I think

The devil himself has got in you!

And you, master Jap,

Go stick to your shop,

And show yourself handy and willing;

Or else, do you see?

Take this much from me,

I'll cut you both off with a shilling. [Exit.

Young C. I won't scrape the door: I wish I may be burned if I do. Here, Richard, give that shovel to the porter, and let him do it. To be set out in this trim before everybody! But I will get my coat and waistcoat again, that I will; and put them on in spite of him. My father expects he will leave us something in his will, and so he bears with him: but he shall not make a fool of me. No, no, I am too wise for that.

[Exit.

SCENE II.—A Room in Cockney's house.

Enter PENELOPE, followed by MISS LA BLOND, carrying a band-box.

Pen. Now, my dear, you will not fail to let me have those things in a couple of hours, for we expect our company early in the evening. And, pray, let me see you sometimes. Where was you on Sunday? We were in expectation all day that you would have stepped over to us.

La Blond. And, upon my word, so I intended. But in the morning I went to the gallery at St. James's, to see the court go to chapel, for we were obliged to get a pattern of one of her majesty's caps for Mrs. Iscariot, a Jew gentlewoman, that lives upon Rish-street-bill. In the evening, Ensign Scald, of the Middlesex militia, took sister Sakey

and I to the Dog and Duck, and coming home we called in, for a little fun, at the Quakers' meeting.

Pen. But, pray, my dear, let me ask you, is there not some coldness between you and my brother of late?

La Blond. Oh, la! Miss Penny, as if you did not know: Master Watty has not put his foot into our shop these six weeks.

Pen. Upon my word, this is the first I have heard of it.

La Blond. However, Miss Penny, it is not that vexes me, but his rudeness when he meets one in a public place. The other night, at Mile-end assembly, he took no more notice of me than if I had been a dog. I don't know that he had any reason to be ashamed of my company: I was there with Miss Fly-blow, a great butcher's daughter in Newgate-market; I'm sure she will have a matter of six thousand pounds to her fortune; and we came in Mr. Deputy Dimplin's own chariot, that waited for us all the while.

Enter YOUNG COCKNEY.

Young C. Sister, they want the key of the beaufet, to get the spoons and the silver candlesticks.

Pen. Oh! brother, come here. How is it you have affronted Miss La Blond? She tells me you have behaved very ill to her.

Young C. Who, I behaved ill to her? Lord! Miss La Blond, I wonder how you can fib on a body so. I'll be judged by anybody in the world: I am sure I have not spoke a word to her I don't know the day when.

Pen. Well, and more shame for you.

La Blond. Oh! pray, don't scold him, Miss Penny: Master Watty may speak or let it alone, just as he pleases. But, perhaps, sir, you think I don't know the reason of all this. There's a West Indian fortune in the house: I am below your notice now; but, believe me, you are every bit as much below mine. *[Exit.]*

Young C. Do you know, sister Penny, that she has given it out all over the town that I am sworn to her on a book; and if I am, it won't hold good in law, for it was only Robinson Crusoe.

Enter OLD COCKNEY and a Maid-servant, and afterwards PRISCILLA TOMBOY, in a hoydening manner.

Old C. Come, Margery, let us see how you have settled the things for the company: have you dusted well, and swept? no cobwebs, nor slut's corners! have you put candles in all the sconces? Come, Penny, child, go into the next room, and help the maid to set out the silver coffee-pot, and best set of burnt china on the tea-table.

[Exit Pen. and Maid.]

Young C. When we begin to dance, papa, who shall I take out for a partner?

Old C. Let me consider—

Pris. Miss La Blond, to be sure.

Old C. Miss Muzzy, Deputy Muzzy's daughter, child; she is a very great fortune. But I must go and order card-tables in the next room. *[Exit.]*

Pris. Oh, lard! Watty, see here if I have not tore my gown.

Young C. I am glad of it.

Pris. And why are you glad of it?

Young C. Because I am. Who sent for you up stairs?

Pris. Why, your uncle Barnacle desired me to come up.

Young C. My uncle Barnacle! I do not believe it.

Pris. I am sure but he did though; he called a bit agone at the shop, and said he'd be here himself presently.

Young C. Well, if you dine with us, you shall not stay in the evening to dance.

Pris. I will, if I like it.

Young C. You sha'n't, miss.

Pris. Master Watty, why don't you go to see poor Miss La Blond? The folks say she is going mad for love of you: I am sure you ought to marry her.

Young C. I am sure I won't, though: I would let her go to Bedlam first.

Pris. Ecod! I believe she is only making game. *(Runs off.)*

Young C. I am determined she shall not dance to-night for her assurance. I will go this moment and tell my papa of her, that I will. *[Exit.]*

Enter BARNACLE and SIGHTLY.

Barn. Business with me, sir! Well, sir, come this way, and let me hear it: I don't know that ever I saw your face before.

Sight. I don't believe you ever did, sir; but if you will have patience—

Barn. And suppose I don't choose to have patience, are you to give me laws in my own house? No dragooning here, good Captain; you are in the city of London, sir; we are not apt to be put under military execution here.

Sight. Sir, I don't understand you.

Barn. None of your rudeness to me, sir; I have been understood by your betters; but, I suppose, you are disbanded, and want to raise money upon your half-pay. Well, I won't deal with you: I have lost money enough by the army. I have a note-of-hand by me from one of your captains for four pounds ten shillings and sixpence.

Sight. But, sir, my business is of a very different nature. There is a young lady, who, I understand, is under your care; and, if you will please to read that letter—

Barn. Ha, ha, ha! A letter from the young lady herself to you, I suppose, sir; desiring you to come and ask my consent to marry her. So, then, you are a fortune-hunter. What servant-maid in the neighbourhood, now, have you been getting intelligence from about this girl and her money? And, if you succeed, how much commission, how much brokerage?

Sight. Sir, I am a gentleman.

Barn. Well, sir, and what then, sir? Have you got any money in the funds, Captain? My father was a pin-maker, and I have forty thousand pounds there.

Sight. Sir, I must tell you—

Barn. And, sir, I must tell you—What, I suppose, because fighting is your trade, you come *vi et armis*, to cut my throat. If that's the case, I must call for assistance. Here, John, Thomas, Richard!

Sight. Upon my word, Mr. Barnacle—

Barn. Well, and upon my word, too, sir; I believe my word will go as far as your's, if you go to that. What? do you come to affront me in my own house? Do you know, sir, that you have treated me with great ill-manners? The first people in the kingdom have come cap in hand to me; and shall a puppy—

Sight. Puppy, sir!

AIR.—CAPTAIN SIGHTLY.

Look you, sir, your years protect you,
No vain terrors need affect you,

*Scorn alone from me you'll meet;
But, in pity, I advise you,
Lest another should chastise you,
Learn with gentlemen to treat.
For the lady, free she chose me;
Neither brib'd, nor forc'd her voice:
And, however you oppose me,
Know, I dare maintain her choice.* [Exit.]

Enter YOUNG COCKNEY.

Barn. This is an incendiary; we shall have an ill-spelt letter to-morrow, or next day, thrown into the area, threatening to burn the house. Here, Walter, call that fellow back.

Young C. Call that fellow back.

Barn. Call him back yourself.

Young C. Captain, Captain! come back, come back.

Re-enter CAPTAIN SIGHTLY.

Sight. Well, what do you want?

Young C. My uncle wants to speak to you.

Barn. Bid Priscilla Tomboy come hither.

Young C. Bid Priscilla Tomboy come hither.

Enter PRISCILLA TOMBOY and PENELOPE.

Barn. I'll put an end to this affair directly. Captain, if you please, I want to speak with you again one moment. Come here, Miss Prissy; did you ever see this young gentleman before?

Pris. Yes, to be sure, I did.

Barn. Well, but you never wrote to him, did you?

Pris. Yes, but I did though.

Barn. And where did you get acquainted with him, mistress?

Pris. Why, if you must know, I got acquainted with him at a friend's house.

Barn. A friend's house! A friend of your's, indeed!

Pris. Yes, a friend of mine; and he is my choice; and, if you do not give your consent, why, I will marry him without it.

Barn. Fetch me the key of the back-garret.

Pris. I know what you are going to do: you are going to lock me up; but I don't care. (Cries.)

Sight. Pray, sir, do not use the young lady ill on my account.

Barn. *Sirrah, leave the house this minute,
Or I'll send to my Lord Mayor.*

Sight. *Sir, I want not to stay in it;
Wherefore do you rave and stare?*

Pris. *You may lock me up in prison,
But I mind not that a straw.*

Young C. *Her'n the fault is more than his'n.*

Pen. *Uncle, brother, pray, withdraw.*

Barn. *To bring up a romp's the devil!*

Sight. } *Did you ever hear the like?*

Barn. *Captain, pray, sir, be so civil—*

Young C. *Hold, sir, hold! you must not strike.*

Barn. *Life and death! I'm out of patience,
And I will at nothing stick;
So, niece, nephew, ward, relations,
Gad! I'll play you all a trick.*

Young C. } *Stick at nothing! pray, sir, tarry;*

Pen. } *What is it you mean to do?*

Barn. *'Sblood! you dog, you slut, I'll marry;*

Pen. *Marry!*

Young C. *Marry!*

Pris. *You, sir?*

Sight. *You!*

Barn. *Yes, I'll take a wife and fling you;
Take a wife, and get an heir.*

All. } *Heaven to your senses bring you!*
} *Ah! dear uncle, have a care.* [Eseunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A little Yard and Garden behind Cockney's house.

Enter PRISCILLA TOMBOY, taking a letter from her pocket; MISS LA BLOND following.

Pris. Here, this way; come into the yard here. I am afraid to speak or move in the house, I am so watched. Here is a letter for the Captain: you will make apologies about my writing, because the lines are a little crooked: excuse my spelling, too; and if he cannot make out all the words, do you help him.

La Blond. Never fear; I shall take it to his lodgings myself: but it seems your guardian did not behave well to him this morning; Master Watty, too, was unmanly; and he swears vengeance against him.

Pris. With all my heart, let him beat him while he is able to stand over him. But there's a rare bustle within. The old man swears that Watty shall not have me now, and he is going to send me back to the West Indies directly: he is, 'faith! He is gone to Deptford to speak to a captain of a ship; but I will not go back to the West Indies for him. And what do you think I have done? I have persuaded Watty that my love for the Captain, and my writing to him, was all only a sham.

La Blond. A sham! How could you do that?

Pris. Oh! very easily, by flattering him up: by telling him he is a pretty young man, and has handsome legs, you may make him believe anything.

La Blond. Well, Miss Prissy, I am sure I wish to see you happy with all my heart; but I am not unacquainted with the family of the Cockneys; and, believe me, if they did not know you to be a young lady of a very large fortune, they would not make such a fuss about you as they do.

Pris. Oh! I know that well enough. They're as frightened as the vengeance now about my going to Jamaica, because they think they shall lose my money. So I have told Watty, that if he can manage it, I will go off with him to Scotland to-night; where, they say, folks may be married in spite of any one.

La Blond. Go off with him to Scotland!

Pris. There's now she is jealous. (Aside.) Hush! speak softly. It is agreed between us, that we are to go out together as soon as it is dark. Don't you think that the Captain could hit upon some contrivance to meet us in the street, and take me from Watty? He shall not have much trouble, for, eood! I will be willing enough to go; and if he does but bluster and swear a little, poor Watty will be afraid to say a word.

La Blond. Take you from him?

Pris. Why, 'tis the only way to get me; if it is not done to-night, it's odds if the old man will not send me off to-morrow.

La Blond. Let me consider a little.

Pris. What are you thinking of, Miss La Blond?

La Blond. Why, look you, Miss Prissy, this is a very serious affair, and should be well weighed before anything is done in it. But I will go with your letter to the Captain.

Pris. Ay, do, my dear; and when I am married

to the Captain, you may have Watty yourself, if you like it; and I dare say, one day or other, he will be an alderman. But, stay, let me go this way, and do you go that; for if they see us together they may suspect. Miss La Blond, desire the Captain to bring his servant along with him; and tell him, if he is a good fellow, he shall, when I am married to his master, have as much rum as ever he can drink for nothing. [*Exit Miss La Blond.*]

Enter YOUNG COCKNEY.

Young C. Miss Prissy, Miss Prissy, I want to speak to you.

Pris. Well, what do you want?

Young C. Why, Miss Prissy, I have been thinking of what you were saying to me; and, if I were sure you would not return to any of your old tricks—

Pris. Why, to be sure, Master Watty, I have been a very sad girl, and I do not deserve that you should have any kindness for me.

Young C. Perhaps, Miss Prissy, you think I cannot get a wife. There is a widow gentlewoman, worth a matter of forty thousand pounds; her husband was a great sugar-baker in Kitchell-Highway; and if I would marry her, she would settle every farthing she is worth upon me.

Pris. Indeed, I do not doubt it.

Young C. But you are for an officer, it seems; and I don't see that they are a bit cleverer than other people. I believe I have been reckoned as genteel as any of them; besides, what is a little outside shew? If you had a mind to go to Scotland with this here Captain, now, it's odds if he could find money to pay for a post-chaise.

Pris. I don't care for the Captain; I wish you would not mention him at all: I am ashamed whenever I think of him.

Young C. So you ought, miss.

Pris. I know I ought, but I was bewitched: I am sure I have been crying about it like anything; only see, Watty, how red my eyes are.

Young C. Ah! fudge! that is no crying; you have been putting an onion to them. But, I say, if you get yourself ready, I will go along with you as soon as it is dusk. Don't you think these clothes become me, Miss Prissy? I have a mind to take them along with us.

Pris. You look very jemmy in them, I am sure.

Young C. Why, I think they shew the fall of my shoulders. I have a very fine fall in my shoulders; have not I, Miss Prissy?

Pris. Yes, indeed have you.

Young C. Well, but there's one thing as perhaps you did not know. If you marry without my uncle's consent, you are not to have no fortune; so that I am taking you hap at a hazard; and if he should not forgive us afterwards, I shall have you to maintain; which will be very hard upon me.

Pris. Oh! but he will forgive us; besides, if you go with me to Jamaica, I'll raise the negroes for us; it's only beating them well, giving them a few yams, and they'll do anything you bid them.

Young C. Well, we cannot go yet; but you may prepare yourself while I step in. Miss Prissy, don't you think our going off will be in the newspapers? We hear that a great West Indian fortune has lately eloped with the son of an eminent grocer in the city! And when we come back, Lord! I warrant there will be noise enough about us. [*Exit.*]

Pris. Quasheba, Quasheba, Quasheba!

(*The negro girl appears at the window, and throws out the things her mistress calls for; which she puts on as fast as she gets them.*)

Quash. What, missy?

Pris. Throw out my hat and my shawl. I will

be ready in a minnte; he shall not wait for me, I warrant him. How purely I have managed it! If the Captain does but meet us now—Watty thinks, as sure as anything, I will go off with him. He is the greatest fool that I ever knew. But suppose the Captain does not meet us, must I go off with Watty? Ecod! I will not: I will bawl out in the street, and say he is running away with me. Let me see now, have I got all my things? have I forgot nothing?

AIR.—PRISCILLA TOMBOY.

*Dear me, how I long to be married,
And in my own coach to be carried!*

*Beside me to see,
How charming 'twill be!
My husband, and, may be,
A sweet little baby
As pretty as he.
Already I hear
Its tongue in my ear:
Papa, papa!
Mamma, mamma!
Hu, hu, ha, ha, ha!*

*Oh, gracious! what calling,
What stamping, what bawling,
When first I am missed by the clam!*

Miss Molly will chatter,

Old Squaretoes will clatter;

But catch me again if they can. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—Ludgate-hill, with a view of St. Paul's church.

Enter CAPTAIN SLIGHTLY and MISS LA BLOND.

La Blond. Captain Slightly! Mercy on us! how you frightened me!

Slight. Well, you see I am a true soldier, at my post, and ready to engage. Her letter mentions the Bell Savage inn; if so, we cannot be better stationed than here.

La Blond. But I say, Captain, when you have got Miss Tomboy, where do you think to take her?

Slight. To Scotland directly, my girl.

La Blond. No, no; that will never do. She shall go and lie at my aunt's to-night, and, in the morning, I am certain we will hit upon a plan to get Mr. Barnacle's consent to your marriage.

Slight. Well, my dear, I will leave everything to you: I am sure I cannot be in more trusty hands.

La Blond. Hush, hush! I hear them coming; hide yourself for a few minutes. (*They retire.*)

Enter YOUNG COCKNEY and PRISCILLA TOMBOY.

Pris. La! Master Watty, you hurry so fast; I vow I must stop and rest myself, so I must; I am as tired as anything.

Young C. Why would you not let me call a hackney-coach, then? But I tell you it will be dark presently, and we shall meet some highwaymen on the road near London.

Pris. Well, stay a moment, then, till I tie my swash.

Young C. Well, then, tie your swash.

Pris. It was you that was so long before you came out. Oh, la! there are two great big men standing at yonder corner. I won't go any farther, Master Watty.

Young C. What's the matter with you, Miss Prissy? La! you frighten me out of my wits.

Pris. Master Watty, just step to that corner, and see if they are gone. Never fear, I won't leave you. (*Gives him the end of her shawl to hold, and*

while he is looking another way, she runs off with Captain Slightly.)

Young C. If ever I knew the like of you! There's no danger; come along.

[Discovers the trick, and runs after them.]

SCENE III.—A Room in Miss La Blond's aunt's house.

Enter CAPTAIN SIGHTLY, PRISCILLA TOMBOY, and MISS LA BLOND. The Captain fastens the door.

Young C. (Without.) Miss Prissy, I know very well you are here; I saw you here with your Captain. I wonder you are not ashamed of yourself, Miss La Blond, to encourage a young lady to run away from her friends.

Sight. What the devil shall we do now?

Pris. (To Sight.) Say I am not here.

Sight. I tell you, sir, she is not here.

Pris. I tell you, sir, she is not—

Young C. (Without.) Ah, ah! I see you, miss, through the keyhole.

Sight. What shall we do?

Pris. Let him in: who's afraid? Come in, Master Watty; who cares for you? (She opens the door.)

Enter YOUNG COCKNEY.

Young C. And who cares for you? Will you come home, Miss Prissy?

Pris. No, I won't. I wish, Master Watty, you would make yourself scarce.

Young C. Well, miss, you will be made to repent of this.

QUARTETTO.—PRISCILLA TOMBOY, CAPTAIN SIGHTLY, YOUNG COCKNEY, and MISS LA BLOND.

Pris. Get you gone, you nasty thing, you; Do you think I care for you?

Young C. I will go, and shortly bring you Those shall make you dearly rue. And to you, sir, I'll bring two, sir.

Sight. } Who, sir? who, sir? who? •
Pris. }

Young C. Never mind, no matter who.

Sight. If that here you longer tarry,
You may chance away to carry
That you will not like to bear.

Pris. You'll well be beaten.

Young C. What, you threaten?

Pris. Captain, draw your sword and swear.

Sight. 'Sblood and thunder!

La Blond. Stand asunder.

Young C. Let him touch me if he dare.

Pris. Master Watt, I'll tell you what,
Home you had much better trot.

Young C. Will you go with me or not?

Pris. Trot, Watt, I will not.
Get you gone, you nasty thing, &c.

[Priscilla puts herself in a boxing attitude, and beats Young Cockney off. Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.—Inside of Cockney's house.

Enter BARNACLE, YOUNG COCKNEY, and PENELOPE.

Barn. I say I will not see her; let her go from whence she came. I shall write her friends in Ja-

maica word, by the next packet, that I was not strong enough to hold her; and that when I was on the eve of sending her back to them, she ran away from me with a young fellow that nobody knows.

Young C. Do so, uncle; and I wonder she has the impudence to come back, after staying out all night.

Barn. And I wonder, sirrah, you dare have the impudence to take her out, when I ordered her to keep her room: it is all your doings.

Pen. Well, pray, dear sir, let me prevail upon you to see her, and hear what she can say for herself.

Young C. She can say nothing for herself, sister Penny; and I believe Miss La Blond was concerned along with them, however fair she may carry it.

Pen. Well, uncle, will you condescend to see this mad girl?

Barn. Where is she?

Pen. Above, in my chamber; she is afraid to come down without your permission. She seems really sorry for what she has done, and, perhaps, things may not be so bad as they appear.

Young C. Oh! I warrant they are bad enough.

Barn. I'll break your bones, you dog.

Young C. For what?

Barn. Bid that girl come hither. [Exit Pen.] But, here, take this stick, I will not trust myself near her with it, lest I should do her a mischief. (Gives his cane to Young C.)

Enter PRISCILLA TOMBOY and PENELOPE.

Barn. Oh! Madam Run-away—

Pris. Don't be angry, pray, don't, and I'll tell you—

Barn. Hussy, what made you go out last night?

Pris. Why, it was Master Watty made me; we were going to Scotland to be married.

Barn. To Scotland! Oh! you dog, Walter!

Young C. Well, it was she herself proposed it.

Pris. Suppose I did; you know, when I was in the house I never could be at rest for you; he was always making love to me.

Young C. I make love to her! I never spoke a civil word to her in all my life.

Barn. Hold your tongue, sirrah. But I say, where have you been all night? Let me hear that.

Pris. You'll be angry.

Barn. Tell me the truth.

Pris. Why, the gentleman that loves me, the officer that was here yesterday, met me and Master Watty in the street, and so he took me away from him: and—but why did little Watty take me out?

Barn. Ay, it's very true; it's all your fault, sirrah. But where did he take you?

Pris. To his lodgings: for he said he loved me, so he could not live without me; and if I did not consent to be his wife, he said he would kill himself on the spot.

Barn. Kill himself! you wicked girl!

Pris. I knew you would be in a passion about it.

Barn. Hark you, hussy, I have but one question more to ask you: are you ruined or not?

Pris. Oh, dear! He, he, he!

Barn. You impudent—

Pris. Little Watty makes me laugh.

Barn. And so you and the gentleman passed for man and wife?

Pris. Why, I'll assure you, at first I was very much against it, for I said I did not think it was becoming; and he said he would rather lie in the street than incommode me; and I, seeing him so polite, said he should not run the risk of catching cold for the love of me.

Barn. And so you—

Pris. Why, he said he would be civil to me;

and I'm sure he'll marry me, for he gave me his promise two or three times.

Barn. Get you gone, hussy!

Pris. I knew now this would be the way.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Captain Sightly, sir, desires to speak to you.

Barn. Desire him to walk up. [*Exit Serv.*]

Pris. Sir, if you will please to speak to W^{itty}.

Young C. Sir, please to speak to Prissy.

Barn. Have done, you couple of devils.

Enter CAPTAIN SIGHTLY and MISS LA BLOND.

Sir, I'm informed that your name is Charles Sightly, lieutenant in I know not what regiment of foot; that you have seduced this girl—

Pris. Well, why don't you say we are married?

Barn. In a word, Captain, I am informed my hopeful ward here has passed the night at your lodgings: answer me upon your honour; is it so or not? for in that case I must even give her to you.

Sight. You ask me upon my honour?

Barn. Ay, I do, sir.

Sight. Then, sir, I will not give it in a falsehood for my interest; the young lady is perfectly innocent, and this only a scheme to incline you to consent to our marriage.

Pris. Oh! you fool!

Barn. Hold your tongue, impudence! You are a brave young fellow, I believe, and more deserving of her than my own relation; therefore, I give her to you; and let this teach you for the future to use candour on all occasions.

Pris. Oh! my dear guardian! (*Runs and kisses him.*)

Barn. You spoil my wig. Let me hear no more of you. Hark you, child, (*to Miss La Blond*) do you think if a husband were thrown in your way,

old enough to be your father, that old Nick would not tempt you? you understand me.

La Blond. Sir, I think I should make him a good wife.

Barn. Say'st thou so, my girl? Well, then, I will marry you myself to-morrow morning. Ladies and gentlemen, you are heartily welcome: pray, salute the young bride and bridegroom. And now let us forget all past bickerings and misunderstandings, and be as merry as music and good cheer can make us.

FINALE.

Young C. Hear, city youths, this friendly rhyme,

'Tis worthy well attending;

Oh! go not on, your precious time

In vain delights mis-spending.

Bucks, bloods, and smart's, reform your ways.

Leave dancing, wenching, gaming, plays;

First get the cash, then cut a flash,

Nor be ashamed of mending.

Sight. I have been naughty, I confess,

But now you need not doubt it,

I mean my follies to redress,

And straight will set about it.

'Tis modest sweetness gives the grace,

To birth, to fortune, and to face:

That charm secure, will long endure,

And all is vain without it.

Pris. And now our scenic task is done,

This comes of course, you know, sirs,

We drop the mask off every one,

And stand in statu quo, sirs.

Your ancient friends and servants we,

Who humbly wait for your decree;

One gracious smile to crown our toil,

And happy let us go, sirs. [*Exeunt.*]

BRAGANZA;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY ROBERT JEPHSON.



Act III.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

DUKE OF BRAGANZA
VELASQUEZ
ALMADA
RIBIRO
MENDOZA
ANTONIO

MEILO
RODERIC
FERDINAND
LEMO
COREA
PIZARRO

RAMIREZ
CITIZENS
OFFICER
ATTENDANTS
DUTCHESS OF BRAGANZA
INES

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Piazza.

Enter RIBIRO meeting a Spanish Officer, conducting two Citizens, bound. LEMOS and COREA following Ribiro at a little distance.

Ribiro. Hold, officer! What means this spectacle?

Why lead you thus in fetters thro' the streets These aged citizens?

Officer. Behold this order. *(Shows a paper.)*

Ribiro. I know the character. 'Tis signed Velasquez.

1 Citizen. We have no mines of unexhausted gold

To feed rapacious Spain and stern Velasquez: And wrung by hard exactions for the state—

Officer. No more; I must not suffer it.

Ribiro. *(Pointing to the prisoners.)* Pray, sir, See these white hairs, these shackles: misery May sure complain. You are a soldier, sir, Your mien bespeaks a brave one—

Officer. I will walk by. Detain them not too long. 'Tis a harsh sentence. *(Withdraws.)*

2 Citizen. Oh! good Ribiro, what have we deserved,

That these rude chains should gall us?

Ribiro. What deserv'd!

1 Citizen. The little all our industry had earn'd, To smooth the bed of sickness, nurse old age, And give a decent grave to our cold ashes, Spain's hungry minions have already seiz'd.

Ribiro. I know the rest. Dry up these scalding tears:

The hour of your deliverance is at hand:

An arm more strong than shuts your prison doors,

Shall burst them soon, and give you ample vengeance.

Citizens. May we, indeed, expect—

Ribiro. Most sure: but, hush!

Resume the semblance of this transient shame.

And hide your hope in sadness. Brave Castilian, Thanks for this courtesy.

(To the Officer, who returns.)

Citizens. Lead on. Farewell!

[Escort Guard and Citizens. Lemos and Corea come forward to Ribiro.]

Ribiro. Was that a sight for Lisbon?

Lemos. Oh! shame, shame!

What crime could they commit? Old, helpless, plunder'd—

Ribiro. Even thoughts are crimes in this distemper'd state.

They once had wealth as you have: Spain thought meet

To seize it: they (rash men!) have dar'd to murmur.

Velasquez here, our scourge, king Philip's idol,
Whom Portugal must bow to, mildly dooms them
But to perpetual bondage for this treason.

Lemos. We must be patient: 'tis a cureless evil.

Ribiro. Is patience, then, the only virtue left us?

Come, come, there is a remedy more manly.

Corea. Would it were in our reach!

Ribiro. Look here, I grasp it.

(Laying his hand on his sword.)

What, turn'd to statues! Hence, enfranchisement,
If the quick fire that lately warm'd your breasts,
Already wastes to embers! Am I rash?

We touch'd this theme before: you felt it then.

Would I could put a tongue in every ingot

That now lies pil'd within your massy stores!

Your gold, perhaps, might move you. Spain will seize it;

Then bid you mourn the loss in the next dungeon,
Or dig her mines for more. Is't not enough?

Instruct me, **Lemos**; you, good **Corea**, teach me

This meekness so convenient to our foes,
Or pierce this swelling bosom.

Lemos. Who can teach it?

'Tis not in art, **Ribiro**. Know us better.

The canker discontent consumes within,

And mocks our smooth exterior.

Corea. Hear me for both:

For all th' indignant hearts in Portugal:

If curses sped like plagues and pestilence,

Thus would I strike them at the towers of Spain.

May her swollen pride burst like an empty bubble?

Distraction rend her councils! rout and shame

Pursue her flying squadrons! Tempests scatter

And whirlpools swallow up her full mann'd navies!

Bold insurrection spread through all her states,

Shaking like pent-up winds their loose allegiance!

All Europe arm, and every frowning king!

Point at one foe, and let that foe be Spain!

Ribiro. Oh! be that curse prophetic! Here 'tis

dangerous,

Nor will the time allow to tell you all;

But thus far rest assur'd—I speak not rashly—

A project is on foot, and now just rip'ning,

Will give our indignation nobler scope

Than tears or curses. (Priests and women's weapons!)

All that secures the event of great designs,

Sage heads, firm hearts, and executing arms,

In formidable union league with us,

And chain capricious fortune to our standard.

Lemos. Say, can our aid promote this glorious cause?

Ribiro. All private virtue is the public fund;

As that abounds, the state decays or thrives;

Each should contribute to the general stock,

And who lends most, is most his country's friend.

Lemos. Oh! would Braganza meet the people's wish!

Ribiro. He is not yet resolv'd, but may be won.

Could I assure him men like you but wish'd it,

(For well he knows and loves you,) trust me,

Lemos,

It would do more to knit him to this cause

Than legions of our hot nobility.

Corea. We love his virtue, will support his rights—

Ribiro. Then shew it by your deeds. Your artizans

Are prompt, bold, hardy, fond of violence.

Alarm their slumb'ring courage, rouse their rage,

Wake their dull'd senses to the shame and scorn

That hisses in the ears of willing bondmen;

If they will hazard one bold stroke for freedom,

A leader shall be found, a brave—a just one.

Anon expect me where the ivy'd arch

Rears the bold image of our late Braganza,

(In sullen discontent he seems to frown,

As if still hostile to the foes of Lisbon.)

There we'll discourse at large. **Almada** comes.

Lemos. Is he a friend?

Ribiro. A firm one. No dishonour

E'er bow'd that rev'rend head. That mighty spirit.

When first the oppressor, like a flood, o'erwhelm'd

us,

Rear'd high his country's standard and defied

him.

He comes to seek me. Lose no time: remember.

[Exeunt **Lemos** and **Corea**.]

I should detest my zeal, could it be stirr'd

Against the wholesome rigour of restraint

Licentiousness made needful. But, good heaven!

Foul murders unprovok'd, deliberate cruelty!

The God within us must rise up against it.

Enter **ALMADA**.

Almada. Well met, **Ribiro**: what new proslaytes?

Thy ardour every hour or finds or makes them.

Ribiro. No; thank the Spaniards for our proslaytes:

Scarce half an hour ago, two citizens,

(My blood still boils,) by fell **Velasquez**' order,

Were dragg'd to prison—

Almada. Spare my soul, **Ribiro**,

Superfluous detestation of that villain.

Ribiro. Knowing this way they were to pass, I brought

Lemos and **Corea**, (whom last night I sounded,)

That their own eyes might see the outrages,

Men of their order must expect to meet

From power that knows no bounds, and owns no law,

Almada. 'Twas wisely done; for minds of coarse alloy

But bluntly feel the touch of others' wrongs,

Tho' deep the impression of their own.

Ribiro. By heav'n, their fury bore a nobler stamp;

Their honest rage glow'd on their kindling cheeks,

Broke through the cold restraints of coward caution,

And swell'd even to an eloquence of anger.

Almada. 'Tis well. But are they yet inform'd how near

Th' approaching hour, decisive of our fate,

That gives us death or freedom—that the dawn—

Ribiro. Not yet. They still believe the Duke, at noon,

But visits Lisbon to command the march

Of our new levies to the Spanish bounds;

Himself to follow straight. Ere then I mean

Again to see them, and still more to whet

The keenness of their hate against our tyrants.

At least a thousand follow where they lead.

Almada. Their boldness, well directed, may do much.

Ribiro. That care be mine: I've studied, and I

know them;

Inconstant, sanguine, easily inflam'd,

But, like the nitrous powder uncompress'd,

Consuming by the blaze nought but itself,

'Tis ours to charge the mine with deadly skill,

And bury usurpation in the ruin.

Almada. I think we cannot fail; our friends are firm:

Honour will bind the noble, hope the weak,

And common interest all. The insulting Spaniards

Broods over embryo mischiefs, nor suspects

The wretched worm conceals a mortal sting
To pierce the haughty heel that tramples him.

Ribiro. How great will be our triumph, Spain's disgrace,

When ev'ry mischief that perfidious court
Has fram'd against Braganza's precious life
Recoils on the contriver!

Almada. Urge that home;

Urge how the Duke's affection to his country,
His right unquestionable to her crown,
First mark'd him for the victim of false Spain;
That his commission as high admiral,
His general's staff, and all the lofty pomp
Of his high-sounding titles, were but meant
As gilded snares to invite him to his death.

Ribiro. These truths, shameful to Philip, must
be told;

They will endear Don Juan to the people,
Will keep them waking, restless, and dispos'd
To aid the glorious tumult of to-morrow.

Almada. My heart expands, and, with a prophet's
fire,

Seizes the bright reversion of our hopes.
I see the genius of our realm restor'd,
And smiling lead him to his rightful throne.
No wild ambition, like a pamper'd steed,
O'erleaps the boundaries of law and reason,
And tramples every seed of social virtue;
But o'er the temp'rate current of his blood
The gentlest passions brush their breezy wings,
To animate, but not disturb the stream.
Such is his temper: the approaching hour
Demands, perhaps, a sterner.

Ribiro. Heaven, still kind,

Has in his consort's breast struck deep the root
Of each aspiring virtue, Bright Louisa,
To all the softness of her tender sex,
Unites the noblest qualities of man;
A genius to embrace the amplest scheme
That ever swell'd the labouring statesman's breast;
Judgment most sound, persuasive eloquence
To charm the froward and convince the wise;
Pure piety without religion's dross,
And fortitude that shrinks at no disaster.

Almada. She is, indeed, a wonder. Oh! *Ribiro*,
That woman was the spring that mov'd us all.
She canvass'd all our strength, urg'd all our
wrongs,

Comb'd our force, and methodiz'd our ven-
geance;

Taught us that ends which seem impossible
Are lost, or compass'd only by the means;
That fortune is a false divinity,
But folly worships what the wise man makes.
She turn'd our cold dejection to device,
And rous'd despondency to active valour.
My age delights to dwell on her perfections—

Ribiro. And I could ever hear them. Virtue's
praise

To honest ears is music. But no more:—
A noise comes this way, and that hurrying throng
Proclaims the upstart minister's approach.
This is the hour, with saucy pageantry,
Thro' our thinn'd streets he takes his wonted
round;

Like the dire clapping of the harpy's wing,
To choke the frugal meal with bitter tears,
And scare content from every humble board.
I will avoid him. But I go, proud man,
When next we meet to make my presence dread-
ful. [Exit.

Almada. Honest *Ribiro*! To this hour my soul
Has kept her purpose; my firm foot has ne'er
Swerv'd from its path in Lisbon, nor shall now
Give way to insolence. Your country's dregs!

(*Looking towards the train of Velasquez.*)
Ye supple sycophants! ay, cringe and beg
That he will tread upon your prostrate necks,

Or ride you like his mules. Authority!
Thy worshipp'd symbols round a villain's trunk
Provoke men's mockery, not their reverence.

Enter Officer.

Officer. Make way, there; room, room for the
minister.

Know you the lord Velasquez comes this way?
Pray, sir, give place.

Almada. Officious varlet, off!
Let not thy servile touch pollute my robe.
Can hirelings frown?

*Enter VELASQUEZ and PIZARRO. The magistrates
of Lisbon with their insignia, Guards and Atten-
dants preceding.*

Velasq. How! am I, then, despised?

(*Looking sternly at Almada.*)

A tumult in my presence? Good, my lord,
It better would become your gravity
To set the fair example of obedience
To trust and office, than instruct the rabble
In what they are the most prone to, feuds and
faction.

Almada. Most reverend admonition! Hold, my
spleen!

Ye golden coronets and ermin'd robes,
Bend from your stools, behold this wond'rous
man,
This Lusitanian censor, this sage Cato,
This consul, with his lictors, rods, and axes,
Reprove the boy, Almada, for his lightness!

Pizarro. Regard not his wild words, he's old and
choleric.

Velasq. (*To his train.*) Attend me at the citadel:
move on. [Exit Attendants.

I know not whether to accuse my fortune,
Or blame my own demerits, brave Almada,
That ever when we meet, thy angry brow
Rebukes me with its frown, or keen reproach
Darts from thy tongue, and checks the forward
wish

That fain would court thy friendship and esteem.

Almada. Friendship with thee! Is it so slight a
boon?

If such deserve the name, go seek for friends
Amidst the desp'rate crew, whose off'ry bond
Is the black conscience of confederate crimes;
Nor in prepost'rous union think to join
Integrity with guilt, and shame with honour.

Know me for what I am—thy foe profess'd.
Fall on thy knee, solicit heaven for mercy,
And tell that seat of pride, thy obdurate heart,

Its last, its only virtue, is remorse. [Exit.

Velasq. Go, hoary fool, preach to the whistling
winds;

I scorn thy council, and defy thy hate.
'Tis time enough for lagging penitence,
When age, like thine, has quench'd ambition's
flame;

Now nobler thoughts possess my active soul.
This haughty province first shall feel my weight,
And since it scorns my love, through fear obey
me.

Pizarro. Already all the power of Spain is thine,
The vice-queen, Margaret, though of Austrian
blood,

Discreet, firm, virtuous, complains in vain,
You leave her but a regent's empty title,
While power is only your's; and happier still,
Braganza summon'd to attend the king,
Will soon cut off his country's only hope,
And leave no rival to obscure thy lustre.

'Bate but the shew and name of royalty,
Thou art already king.

Velasq. The shew, the name,

All that gives grace and awe to majesty
Shall soon be mine, Pizarro. Olivarez,
Whose counsels rule the Escorial, to my hand
Has long resign'd the reins of Portugal,
And dreams not (unsuspicious of my faith)
The delegate, the creature of his breath,
Anon will bid defiance to his power,
And rank himself with monarchs.

Pizarro. Oh! take heed;
Consider, sir, that power still awes the world—
Velasq. My towering fortune rises on a rock,
And firm as Atlas will defy the storm.
The purple cement of a prince's blood
Shall strengthen its foundation.

Pizarro. Ha!
Velasq. Braganza's.
The precious mischief swells my exulting breast,
And soon shall burst its prison.

Pizarro. Can it be?
I know thy dauntless temper mooks at fear,
And prudence guides thy daring; but a prince
Follow'd by faithful guards, encompass'd round
With troops of gallant friends, the people's idol—
Velasq. Is mortal, like the meanest of his

train,
And dies before to-morrow. Cease to wonder;
But when this mighty ruin shakes the realm,
Prepare like me, with well-dissembled grief,
To hide our real joy, and blind suspicion.

(*Flourish of trumpets.*)
These trumpets speak his entrance; never more
Such sprightly notes, nor shout of joyful friends,
Peep or choral song shall usher him;
But and solemnity of funeral pomp,
Mute sorrow, mournful dirges, ghastly rites,
Marshall'd by death, in comfortless array,
Wait his cold relics to their sepulchre. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Antichamber in the Duke of Braganza's Palace.*

RIBIRO and MENDOZA discovered.

Ribiro. A moment's pause, Mendoza: here appointed
By promise to the Duke at noon to wait him,
I could not mingle with his followers,
So saw it but in part.

Mendoza. The air still rings
With loudest acclamations.

Ribiro. Yes, Mendoza;
With joy I heard them; heard the vaulted sky
Echo Braganza. 'Twas no hireling noise,
No faction's roar of mercenary joy,
Sound without transport, but the heartfelt cry
Of a whole nation's welcome. Hear it, Spain!
Proud usurpation, hear it!

Mendoza. The whole way
Was cover'd thick with panting multitudes,
That scarce left passage for their chariot-wheels;
The trees were bent with people; ev'ry roof,
Dome, temple, portico, so closely fill'd,
The gazers made the wonder. Here and there
A discontented Spaniard stalk'd along,
Should'ring the crowd; and, with indignant scorn,
Turn'd up his sallow cheek in mockery.

Ribiro. We shall retort their scorn. Mark'd you
the Duke?

His mind is ever letter'd in his face.
Mendoza. Pleasure was mingled with anxiety,
Both visible at once. But, oh! what words
Can paint the angel form that grac'd his side,
His bright Louisa! Like th' Olympian queen,
When o'er her fragrant bosom Venus bound

Th' enchanting oenias, from her lucid eyes
Stream'd the pure beams of soft benevolence,
And glories more than mortal shone around her.
Harmonious sounds of dulcet instruments
Swell'd by the breath, or swept from tuneful wire,
Floated in air, while yellow Tagus burn'd
With prows of flaming gold; their painted flags,
In gaudy frolic fluttering to the breeze.
On to their palace thus the triumph came:
Alighted at the gate, the princely pair
Express'd their thanks in silent dignity
Of gesture, far more eloquent than words;
Then turn'd them from the throng—

Ribiro. Why this looks well.
The Duke will sure be rous'd to resolution
By this bright presage of his coming glory.

Mendoza. With grief I learn he still is undeter-
min'd.

His fears prevail against the public wish;
And thus the ill-pois'd scale of our fair hopes,
Moans light and unsubstantial.

Ribiro. Oh! you wrong him.
I know his noble nature: Juan's heart
Pants not with selfish fear. His wife, his friends,
An infant family, a kingdom's fate,
More than his own, besiege his struggling soul;
He must be more than man, who will not hear
Such powerful calls, and less, who can despise
them.

Mendoza. Indeed, I cannot wonder he's dis-
turb'd;

But doubts are treason in a cause like this.

Ribiro. Dismiss these fears; Louisa's gentle
sway

Will fix him to our purpose. Night's chaste orb
Rules not the heavings of the restless tide
More sure than she with mild ascendancy
Can govern all his ebbs and flows of passion.
But come, by this time the fond multitude
Have gaz'd away their longing, and retire.
Our greeting will be seasonable now. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A magnificent Chamber in the Duke of Braganza's palace.*

DUKE OF BRAGANZA discovered, speaking to LEMOS and COREA; other Citizens at a little distance.

Duke. No more, kind countrymen; this goodness
melts me.

What can I render back for all these honours?

This wondrous prodigality of praise?

What but my life, whence'er your welfare asks it.

Lemos. Heav'n guard that precious life for Por-
tugal!

To you, as to a tutelary god,
This sinking country lifts her suppliant hands,
And certain of your strength, implores your arm
To raise her prostrate genius from the dust.

Duke. A private man, a subject, like your-
selves,

Bankrupt of power, though rich in gratitude,
The sense of what you suffer wrings my soul,
Nor makes your sorrows less.

Enter DUTCHESS OF BRAGANZA.

Dutchess. Much injur'd men,
Whom love not fear should govern, from this
hour,

Know, we espouse your cause. We have not
hearts

Of aliens, to behold with passing glance
And cold indifference the ruthless spoiler
Smile o'er the ravage of your fertile plains.

We feel the fetters that disgrace your limbs;

We mourn the vigour of your minds depress'd;
With horror we behold your gen'rous blood
Drain'd by the insatiate thirst of ravening wolves.
If we have nature, we must feel your wrongs,
If we have power, redress them.

Corea. Matchless lady! *

There spoke our rightful queen, our better angel!
In us behold your servants, subjects, soldiers;
Though yet unpractis'd in the trade of war,
Our swords will find an edge at your command.

Duke. We neither doubt your courage nor your love,

And both, perhaps, ere long may meet the trial:
I would detain you, but our conference
Might now be dangerous. Rank me with your friends,

And know I have a heart for Portugal.

[*Exeunt Lemos, Corea, &c.*]

Dutchess. Why wears my Juan's brow that thoughtful cloud?

Why thus with downcast look and folded arm,
When ev'ry other bosom swells with hope? *
When expectation, like a fiery steed,
Anticipates the course, and pants to hear
The sprightly signal start him for the goal.
Think that the people from their leader's eye
Catch the sure omens of their future fate;
With his their courage falls, their spirits rise;
For confidence is conquest's harbinger.

Duke. Light of thy Juan's life! my soul's best joy!

Swifter than meteors glide, or wings of wind,
My nimble thoughts shoot through their whirling round:

A thousand cares distract this anxious breast.
To recompense the dark uncertainty
Of this dread interval, 'twixt now and morn,
Would ask whole years of happiness to come.
Now thou art mine, these faithful arms enfold thee;

But oh! to-morrow may behold thee torn
By barbarous ruffians from their fond embrace;
The flowing honours of that beauteous head,
May sweep a scaffold's dust, and iron death
Close in eternal sleep those radiant eyes
That beam with love and joy unutterable.

Dutchess. Oh! make me not your curse, as sure I must be,

The stain, the blot of your immortal fame,
If one soft passion, like a languid spell,
Dissolve thy manly fortitude of soul,
And melt the prince and patriot in the husband.

Duke. That tender union is thy healing balm, *
The cordial of my soul; our destinies
Are twin'd together. Were my single life
The only forfeit of this perilous chance,
I'd throw it, like a heedless prodigal,
And wanton with my fortune; but, alas!
More than the wealth of worlds is now at stake.
And can I hazard this dear precious pledge.
Venture my all of bliss on one bold cast,
Nor feel the conflict that now rends my heart?

Dutchess. Why do you tremble? These cold struggling drops—

Duke. They fall for thee, Louisa; my quell'd spirit

'Avows its weakness there.

Dutchess. 'Tis cruel fondness;
It wounds me deeply Juan.

Duke. Witness, honour,
Thy martial call ne'er found Braganza's ear
Cold till this bitter moment. I have met,
Nay, courted death, in the steel'd files of war,
When squadrons wither'd as the giant trod;
Nor shrunk ev'n when the hardest in the field
Have paus'd upon the danger. Here, I own,
My agonizing nerves degrade the soldier,
Ev'n to a coward's frailty: should the sword

Which black destruction soon may wave o'er all,
(Avert it, heav'n!) strike at thy precious life,
Should but one drop, forc'd by rude violence,
Stain that dear bosom, I were so accurs'd,
The outstretch'd arm of mercy could not save me.

Dutchess. I have a woman's form, a woman's fears;

I shrink from pain and start at dissolution;
To shun them is great Nature's prime command;
Yet summon'd as we are, your honour pledg'd,
Your own just rights engag'd, your country's fate,
Let threat'ning death assume his direst form,
Let dangers multiply, still would I on,
Still urge, exhort, confirm thy constancy,
And though we perish'd in the bold attempt,
With my last breath I'd bless the glorious cause,
And think it happiness to die so nobly.

Duke. Oh! thou hast rous'd me. From this hour I banish

Each fond solicitude that hover'd round thee:
Thy voice, thy looks, thy soul are heav'n's own fire.

'Twere impious but to doubt that pow'r ordain'd thee

To guide me to this glorious enterprize.

Dutchess. Thou shalt be chronicled to latest time,

Heaven's chosen instrument to punish tyrants,
The great restorer of a nation's freedom!
Thou shalt complete what Brutus but attempted.
Nor withering age, nor cold oblivion's shade,
Nor envy's caulk'rous tooth shall blast thy wreaths:
But every friend to virtue shall inscribe
To Juan's name eternal monuments.

But, see, our friends approach; awhile I leave thee:

Remember still, thou must be king or nothing.

[*Exit.*]

Duke. I will suppress th' emotions of my heart;
Quite to subdue them is impossible.

Enter RIBIRO and MENDOZA.

Welcome, ye wakeful guardians of your counti,
Had we in all the people's mighty mass

But twenty spirit's match'd with you in virtue,
How might we bid defiance to proud Spain!
How scorn the close disguise of secret councils,
And challenge their full force in open combat!

Ribiro. Led by Don Juan, can we doubt th' event?

All things conspire: antipathy to Spain
Is here hereditary; 'tis nature's instinct;
'Tis principle, religion, vital heat;
Old men to list'ning sons with their last breath
Bequeath it as a dying legacy;
Infants imbibe it at the mother's breast;
It circles with their blood, spreads with their frame,

Its fountain is the heart, and till that fails
The stream it fed can never cease to flow.

Mendoza. That furious impulse gives the spleen of fiends

To softest tempers, the unpractis'd arm
Sinews with lion's strength, and drives us on
Resistless as the sweeping whirlwind's force.

Duke. All is propitious; every post is fill'd
With officers devoted to our service:
Already in their hearts they own my title,
And wait but for our orders to proclaim it.

Enter ALMADA.

Come to my breast, my sage admonisher!
The tutor and example of my arms!
The proud Iberian soon shall feel their force,
And learn from Juan's sword to venerate
The fame of brave Almada.

Almada. Thus, my prince,
Thus did I hope to find thee. Hence no more
Shall hard exactions grind the prostrate people;
Our gentry, to their provinces confin'd,
Languish no more in shameful circumscription;
No more our ancient noblemen be stripp'd
Of all but empty titles, tinsel names,
Like tarnish'd gold on rags to mock the wearer;
Our posts of eminence no more be filled
With upstart strangers, or the sordid lees
Of base plebeian natives.

Duke. My impatient breast,
Full of the expected joy, like a young bride-
groom,

Upbraids the lazy hours that lag between
My wishes and enjoyment. The onset is—

Almada. When St. Lazar beats five; at that
hour

We'll welcome the sun's rising with an offering
More glorious than the Persian hetacomb.

Ribiro. At night your friends assemble with
Almada

In dreadful secrecy: then with rais'd arm
Lie cannon'd on the river's southern side;
Should our design be known, they will be call'd
To reinforce the posts, and guard the city.

Almada. If we suspend the blow beyond to-
morrow

All may be lost. Three thousand veterans
Lie cannon'd on the river's southern side;
Should our design be known, they will be call'd
To reinforce the posts, and guard the city.
Adieu, then, to our dream of liberty!
We rivet closer chains on Portugal,
And drag the doom of traitors on ourselves.

Enter DUTCHESS OF BRAGANZA.

Dutchess. Suspend your consultations for a
moment;

Within the minister of Spain attends:
Forgive th' officious love of your Louisa:
No stranger to his arts, she warns her Juan—

Duke. I know he comes, in solemn mockery,
To make a hollow tender of his service
With most obsequious falsehood.

Dutchess. My best lord,
Hold strictest watch on all your words and mo-
tions;

Guard every look, with that discerning villain;
Subtle, insidious, false, and plausible;
He can, with ease, assume all outward forms,
Seem the most honest, plain, sincere, good man,
And keep his own designs lock'd close within,
While with the lynx's beam he penetrates
The deep reserve of every other breast.

Duke. I, too, will wear my vizor in the scene,
And play the dupe I am not. Friend, farewell!
Perhaps ere morning we may meet again.
The hour is fix'd, Louisa; all prepar'd.

Dutchess. Then this is our last night of sla-
very;

A brighter era rises with the dawn. [*Exit Duke.*]
If we may dare, without impiety,
To challenge heavenly aid, and swell the breast
With confidence of more than mortal vigour,
Can heaven stand neuter in a cause like this?
Or favour fraud, oppression, cruelty?

Now, gentle friends, I am a suitor to you.

Almada. You are our sovereign, madam; 'tis
your right

Not to solicit but command our duty.

Dutchess. Think me not light, capricious, vari-
able,

If I, who urg'd you to this bold attempt,
And ever when your anger seem'd to cool,
Pour'd oil to wake the flame and feed its blaze,
Now supplicate with milder earnestness
And strive to allay its fury.

Almada. Speak your pleasure;
The obedience of our hearts will follow it.

Dutchess. I know the measure of your wrongs
would license,

Nay, justify the wild excess of vengeance;
Yet in the headlong rage of execution,
Think rather what your mercy may permit
Than what their crimes deserve who feel your
justice.

Oh! follow not the example we abhor,
Nor let those weapons justice consecrates
Be dy'd with drops drawn from the bleeding
breast

Of reverend age, or helpless innocence.

Wilt thou take heed, Almada?

Almada. Fear not, madam;

All mercy not injurious to our cause,
Ev'n Spaniards, as they are men, from men may
challenge.

For Indus' wealth I would not stain this sword,
Sacred to honour, in the guiltless blood
Of unoffending wretches: rest secure;
A prostrate and defenceless enemy
Has stronger guards against a brave man's wrath,
Than tenfold brass, or shields of adamant.

Dutchess. Generous Almada! well dost thou
instruct;

Soft pity is not more akin to love
Than to true fortitude. Thy soft youth, Men-
doza,

Need not be tutor'd to humanity.

Mendoza. Heav'n and my conscious soul bear
witness for me,

That not to satiate any private malice,
But for the general good, I stand engag'd
In this great compact. 'Twere a coward's ven-
geance

To turn a sacrifice to massacre,
And practice while I punish cruelty.

Ribiro. Till fortune give one victim to my
rage,

Compassion and this bosom must be strangers;
No sanctuary, nor interceding prayers,
Nor wings of angels stretch'd to cover him,
Shall save that monster from the doom he merits.

Dutchess. You mean the minister of Spain,
Velasquez?

Ribiro. I mean the minister of hell, Velasquez,
That cool, deliberate executioner;
If he escape, may this good arm rot off,
All worthy thoughts forsake, and scorn pursue
me:

Write boaster on my forehead; let my name
Blister the tongue that speaks it. Infamy
Be here my portion, endless pains hereafter.

Dutchess. Oh! would that sacrifice might ex-
piate!

Ribiro. Pardon the rash effusion of my zeal;
It deals too much in words.

Dutchess. Not so, Ribiro;

Thy anger has a license; and thy zeal,
We know, is generous, not sanguinary.

Almada. Madam, we take our leave: good angels
guard you!

We go to prove our duty in your service.
The homage of our hearts has long been your's,
And soon you shall receive it from our knees.

Dutchess. Believe me, friends, your loves are
written here,

In characters no time can e'er efface.

[*Exeunt Almada, Ribiro, and Mendoza.*]

And may the mighty spirits of past times
Rais'd by desert to bright immortal thrones,
Suspend awhile their task of heav'nly praise
In ministry unseen to hover round them!
Protect aspiring virtue like their own,
And in their bosoms breathe resistless ardour!

[*Exit.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Apartments of Velasquez, in the palace of the Vice-Queen.*

VELASQUEZ and PIZARRO discovered.

Pizarro. You seem disturb'd.*Velasq.* With reason. Dull Braganza Must have been tutor'd: at our interview I practis'd every supple artifice That glides into man's bosom; the return Was blank reserve, ambiguous compliment, And hatred thinly veil'd by ceremony.*Pizarro.* Might I presume—*Velasq.* *Pizarro,* I am stung: His father Theodosius, that proud prince, Who durst avow his enmity to Philip, And menac'd thunders at my destin'd head, With all his empty turbulence of rage Could never move me like the calm disdain Of this cold-blooded Juan.*Pizarro.* Then, my lord, Your purpose holds?*Velasq.* It does: I will dispatch This tow'ring Duke, who keeps the cheek of Spain

Pale with perpetual danger.

Pizarro. For what end?

Unconscious of his fate, he blindly speeds To find a grave in Spain. Why, then, resolve To spill that blood, which elsewhere will be shed Without your crime or peril?

Velasq. That's the question.

Were I assur'd they meant his death, 'twere needless:

But when they draw him once from Portugal, Where only he is dangerous, then, perhaps, Their fears or lenity may let him live; And while he lives, my fiery course is check'd, My sun climbs slowly, never can ascend To its meridian brightness.

Pizarro. Still, my lord,

My short lin'd wisdom cannot sound your depth.

Velasq. I mean to tell thee all, for thou may'st aid me,

And thy tried faith deserves my confidence.

Pizarro. I am your own for ever, your kind hand,

Bounteous beyond my merit, planted here Favours innumerable.

Velasq. Think them little:

As earnest, not the acquittal of my love. The enormous wealth of Juan's royal house, His large domains, extended influence, His numerous vassals so have swell'd his state, That were his means but push'd to one great end, How easy might he wreat this realm from Spain, And brave King Philip's rage!

Pizarro. Good, careless prince!

Mild and uxorious! No ambitious dream Disturbs his tranquil slumber.

Velasq. Just his nature:

On household wing he flutters round the roof, That with the princely eagle might have soar'd And met the dazzling sun.—Now, by his death, (My engine cannot fail, this night he meets it,) His wealth, his mightiness, his followers, Become Louisa's dower. What think'st thou now?

Could I but win her to accept my hand, (And much my art will move, and more my power.)

Might not our union, like the impetuous course Of bleeding torrents, break all feeble mounds Spain could oppose to bar me from the crown? That once obtain'd, let Olivarez rail,

Let his inglorious master call me traitor; I'll scorn their idle fury.

Pizarro. Still I fear

Louisa's heart, cold and impenetrable, To all but Juan's love, will own no second, Tho' big ambition swells her female breast Beyond the sex's softness.

Velasq. My hope rests

Even on that favourite passion: grief, at first, Will drive her far from love; a second flame Perhaps may ne'er rekindle in her heart; Yet, give her momentary frenzy soope, It wastes itself; ambition then regains Its wonted force, and winds her to my lure. But come, I must not lose these precious moments;

The fates are busy now: what's yet untold, There place thyself and learn. Take heed you move not. (*Pizarro retires.*)

Without there! ho!

*Enter an Officer.**Officer.* What is your lordship's pleasure?*Velasq.* Attends the monk, Ramirez?*Officer.* He does, my lord.*Velasq.* Conduct him in and leave us. [*Exit Officer.*]*Enter RAMIREZ.*

You are welcome, Most welcome, reverend father! Pray, draw near:

We have a business for your privacy, Of an especial nature; the circling air Should not partake it, nor the babbling winds, Lest their invisible wings disperse one breath Of that main secret, which thy faithful bosom Is only fit to treasure.

Ramirez. Good my lord,

I am no common talker.

Velasq. Well I know it,

And therefore chose thee from the brotherhood, Not one of whom but would lay by all thoughts Of earth and heaven, and fly to execute What I, the voice of Spain, commission'd him.

Ramirez. Vouchsafe directly to unfold your will,

My deeds, and not my words, must prove my duty.

Velasq. Nay, trust me, could they but divine my purpose,

The holiest be, that wastes the midnight lamp In prayers and penance, would prevent my tongue

And hear me thank the deed, but not persuade it. Therefore, good friend, 'tis not necessity, That sometimes forces any present means, And chequers chance with wisdom, but free will, The election of my judgment and my love, That gives thy aptness this pre-eminence.

Ramirez. The state, I know, has store of instruments,

Like well-rang'd arms in ready order plac'd, Each for its several use.

Velasq. Observe me well;

Think not I mean to snatch a thankless office; Who serves the state, while I direct her helm, Commands my friendship, and his own reward. Say, can you be content in these poor weeds, To know no earthly hopes beyond a cloister? But stretch'd on musty mats in noisome caves, To rouse at midnight bells, and mutter prayers For souls beyond their reach, to senseless saints? To wage perpetual war with nature's bounty? To blacken sick men's chambers, and be number'd

With the loath'd leavings of mortality,

The watch-light, hour-glass, and the nauseous phial?

Are these the ends of life? Was this fine frame,
Nerves exquisitely textur'd, soft desires,
Aspiring thoughts, this comprehensive soul,
With all her train of god-like faculties,
Given to be sunk in this vile drudgery?

Ramirez. These are the hard conditions of our state.

We sow our humble seeds with toil on earth,
To reap the harvest of our hopes in heaven.

Velasq. Yet wiser they who trust no future chance,

But make this earth a heaven. Raise thy eyes
Up to the temporal splendours of our church;
Behold our priors, prelates, cardinals;
Survey their large revenues, princely state,
Their palaces of marble, beds of down,
Their statues, pictures, baths, luxurious tables,
That shame the fabled banquets of the gods.
See how they weary art, and ransack nature,
To leave no taste, no wish ungratified.
Now, if thy spirit shrink not, I can raise thee
To all this pomp and greatness. Pledge thy faith.

Swear thou wilt do this thing, whate'er I urge,
And Lisbon's envied crozier shall be thine.

Ramirez. This goodness, so transcending all my hopes,

Confounds my astonish'd sense. Whate'er it be
Within the compass of man's power to act,
I here devote me to the execution.

Velasq. I must not hear of conscience and nice scruples,

Tares that abound in none but meagre soils,
To choke the aspiring seeds of manly daring;
Those puny instincts which, in feeble minds,
Unfit for great exploits, are miscall'd virtue.

Ramirez. Still am I lost in dark uncertainty;
And must for ever wander, till thy breath
Deign to dispel the impenetrable mist,
Fooling my sight that strives in vain to pierce it.

Velasq. You are the Duke of Braganza's confessor,

And fame reports him an exact observer
Of all our church's holy ceremonies.
He still is wont, whene'er he visits Lisbon,
Ere grateful slumber seal his pious lids,
With all due reverence, from some priestly hand
To take the mystic symbol of our faith.

Ramirez. It ever was his custom, and this night
I am commanded to attend his leisure
With preparation for the solemn act.

Velasq. I know it. Take thou this: (gives him a box) it holds a wafer

Of sovereign virtue to enfranchise souls,
Too righteous for this world, from mortal cares.
A monk of Milan mix'd the deadly drug,
Drawn from the quintessence of noxious plants,
Minerals and poisonous creatures, whose dull bane

Arrests the nimble current of life's tide,
And kills without a pang.

Ramirez. I knew him well,
The Carmelite Castruccio, was it not?

Velasq. The same; he first approv'd it on a wretch

Condemn'd for murder to the ling'ring wheel,
This night commit it to Braganza's lips.

Had he a heart of iron, giant strength,
The antidotes of Pontus, all were vain,
To struggle with the venom's potency.

Ramirez. This night, my lord?

Velasq. This very night; nay, shrink not,
Unless thou mean'st to take the lead in death,
And pull thy own destruction on thy head.

Ramirez. Give me a moment's pause. A deed like this—

Velasq. Should be at once resolv'd and executed.

Think'at thou I am a raw, unpractic'd novice,
To make thy breast a partner to the trust,
And not thy hand accomplice of the crime?

Why, 'tis the bond for my security.

Look not amaz'd, but mark me heedfully:

Thou hast thy choice—dispatch mine enemy,
(The means are in thy hand,) be safe and great;
Or instantly prepare thee for a death.

Which nothing but compliance can avert.

Ramirez. Numbers, I know, even thus have tasted death,

But, sure, imagination scarce can form
A way so horrid, impious!

Velasq. How's this, how's this?

Hear me, pale miscreant, my rage once rous'd,
That hell thou dread'st this moment shall receive thee.

Look here and tremble!

(Draws a dagger and seizes him.)

Ramirez. My lord, be not so rash;
Your fury's deaf. Will you not hear me speak?
By ev'ry hope that cheers, all vows that bind,
Whatever horror waits upon the act,
Your will shall make it justice: I'm resolv'd.

Velasq. No trifling, monk; take heed, for should'st thou fail—

Ramirez. Then be my life the forfeit. My obedience

Not only follows from your high command,
But that my bosom swells against this Duke
With the full sense of my own injuries.

Velasq. Enough; I thank thee. Let me know betimes

How we have prosper'd. Hence, retire with caution;

Deserve my favour, and then meet me boldly.

[Exit Ramirez.]

'Tis done! His doom is seal'd. Come forth,

Pizarro. (Pizarro comes forward.)

Is't not a subtle mischief?

Pizarro. Past all praise;

The holy tool had qualms.

Velasq. But this dispell'd them,

(Pointing to his dagger.)

And fortified the coward by his fears.

His work perform'd, I mean to end him, too.

Say, is my barge prepar'd as I commanded?

Pizarro. All is prepar'd, my lord.

Velasq. The friends of Juan,

(I'll tell thee as we pass) they shall not long
Survive to lift their crests so high in Lisbon.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—The Castle of Almada.

Enter ALMADA and an Attendant.

Almada. Good Perez, see that none to-night
have entrance

But such whose names are written in that roll,
And bid thy fellows from the northern tower,
Choose each a faction, and prepare to follow
Where I at dawn will lead.

Attendant. I will, my lord.

Almada. Wait near the gate thyself, nor stir
from thence

Without my summons.

Attendant. Trust my vigilance.

[Exit.]

Almada. Now rayless midnight flings her sable
pall

Athwart the horizon, and with pond'rous mace,
In dead repose weighs down o'er-labour'd nature;
While we, the busy instruments of fate,
Unmindful of her season, wake like ghosts,
To add new horrors to the shadowy scene.

Enter ANTONIO.

Antonio. Health to Almada!

Almada. Thus to meet, Antonio,
Is the best health, the soundness of the mind.
Better at this dark hour to embrace th' arms
Thus girt for manly execution, friend,
Than in the mazes of the wanton dance,
Or revelling o'er bowls in frantic mirth,
To keep inglorious vigils.
Antonio. True, my lord.

Enter RIBIRO with LEMOS and COREA.

Almada. Oh! soul of honour! ever, ever constant!
(*To Ribiro.*)

These are the worthy citizens, our friends—

Ribiro. And such as laurell'd Rome might well have own'd

(*Presenting Lemos and Corea.*)

Worthy to fill her magisterial chairs,
When reverence bow'd to virtue tho' untitled.

Almada. As such I take their hands; nay, more,
as such

Their grateful country will rejoice to own them.
Are we all met?

Antonio. Mendoza is not here,
Nor Roderic; and Mello, too, is absent.

Almada. They were not wont to be thus waited for.

Ribiro. Anon they will be here; meantime proceed.

They know their place already.

Almada. Why we meet,
Is not to canvass our opprobrious wrongs,
But to redress them. Yet as trumpets sound
To rouse the soldier's ardour, so the breath
Of our calamities will wake our fires,
And fan them to spread wide the flame of vengeance.

'Tis not my gift to play the orator,
But in plain words to lay our state before you.
Our tyrant's grandsire, whose ambition claim'd,
And first usurp'd Braganza's royal rights,
By blood establish'd his detested sway.
Old Tagus blush'd with many a crimson tide,
Stuic'd from the noblest veins of Portugal.
The exterminating sword knew no distinction.
Princes and prelates, venerable age,
Matrons, and helpless virgins fell together,
Till cloy'd and sick of slaughter, the tir'd soldier,
With grim content, flung down his reeking steel,
And glutted rage gave truce to massacre.

Ribiro. Nor pass'd the iron rod to milder hands
Through two succeeding reigns. With cruel zeal

The barbarous offspring emulate their sire,
And track his bloody footsteps in our ruin.

Almada. Now mark how happily the time conspires

To give our great achievement permanence;
Spain is not what she was when Europe bow'd
To the fifth Charles, and his degenerate son;
When, like a torrent swell'd by mountain floods,
She swept the neighbouring nations with her arms,

And threaten'd those remote; contracted now
Within an humble bed, the thrifty urn
Of her exhausted greatness scarce can pour
A lazy tide through her own mould'ring states.

Ribiro. Yes, the Colossus totters, every blast
Shakes the stupendous mass and threatens its downfall.

Enter MENDOZA.

Mendoza. Break off, break off; the fatal snare is spread,
And death's pale hand assists to close the toil.

Almada. Whence this dread greeting? Ha! thy alter'd cheek

Wears not the ensign of this glowing hour.

Mendoza. The scream of night-owls, or the raven's croak

Would better suit the baleful news I bring
Than the known accents of a friendly voice.

We are undone, betray'd?

Almada. Say'st thou, betray'd?

Mendoza. Our tower is sapp'd; the high rais'd fabric falls

To crush us with the ruin. What avails

The full maturity of all our hopes?

This glorious league? the justice of our cause?

High heaven might idly thunder off our side,

If traitors to ourselves—

Almada. Ourselves! Oh, shame!

I'll not believe it. What perfidious slaves—

Mendoza. Two whom we thought the sinews of our strength,
Don Roderic and Mello.

Ribiro. Lightnings blast them!

May infamy record their dastard names,
And vulgar villains shun their fellowship!

These hot, loud brawlers—

Mendoza. Are the slaves of Spain,

And bargain for the price of perfidy.

On to the wharf, with quick, impatient step,

I saw Velasquez press, and in his train
These lurking traitors. Now, even now, they cross

The ebbing Tagus in the tyrant's barge,
And hasten to the fort. The troops of Spain,
Even while we speak, are summon'd to the charge,

And mark us for their prey.

Almada. Nay, then, 'tis past.

Malignant fortune, when the cup was rais'd

Close to our lips, has dash'd it to the ground.

Ribiro. This unexpected bolt strikes flat our hopes,

And leaves one dreary desolation round us.

I see their hangmen muster; wolf-ey'd cruelty,

Grimly sedate, glares o'er her iron board

Of racks, wheels, engines, feels her axe's edge,

Licks her fell jaws, and with a monster's thirst,

Already drinks her blood.

Mendoza. There's not a pang
That rends the fibres of man's feeling frame,
No vile disgrace, that even in thought o'erspreads
The cheek with burning crimson, but her hate,
Ingenious to devise, and sure to inflict,
In keenest agony will make us suffer.

Almada. Would that were all! Our dismal scene must close;

Nature o'erpower'd, at length will leave her load,

And baffle persecution: but, oh! Portugal,

Alas! unhappy country, where's the bourn

Can mark the extent of thy calamities.

Like winter's icy hand our luckless end

Will freeze the source of future enterprise:

Oppression, then, o'er the devoted realm,

Erect and bold, will stalk with tenfold ravage.

There, there alone, this breast is vulnerable;

These are the wheels that wrenoh, the racks that tear me.

Antonio. But are there left no means to elude the danger?

Why do we linger here? Why not resolve
To save ourselves by flight?

Mendoza. Impossible!

The guards, no doubt, are set; the port is barr'd.

Almada. Fly, Lemos, to the people, and restrain

Their generous ardour. It would now break forth
Useless to us, and fatal to themselves.

[*Exit Lemos.*

You to the Duke, Ribiro. In our names,

(Perhaps our last request,) by our lost fortunes,
By all our former friendship, oh! conjure him
To save our richest treasure from the wreck,
Nor hazard, in a desperate enterprise,
His country's last, best hope, his val'd life.

Ribiro. Support him, heaven, and arm his piety

To bear this sad vicissitude with patience. [*Exit.*

Almada. And yet we will not meet in vain, brave friends;

We came with better hopes, resolv'd like men
To struggle for our freedom. What remains?

A greater power than mortals can arraign,
Has otherwise decreed it. Speak, my brothers,

Now doubly dear in stern adversity;

Say, shall we glut the spoiler with our blood,

Submit to the vile insults of their law,

To have our honest dust by ruffian hands

Given to the winds? Is this the doom that waits

us?

Mendoza. Alas! what better doom? To ask for mercy
Were ignominious, to expect it bootless.

Almada. To ask for mercy! Could Spain stretch
my life

To years beyond the telling, for one tear,

One word, in sign of sorrow, I'd disdain it.

Death still is in our pow'r, and we'll die nobly,

As soldiers should do, red with well-earn'd
wounds,

And stretch'd on heaps of slaughter'd enemies.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Chamber in the Duke of Braganza's Palace.

DUTCHESS OF BRAGANZA discovered.

Dutchess. Oh! thou Supreme Disposer of the world!

If from my childhood to this awful now,
I've bent with meek submission to thy will,
Send to this feeling bosom one bless'd beam
Of that bright emanation, which inspires
True confidence in thee, to calm the throbs
That heave this bosom for my husband's safety,
And with immortal spirit to exalt
Above all partial ties our country's love.

Enter RIBIRO, hastily.

Ribiro. Where is the Duke? Oh! pardon, gracious madam.

Dutchess. What means this haste and these distracted looks?

Ribiro. Detain me not; but lead me to my lord:

His life, perhaps—nay your—

Dutchess. His life! Oh, heavens!

Tell me, Ribiro—speak!

Ribiro. Too soon, alas!

You'll hear it. Ask not now, dear lady,

What I've scarce breath to utter.—Where's the Duke?

Dutchess. This moment, with his confessor retir'd,

I left him in his closet.

Ribiro. 'Tis no time

All must give place to this dire urgency.

Even while we speak—A moment's precious now—

He must be interrupted—Guide me to him.

Dutchess. Suspense is ling'ring death. Come on, I'll lead you. [*Exeunt.*

Enter RAMIREZ.

Ramirez. Oh! welcome interruption. Pitying heaven,

Awhile at least, arrests the murd'rous deed,

And gives a moment's respite from damnation.

Is there a hell beyond this war of conscience?

My blood runs backward, and my tottering knees

Refuse to bear their sacrilegious load.

Methought the statues of his ancestors,

As I pass'd by them, shook their marble heads;

His father's picture seem'd to frown in wrath,

And its eye pierce me, while I trembling stood

Assassin-like before it.—Hush! I'm summon'd.

Re-enter DUTCHESS OF BRAGANZA.

Dutchess. Get you to rest, good father. Fare you well!

Some unexpected business of the state

Demands my lord's attention. For this night

Your holy function must be unperform'd

Till more convenient season.

Ramirez. Holy function! (*Aside.*)

I humbly take my leave, and will not fail

To recommend you in my prayers to heaven.

[*Exit.*

Dutchess. The heavens, I fear, are shut, and will not hear them.

Now gush my tears; now break at once my heart!

While in my Juan's presence, I suppress'd

The bursting grief; but here give nature way!

Is there a hope? Oh, no! All horrible.

My children, too—their little lives—My husband—

I conquer'd his reluctance; I persuaded

By every power his boundless passion gave me:

I thought it virtue, too. Mysterious heaven!

Then I, and only I, have work'd his ruin.

Enter DUKE OF BRAGANZA.

Duke. Alas! my love, why must thy Juan seek thee?

Why dost thou shun me at this awful moment?

The few sad hours our destiny permits,

Should sure be spent together.

Dutchess. Must we part, then?

Duke. I fear we must for ever in this world,

Till that great power who fashion'd us in life,

Unites us once again no more to sever;

In those bless'd regions of eternal peace,

Where sorrow never enters; where thy truth,

Thy unexampled fortitude and sweetness,

Will meet their full reward.

Dutchess. Where is the friend

Who rung our dismal knell?

Duke. Good, generous man!

Assur'd of death, yet careless of his life,

And anxious but for us, he is return'd,

To know what our brave leaders will determine:

Yet what can they determine but to die?

Our numbers poorly arm'd, undisciplin'd,

May fight and fall with desperate obstinacy,

For valour can no more; but, oh! Louisa,

Friends, country, life itself, seem little:

One sharp, devouring grief consumes the rest,

And makes thee all its object.

Dutchess. My dear husband!

These soft endearments, this excess of fondness,

Strike deeper to my soul, than all the pangs

The subtlest vengeance could contrive to wound

me.

Oh! fly me, hate me, call me murderess!

'Tis I have driven thee to this precipice;

I urge the ruffian hand of law to seize thee;

I drag thee to the block; I lift the axe,

(Oh, agony!) Louisa dooms thee dead!

Duke. 'Tis anguish insupportable to hear thee
Add self-upbraidings to our misery.
Thou my destroyer! No, my best Louisa;
Thou art my guardian angel. At this hour,
This dreadful hour, 'tis safety to be near thee.
Those dastards who betray'd our brave design,
(That baseness which no caution could prevent,
Nor wisdom could foresee,) 'twas that undid us.
I will not curse them: yet I swear by honour,
Thus hunted to the utmost verge of fate,
Without one ray of hope to cheer the danger,
I would not barter this dire certainty,
For that ignoble life those bad men purchase
By perfidy and vileness.

Dutchess. Oh! two such—
But indignation wants a tongue to name them.
How was their fury thunder'd on our side!
Their youthful veins full of Patrician blood
Insulted by Velasquez; stripp'd by Spain
Of all the ancient honours of their house;
Sworn at the altar to assert this cause
By holiest adjurations: yet these two
To turn apostates. Can this fleeting breath,
This transitory, frail, uncertain being,
Be worth so vast a ransom?

Duke. Yes; to cowards,
Such ever be the proselytes of Spain:
Leave them to scorn. Fain would I turn my
thoughts

From this bad world; shake off the clogs of
earth,
And for that great tribunal arm my soul,
Where heaven, not Spain, must judge me.—But in
vain;
My soften'd mind still hangs on those bless'd
days;

Those years of sweet tranquility and peace,
When smiling morn but wak'd us to new joys,
And love at night shed blessings on our pillow.

Dutchess. Those hours are fled, and never can
return:

'Tis heaven's high will, and be that will obeyed:
The retrospect of past felicity
Plucks not the barbed arrow from the wound,
But makes it rankle deeper. Come, my Juan,
Here bid adieu to this infectious grief;
Let's knit our constancy to meet the trial.
Shall we be bold in words, mere moral talkers?
Declaim with pedant tongue in virtue's praise,
Yet find no comfort, no support within,
From her bright energy? It comes, it comes!
I feel my breast dilate. The phantom, death,
Shrinks at the radiant vision; bright ey'd hope
Bids us aspire, and points the shining throne.
Spain, I defy thee!

Duke. Oh! would she hew the elm,
And spare the tender vine, this stubborn trunk
Should brave her fury. Here is royal blood,
And blood long thirsted for. They cannot dare,
Insatiate as they are, remorseless, savage,
With sacrilegious hands to violate
This beauteous sanctuary. Let me not think.
Distraction! horror! Oh! it splits my brain,
Rends every vital string, and tears my heart.
Mercy can grant no more, nor I petition,
Than to fall dead this instant, and forget it.
I look towards heaven in vain. Gape wide, oh!
earth,

And bury, bury deep this load of anguish.

Dutchess. Be not so lost. Hear, oh! hear me,
Juan,

My lord, my life, my love! Wilt thou not speak?
He heeds me not. What shall I say to move
him?

For pity's sake look up! Oh! think, Braganza,
Could Spain behold thee thus—

Duke. Oh! no, Louisa;
No eye shall see me melt. I will be calm,

Still, silent, motionless! Oh! tough, tough heart,
Would I could weep to ease thee!

Dutchess. Here, weep here;
Pour the warm stream into this faithful breast;
Thy sorrows here shall find a kindred source,
Which flows for every tear with drops of blood.
Now summon all thy soul. Behold, he comes
To thunder our irrevocable doom.

Enter RIBIRO.

Ribiro. Oh! for an angel's organ to proclaim
Such gratulations as no tongue can speak,
Nor mortal breast conceive—joy, boundless joy!

Duke. Am I awake? Thou canst not mean to
mock me.

Ribiro. I shall go wild with transport. On my
knee,

I beg you to forgive the cruel shock
This tongue (heaven knows with what severe
reluctance!)

So lately gave to all your dearest hopes.

Duke. No; let me take that posture: for I
swear,

Though yet I know not why, my lighten'd heart
Beats freer, and seems eas'd of half its burthen.
Forgive my strong impatience—quickly tell me.

Ribiro. Still ignorant of our intended vengeance,
Velasquez is return'd. Our gallant friends
Were wrong'd by rash suspicion.

Duke. Hear I right?
Or is 't illusion all? (*Embracing him.*) Thus let me
thank thee.

Louisa, then, is safe. Fountain of mercy!
These late despairing arms again enfold her,—
My queen, my love, my wife!

Dutchess. Flow, flow my tears;
Take, bounteous lord of all! this melting tribute;
My heart can give no more for all thy goodness.

Duke. And now disclose this wonder.

Ribiro. Thus, my lord,
When, at the appointed time, our two brave
friends

Were hast'ning to Almada, near the square,
Velasquez and his followers cross'd their steps,
Their course seem'd towards the river; struck
with fear,

And ignorant what cause, at that late hour,
Could draw him from the palace, straight they
chang'd

Their first intent of joining our assembly,
And, unobserv'd, pursu'd the attending train.
Think what these brave men suffer'd when they
saw

The tyrant climb his barge, and push from shore.
Their swords were half unsheath'd, both half re-
solv'd

To rush at once, and pierce him to the heart;
But prudence, or our fortune, check'd their hands.

Duke. It had been certain ruin. But go on.

Ribiro. An instant pass'd in thought, they seiz'd
a boat,

And, following, anxious hung on all his motions:
Mendoza saw them thus; then hurrying back,
Fill'd us with consternation at the tidings.

Dutchess. Nor was it strange; it wore a dread-
ful aspect;

But fear interprets all things to its danger.

Ribiro. He cross'd the river where Tago's fort
Commands the narrowing stream. The governor
Attended at the gate; a while there pass'd
In short but earnest converse; they took leave;
With hasty strides Velasquez reimbark'd;
The vessel, to the shore she left, return'd,
And her proud master sought again the palace.

Dutchess. Could not our valiant friends discover
aught

That might reveal his purpose?

Ribiro. Madam, no.

To have inquir'd too near were dangerous;
Besides, their haste to reassure our hopes,
Press'd their return. But thus we may resolve:
He apprehends some danger imminent.
He sees above his head the gathering cloud,
But knows not when 'twill burst in thunder on
him.

Duke. Thanks, gentle friend. Alas! I tremble
still:

As just escap'd from shipwreck, I look round;
And, tho' I tread on earth,—firm, solid earth,—
See with broad eye the threat'ning surge far off:
Scarce can I credit my conflicting sense,
Or trust our preservation.

Dutchess. Thy glad tale
Has rais'd me from the gulph of black despair,
Even to the topmost pinnacle of joy.
Yes, we shall conquer! All these dangers past
Will serve but to enrich the future story:
Our children's children shall recount each fear,
And, from the mingled texture of our lives,
Learn to revere that sacred Providence,
That guides the strife of virtue.

Duke. Oh! Louisa,
I thought I knew the extent of all my fondness;
That long acquaintance with thy wondrous virtue
Had given thee such dominion o'er my soul,
Time could not add to my transcendent passion:
But when the danger came, it wak'd new fires;
Presented thee in softer loveliness,
And twin'd thee closer here.

Ribiro. My lord, ere this,
Our friends expect me.

Duke. Let us fly to meet them:
I long to pour into their generous breasts
My cordial greeting.

Dutchess. Go, my dearest Juan;
To them and all commend me. Such rare zeal
Merits more recompense than our poor thanks
Can, at the best, requite: for souls like theirs,
I'll brook the indignity of foul surmise;
And virtue wrong'd demands a double homage.

Duke. If the good augury of my breast deceive
not,

No more such terrors will appal our souls;
But guilt alone shall tremble. Come, Ribiro.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—The Castle of Almada.

ALMADA and several Conspirators, as before, with
MELLO and RODERIC.

Almada. Again our hopes revive: the unloaded
stem
Shakes the wet tempest from its vigorous head,
And rears the swelling harvest to our sight.

Mendoza. After the chillings of this anguish fear,
Methinks I breathe more free; the vital stream,
In sprightlier tides, flows through its wonted
course.

Warms my whole frame, and doubly mans my
heart.

Almada. And may the generous ardour spread
to all.

Observe me, friends: our numbers must divide
Into four equal bands, all to attack,
At the bell's signal, the four palace gates.

So, every passage barr'd, the foe in vain
May strive to unite, and overwhelm our force.
Myself, with the brave few who have sworn to
follow,

Will rush impetuous on the German guard,
Who, at the northern entrance, hold their station.
The fort be Roderic and Mello's care,

With Ferdinand, Henriques, and Antonio.
Mendoza, Carlos, and their gallant troop,
Must seize the regent Margaret, and secure
The counsellors of Spain as hostages
For the surrender of the citadel.

Mendoza. Letters to every province are dispers'd
Importing this great change, and all are ready
To shake to earth the intolerable yoke.
Nay, distant India, in her sultry mines,
Shall hear the cheerful sound of liberty;
Again fair commerce, welcom'd to our shore,
Shall loose her swelling canvas to the winds,
And golden Tagus heave once more to meet her.
But see, the Duke.

Enter DUKE OF BRAGANZA.

Almada. Your unexpected presence,
Like a propitious omen, cheers the night,
And gives a royal sanction to this meeting.

Duke. My wish surpass'd my speed. A call like
this
Might imp the tardiness of feeble age.
The general perseverance in our cause
Transcends all gratitude; but these wrong'd vir-
tues— (To Mello and Roderic.)

Mello. Pray, forbear;
The painful error brought its punishment.
Ribiro bore our duties to your grace?

Duke. He did, and soon will join us. On our
way,
He left me with design once more to view
The posture of the guards; for still we fear
Some dark, impending mischief from Velasquez.

Almada. Whatever fortune waits upon our
swords,
Your highness must not share the common haz-
ard;

Lest, in the tumult, some inglorious chance
Deprive your country of its last best bulwark.

Duke. And should I merit to be call'd her bul-
wark,
Or rank with men like you, could I submit
To hear, and not partake the glorious danger?

Almada. Pray, be advis'd; in this I must com-
mand.

Duke. Then be it so: but yet should aught be-
tide

To claim the interest of thy prince's arm,
I cannot wrong our friendship to suspect
You will forbear my summons to the field.

Almada. Trust your Almada. Lo! the night
wears fast;
Nor are our scatter'd numbers yet return'd.

Enter RIBIRO.

Duke. Welcome, Ribiro! What intelligence?

Ribiro. The worst, if we delay. Oh! had your
eyes

Beheld the sight that blasted mine—

Duke. What sight?

Ribiro. Lemos is seiz'd this moment; and Pi-
zarro,
The ready tool of fell Velasquez' crimes,
Leads him to prison.

Duke. Soon we'll wrench the gates,
And from their gloomy caverns draw to light
All that remains of those unhappy men,
Whom, unarraign'd, unheard, the tyrant's nod
Consign'd to horrors nature shakes to think of.

Almada. His triumph will be short. The subtle
fiend

May league with hell to thwart us; but in vain:
His fate or ours will quickly be decided.

Ribiro. Even now it seems his demon whispers
him
His audit is at hand, and scares his soul.

Anxious at this late hour, he walks his chamber,
Nor seeks the season's rest; and, still more
strange,
The palace guards, stretch'd by their glimmering
fires,
Their arms cast by, lie wrapp'd in thoughtless
sleep.

Duke. Anon, we'll rouse them with so loud a
peal,
That death's dull ear shall hear it.

Almada. Cores!
Soon as our work begins, your hardy tribes
Must thro' the streets proclaim Don Juan king.
Press towards the palace; should our friends give
ground,
Sustain their fainting strength.

Corea. We will not fail.
Almada. The general suffrage to thy sword, Ri-
biro,

Commits our master work; a deed so envied
That ev'ry trenchant steel of Portugal
(Did not thy gallant zeal demand it first)
Would strike to share the glory.

Ribiro. This shall thank you;
(Pointing to his sword.)

And if it reek not with his hated blood,
Exchange it for a distaff.

Almada. Friends, I mean not,
By gloomy presage, to allay your ardour.
We must not look to fortune in this cause;
But on ourselves rely for sure success:
The least disorder in our bold approach,
The least repulse, may drive our engine back.
One brave man's rashness, or one coward's fear,
Turns all our fairest hopes to shame and ruin.

Duke. Now to our stations. Yet, ere we de-
part,

This honest pledge, the soldier's short embrace:
The sweet remembrance, if we fall for freedom,
Will more than soften half the pains of dying;
But if we meet, in stronger clasps renew'd,
Will double all the joys of victory. [Exit.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—The Apartments of Velasquez in the
royal palace.

VELASQUEZ discovered.

Velasq. Why am I hunted by these phantom
fears?

It cannot be my fate. 'Tis nature's weakness.
The spirits rais'd too high, like billows puff'd
By sudden storms, lift up our little bark,
Then slipping from their burthen, sink as fast,
And leave it wreck'd and found'ring.

Enter PIZARRO.

Have you, as I commanded, question'd Lemos?

Pizarro. Just now I left him.
Velasq. Has the slave confess'd?

Pizarro. With sullen calmness he defies your
power,
Or answers but with scorn.

Velasq. We'll find the means
To make him speak more plainly; to bring down
This daring spirit. He is dangerous;
And, under the fair mask of public virtue,
Combines with proud Almada and the rest
In dark confederacy against my state.

Pizarro. He is, my lord, the master-spring that
moves

The factious populace.
Velasq. I know it well;

But I have ta'en such care, as shall unbinge
Their ill-contriv'd designs. Ere noon, to-morrow,
Don Garcia, with the Spanish veterans
From Saint Jago's fortress, shall pour in,
And bend those stubborn necks to due obedience.
How will their disappointed fury rave,
To find their royal demagogue, Braganza,
(The idol their vain worship rais'd so high!)
Low levell'd with the earth.—I wonder much
Ramirez not returns: night's latest watch
Will soon be told.

Pizarro. Perhaps he but delays
(For better welcome) to behold the effect
Of the dire venom, and to glad your ears
By telling how your enemy expir'd.

Velasq. It may be so, I cannot doubt the ef-
fect:

Poison administer'd will do its work,
And that most speedily: 'tis swift perdition.
Yet, tho' this hour cuts off my greatest foe,
If my firm soul were capable of fear,
I might distrust the promise of my fortunes.

Pizarro. Wherefore, my lord?
Velasq. I almost blush to tell it:—

Tir'd with the travail of this anxious night,
I threw me on my couch, and try'd to rest;
I try'd in vain; my vex'd lids scarcely clos'd;
Or when a momentary slumber seal'd them,
Strange visions swam before their twilight sense.
But why retrace the hideous phantasy?
Yet still it hovers round me, still remains
A faithful reverence of the past illusion.

Pizarro. Such reverence but degrades a noble
mind,
And sinks its vigour to an infant's weakness.
Beldams and priests infuse these idle fears,
And turn the milk of nature to its bane.

(Noise at a distance.)
Velasq. Heard you that noise! Didst thou not
mark, Pizarro?

The monk has kept his word—'tis Juan's knell:
His followers, who shouted him at noon,
Now wail his death. My genius now has room;
Their sorrows are my triumph, and proclaim
Assur'd success to my aspiring soul.

Pizarro. Sure, 'tis the din of clashing arms—
Again!—
It comes this way.

Enter an Officer, with his sword drawn.

Velasq. Ha! bleeding! Speak:
Know you the cause? Speak; instant speak.
Officer. Too well.

The raging multitude have for'd their way;
Their cry is, "Where's the tyrant? where's Ve-
lasquez?"

Don Juan's at their head, and guides the storm.

Velasq. Juan alive! Eternal silence seize thee!
Impossible!

Officer. These eyes, my lord, beheld him;
Saw his rais'd arm—

Velasq. Ha! am I then betray'd!
Perdition catch Ramirez! You, Pizarro,
Collect my scatter'd train—I'll forth, and meet
The rebel's sword.

Pizarro. Be not so rash,
Nor venture lightly. [Exit Velasquez.

Officer. He rushes on his death.
Two of my soldiers are already slain,
Striving to bar the outward palace gates;
Where, like a tide, the frantic people press,
Beating down all before them.

Pizarro. Hence; begone!
The uproar's louder—Wake the sleeping grooms;
Bid them bring arms—Alarm the magistrates—
Send to the guard, and draw them to the square.

[Exit Officer.]

Re-enter VELASQUEZ.

Velasq. Rain'd! undone! all's lost! The streets
are throng'd
With raging citizens. A furious band
Of armed Portuguese just now are mounting.
Fate's bloody book is open'd, and I read
My dreadful doom. Yet, I'll not tamely yield;
But grapple to the last with destiny.

Pizarro. All is not lost; perhaps some means
are left.

Velasq. Just at the gate, I met the dastard monk
Struggling for entrance: scarce his breath suffic'd
To tell me that our purpose had miscarried,
And Juan lives, I stab'd him to the heart;
The best reward for unperforming fear.

Pizarro. Think not of him; but save yourself
by flight.

Velasq. Where can I fly? I am beset, de-
voted—

Our foes, like famish'd blood-hounds, are abroad,
And have us in the wind.

Pizarro. Resolve at once.

The postern's yet unforc'd; that way escape:
Disguise yourself, and fly to Juan's palace;
'Tis but the terrace length; implore his mercy:
It is the foolish weakness of his nature
To spare where he may punish.

Velasq. Ask my life!

No, rather let me perish. Hold! his wife—
Perhaps alone, unguarded. If I fall,
I'll leave a scorpion in the traitor's breast,
Shall make him curse the hour he roas'd my fury.

[*Exit.*]

Pizarro. Now let the tempest rise. Oh! sickle
fortune,
This moment mounted to thy giddy top,
Now whirl'd to earth, and grov'ling—Hark! they
come.

Enter RIBIRO, with other Conspirators.

Ribiro. Search all the chambers. If the villain
'scape,
Our work's but half accomplish'd.

Pizarro. Pass no further.

Ribiro. This is the tyrant's counsellor.
Where is thy master, Spaniard?

Pizarro. Safe, I hope,
From lawless rage like thine; and still will live
To punish this outrageous violence.

Ribiro. Insolent slave! and yet I like thy cou-
rage.

'Tis vain to strive, deliver up thy sword.
I will not force thee to betray thy master,
Perfidious as he is: even in a foe,
I can discern a virtue, and esteem it.
Gonzalez, guard him safe; the rest disperse,
And leave no place unsearch'd. He must be
found;
But by your loves, I charge you kill him not:
Rob not my sword, but leave that stroke for me.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Duke of Braganza's Palace.*

*Enter DUTCHESS OF BRAGANZA; an Attendant
following.*

Dutchess. No, Ines, no; I love my husband
much,

But more his honour. Could I press his stay
In tame inaction here to wait the event,
While almost in his sight, his crown and glory
Hang on the doubtful fate of others' swords?
Would he have heard me? No, I knew him better.
Soon as Almada's danger reach'd his ear,
Who twice repuls'd could scarce renew the charge,
Swift as a jav'lin cuts the whistling air,
He snatch'd his sword, and breaking from my
arms,

Rush'd to the fight, and join'd the warring throng.
Ines. That favouring power, which has so oft
preserv'd,
Will not forsake him now.

Dutchess. Oh! grant it, heaven!
Go, Ines, to the terrace, and observe
If any friend (for, sure, I may expect it)
Bring tidings from my husband. [*Exit Ines.*]

Would this arm,
This feeble arm, had strength to second him!
The conflict here is worse. My restless heart,
Swell'd with eventful expectation, throbs
And feels its bounds too narrow. Fear on fear,
Like light reflected from the dashing wave,
Visits all places, but can rest in none.
The distant shouts that break the morning sky,
Lift up awhile my mounting thoughts to heaven,
Then, sinking, leave them to fall down as low,
In boding apprehension.—Welcome, welcome!

Enter MENDOZA.

What of my lord?

Mendoza. He bade me fly to greet you;
Himself awhile detain'd to stop the rage
Of cruelty and carnage.

Dutchess. He returns,
Unhurt, victorious to these happy arms?

Mendoza. All, all your fondest wish could form
he brings—

Crown, conquest, all. Oppression is no more;
Pierc'd by a thousand wounds the giant dies;
While free-born men, with fearless gaze, walk
round,

And view the monster's bulk.

Dutchess. I would know more:
Was it a dear-bought triumph? Must we mourn
The fall of many friends?

Mendoza. Scarce one of note
But lives to share our joy. The regent seiz'd,
Gave orders for the citadel's surrender,
To save the threaten'd lives of the whole council,
Whom sleeping we secur'd. Poorly content
To obey her mandate, though he knew it forc'd,
The dastard governor resign'd his charge,
And struck the Austrian banner. Such the power
Of Juan's royal name, and conquering arm.
The rest himself will tell. I must return.
Abroad, the wild commotion rages still:
The king may want my service. Angels guard
you. [*Exit.*]

Dutchess. Oh! fly, begone! lose not a thought
on me.

Now to thy rest, my soul, thy pray'rs are heard.
From this white hour, the bright, revolving sun,
With kinder beams, shall view this smiling land:
A grateful people, by my Juan's arm,
Rescu'd from shameful bonds, shall bless his name,
And own him their preserver.

Enter INES.

From my lord?

Ines. Madam, not yet. A stranger at the gate,
Disguis'd, and almost breathless with his fears,
With earnest importunity, entreats
He may have leave to cast him at your feet.

His accents mov'd me much; he seems afflicted.
Dutchess. Some wretch escap'd from the pur-
suer's rage,
And flies for shelter here. Yes, let him come.

Would I could save them all! My woman's soul,
Forc'd from her place in this tumultuous scene,
But ill supports the assum'd severity,
And finds her native seat in soft compassion.

Enter VELASQUEZ, disguised.

Whoe'er thou art, be safe. The greedy sword

Will have enough of death, and well may spare
One fugitive, who shuns its cruel edge
To wait the stroke of nature. Trust thy safety.
Why do thy doubtful eyes so oft look round?
Here are no enemies. My word is pass'd,
Inviolable as recorded oaths.

Metthink I have seen that face. Say, art thou
not—

Velasq. The man you most should fear, most
hate.

Dutchess. Velasquez?

Velasq. Yes, that devoted wretch, the lost Ve-
lasquez!

From the high top of proud prosperity,
Sunk to this ignominy.

Dutchess. Presumptuous man!

If mercy could know bounds, thy monstrous crimes
Almost exceed them. Speak, then, what could
urge thee

To seek the shelter of this hostile roof,
And trust a virtue to thy soul a stranger?

Velasq. Fate left no second choice. Close at
my heels,

Revenge and death insatiably pursu'd;
Fear lent me speed, and this way wing'd my flight.
Why flash those eyes with anger? Royal lady,
Fortune has stripp'd me of the power to injure:
A stingless serpent, a poor fang-drawn lion,
Fitter for scorn than terror.

Dutchess. Thou art fallen!

Yet, let me not insult thy alter'd state,
By pitying or upbraiding. If thy life
Be worth the acceptance, take it; and, hereafter,
Wash out the foulness of thy former deeds,
By penitence and better purposes.

(*Shouts within.*)

Those joyful sounds proclaim my Juan near.

Retire awhile, till I prepare my lord
(*To 'Velasquez.*)

To shield thee from the angry nobles' rage.

All were combin'd to take thy forfeit life.

Duke. (*Without.*) Throw wide the palace gates;
let all have entrance.

Dutchess. His well-known voice. 'Tis he, 'tis
he himself!

Duke. (*Without.*) Where is my queen?

Dutchess. Quick let me fly to meet him!

Fly to my hero's breast!

(*Velasquez seizes her, and draws a dagger.*)

Velasq. Hold, madam, hold!

Thus I arrest your transports.

Dutchess. Barbarian! monster!

Enter DUKE OF BRAGANZA.

Duke. What sounds are these? Horror! Inhu-
man slave!

Turn thy fell poniard here.

Velasq. Approach not, stir not;
Or, by the blackest furies hell e'er loos'd,
This dagger drinks her blood.

Duke. See, I obey;

I breathe not, stir not, I am rooted here:
Here will I grow for ages.

Dutchess. Oh, my Juan!

Duke. Oh, horrible! Does Juan live for this?

Curs'd be the fatal fire that led my steps
To follow false ambition, while I left
To lurking robbers an unguarded prize;
This gem more worth than crowns or worlds can
ransom.

Velasq. Take back a name more foul, thou dark
usurper!

Was it for this, thy unsuspecting prince,
With lavish bounty, to thy faithless hand
Trusted his royal functions? Thus to arm
'Gainst his own breast, thy black ingratitude.

Duke. Must I endure it?

Dutchess. Out, false hypocrite!

Thy tyrant's snares were found; his flimsy nets,
To catch that precious life, long since unravell'd:
Thy conscious cheek avows it.

Velasq. Be it so.

Dutchess. Coward! perfidious coward! is it
thus,

Thus you requite—

Velasq. Thy foolish pity—thus—

Hear me, thou rebel, is this woman dear!

Duke. Oh, heavens!

Velasq. Thy straining eyes, thy agonizing heart,
Thy life's inglorious dotage all proclaim it.

Dutchess. Peace, devil, peace, nor wound his
generous soul

By taunts that fiends might blush at.

Duke. Speak thy purpose.

Velasq. Then briefly thus: call off thy traitorous
guards,

The fruits of thy foul treason, every post,
Seiz'd by thy midnight plots, thy rebel arms
Restore again to Spain; back to the palace
Give me safe conduct—to thy oaths I trust not,

It must be done this instant—leave my power
To intercede with Spain for thy fall pardon,

And grace to all, whom thy ill-starr'd ambition
Led to this base revolt; else, by my rage,

The boiling rage that works my soul to frenzy,
Thou shalt behold this beauteous bosom gor'd,

All over gash'd and mangled.

Dutchess. Strike this instant.

Duke. Hold, ruffian, hold!

Dutchess. Give me a thousand deaths;

Here let me fall a glorious sacrifice,

Rather than buy my life by such dishonour.

If thy fond love accept these shameful terms,

(*To the Duke.*)

That moment is my last; these hands shall end me.

Blood-thirsty tyger, glut thy fury here.

(*To Velasquez.*)

Velasq. Her courage blasts my purpose. (*Aside.*)

Dost thou brave me?

Dutchess. Defy thee; yes; feel, do I shrink or
tremble?

Serene, undaunted will I meet the blow;

But ev'ry drop that stains thy reeking hands,

In thy last pangs shall cry for vengeance on thee.

Furies shall seize thee, shake their scorpion
whips,

And in thy deafen'd ears still holloa murder!

Velasq. No more! Resolve; (*to the Duke*) not

heaven itself can save her—

Enter RAMIREZ, wounded.

Ha! darkness cover me! he still alive!

Fate, thou hast caught me. Every hope is lost.

Enter ALMADA, RIBIRO, MENDOZA, and others.

(*The Duke and Dutchess run to each other's arms.*
Velasquez is seized.)

Duke. I have thee once again, my heart's best
treasure,

Sav'd from the vulture's talons. Oh! dire fiend!

Velasq. Unhand me. No; though earth and hell
conspire—

Dutchess. Blasphemer, down, and own a power
above thee.

Ribiro. Secure this monster. Read this paper,
madam.

Returning from the charge we found that wretch
Stretch'd in our way and weltring in his blood;

Earnest he begg'd we should commit to note
These few short words, and bear them to the
Duke:

That done, he dragg'd his bleeding body on,
And came to die before him.

Duke. Oh! Ramirez,

Ev'n in this day of joy my heart runs o'er
With sorrow for thy fate. What cruel hand—

Ramires. A villain's hand, yet heaven directed
it.

I have not strength to publish all my shame,
That roll contains it. This wide gaping wound,
My deep remorse, may expiate my crime;
But, oh! that tempter—

Duke. Ha! he faints; support him.

Thy crime! what crime?

Ramires. Thy happier star prevail'd,
Else hadst thou died even by the pious act
That seals our peace above.

Duke. Merciful powers!

Ramires. Yet ere I sink, speak comfort to my
soul,

And bless me with forgiveness.

Duke. Take it freely.

Ramires. Enough; I die contented.

[*He is led off.*]

Dutchess. Oh! my Juan,
Peruse that tale and wonder. Impious wretch,
Well might my heart stand still, my blood run
cold,

And struggling nature murmur strong reluctance
Against my foolish pity, while I meant
To step between thee and the braided bo't,
To rescue from the stroke of righteous justice
The foul snorner of my husband's murder.

Velasq. Curse on the coward's fears prevented
it!

Wither these sinews that relax'd their hold,
And left thy feeble wing to soar above me.

Duke. Hence with that villain; drag him from
my sight.

Till awful justice doom his forfeit life,
Let heaviest chains secure him. Hence, begone!

Velasq. Yes, in your gloomiest dungeons plunge
me down.

Welcome, congenial darkness! horrors hail!
No more these loathing eyes shall view that sun,
Whose irksome beams light up thy pageant
triumph. [*Led off by Ribiro and others.*]

Duke. Then ever present, all protecting power!
Through what dark clouds of thick involving
danger

Thy watchful providence has led my steps!
The imagin'd woes that sunk me in despair,
Thou mad'st the wondrous instruments to save
me.

Dutchess. I feel, I own the high supremacy;
Yet have I much to ask—thy victory—

Duke. For that our thanks to this brave man are
due.

He chose the post of danger, and expos'd
His dauntless breast against the stubborn force
Of steady northern courage.

Almada. Twice was I down,
And twice my prince's valour rescu'd me.

Duke. For ever hallow'd be the well pois'd
blade

That sav'd that reverend head.

Dutchess. Fortune was kind, Almada, to com-
mit

Thy safety to the arm you taught to conquer.

Almada. Henceforth I more shall prize that
trifle life,

Since now I owe it to my sovereign's valour.

Enter RIBIRO.

Ribiro. Vengeance, thy debt is paid. The ty-
rant's dead.

Duke. Say'st thou? Velasquez?

Ribiro. Ay; what was Velasquez,
Dispers'd and mangled by the people's rage,
In bloody fragments stains a thousand hands;
Like ravenous wolves by eager famine pinch'd,
With worrying fangs they dragg'd him from my
grasp,

And in my sight tore out his reeking entrails.

Duke. His blood be on his head, and may his
end,

Provok'd by crimes beyond the reach of pardon,

Strike terror to the souls of impious men,

Who own no God, but from his pow'r to punish.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE MOGUL TALE;

OR, THE DESCENT OF THE BALLOON:

A FARCE, IN TWO ACTS.



Act II—Scene 2

CHARACTERS.

THE MOGUL
JOHNNY

DOCTOR
MUNUCHS

IADIFS
FANNY

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Garden of the Mogul, adjoining to the seraglio.*

Enter First and Second Ladies.

1 *Lady.* Who do you think is the emperor's favourite now? whilst I continued his favourite myself, I had no occasion to make any inquiry.

2 *Lady.* You may be the emperor's again: as to me, I shall never enjoy his favour. But here she comes.

Enter Third Lady.

3 *Lady.* So, here you are musing and plotting mischief against me, because the Sultan loves me: well, the woman who possesses his heart is sure to have every woman in the seraglio against her; but there was a time when you was kind to me. *(To the first Lady.)*

1 *Lady.* Yes, my dear Sophy, when you was in distress; and I assure you, that if ever that time should come again, we will be as kind again, and love you as well as ever.

3 *Lady.* You think so: however, our sex are seldom kind to the woman that is so prosperous; their pity is confined to those that are forsaken—to be forsaken and ugly are the greatest distresses a woman can have. *[Exit.]*

1 *Lady.* Let her go; a good-for-nothing, happy creature! however, by some accident, she is the favourite now, perhaps some of us may become favourites soon—Sister, what's that! *(Looking up.)* I tremble all over!

2 *Lady.* I am afraid it is a great ravenous bird coming to devour us—is it a fowl? Perhaps it is the chariot of some of the gods of the Gentoo.

1 *Lady.* Oh! no, it cannot be a bird, it has no wings. Perhaps this is our prophet Mahomet coming to earth again, and this is his chariot: it is they are gods, I see their heads. *(Balloon descends.)* Let us not be afraid, if they bear the shape of men, (as gods, they say, mostly do) let us face them.

2 *Lady.* Oh, dear heart! stay—I never saw a god in all my life, and yet, if they come in the shape of men, why, I don't think I should be so much afraid of them neither. *[Exit.]*

Enter JOHNNY, FANNY, and Doctor.

Johnny. Oh dear! oh dear! The devil take all balloons, I say! what a cursed confounded journey we have had of it! Fan, come out: where the devil are we, after all? in Scotland, Denmark, or Ireland, or Norway, or limbo? It is devilish hot! *(Fann himself with his hat.)* Why, Fan! where are you, Fan?

Fanny. I'm here, Johnny. Oh, lord! I am so glad to set my foot on Christian ground again.

Johnny. Christian ground, you fool! why, we're in limbo. it must be limbo, or Greenland. Doctor, what say you? it is Greenland, is it not?

Doctor. Why, man, Greenland is cold; quite the reverse of this climate, this is either east, west, or south, but which I cannot tell. I am sure it is not north, by the heat; other conclusions I draw from other causes: I know we are a thousand miles from our native land, from the swiftness of our machine's motion, and the length of time we have been in it; another conclusion is, that not knowing the paths we have come, we know not where we are. 'I know only that we are in a close walk of trees, with houses at a distance. we may be amongst people who pay no regard to genius, science, or invention, but may put us all to death, taking us for three witches that ride in the air.'

Fanny. Oh, lord! put us all to death! Is all our fine ride in the air come to this? Oh, lord! oh, lord!

Johnny. Ay, Fan, and how the people clapped and huzzaed when they saw us mount in the air! They little thought they should not see us again—'gad! that was the reason, may be, that they s'emed so glad: for my part, I was so pleased with my journey, I was almost out of my wits for joy; I did not think that we should have more than a couple of hours ride. I thought we should have been picked up in Essex, Derby, or Kent, or Middlesex, or thereabouts, but the devil a bit! the Doctor, with all his magic, could not stop it when it was set a-going.

Doctor. I own I am shocked at our adventure.

Johnny. Well, here we are after all, but where, the Lord only knows!

Doctor. Do you appear lighter? I am much more heavy than in my natural element.

Johnny. Ay, Doctor, like a fish out of water.

Doctor. I do not speak to you of elements.

Johnny. I am sure, Doctor, I wish you hadn't brought us out of our element.

Doctor. Your soul and body are composed of one element, and that is earth, and your wife is all water.

Fanny. Ay, Doctor, with now and then a spark of fire.

Johnny. D—e! Doctor, you are all air, and yet you have not enough of it to take us back neither.

Doctor. I may be able to fill that machine again. *Johnny.* I wish you would fill our bellies in the meantime, upon my soul, I am half starved.

Doctor. The pure air we breathed while so many degrees above the earth, supplied every want.

Johnny. No, not it, Doctor, you know you eat heartily of the ham and chickens, and drunk more of the wine than Fan and I.

Fanny. That he did.

Doctor. That was only by way of experiment; I had no wants, I assure you.

Fanny. Lord, Doctor! no wants!

Doctor. None there.

Fanny. Why, yes, you had; you know you wanted to kiss me when you thought Johnny was asleep.

Johnny. Zounds! stand back; yonder is a fine lady coming.

Enter First Lady.

1 Lady. Are you gods?

Fanny. She speaks to us.

1 Lady. Then, you are gods?

Johnny. Gods, ma'am! no, we are three poor devils.

1 Lady. Devils! avaunt!

Fanny. Don't go to send us back again; we have had enough of it, I assure you.

1 Lady. Be ye gods or devils, in these shades you must not remain a moment.

Johnny. Why where the devil are we?

1 Lady. In the dominions of the Great Mogul.

Fanny. The Great Mogul!

Johnny. The Great Mogul! Oh, oh, oh!

Doctor. Oh, oh, oh!

1 Lady. In the seraglio of his favourite concubines, where no mortal but himself dare approach in human shape, except our wretched sex, and eunuchs, who are our guards.

Johnny. Eunuchs! Lord, madam, they are of no sex at all: we have often heard, madam, of the Great Mogul. Why, Lord! he can't be jealous of me; and as to the Doctor, there, he is nobody; it is all over with him, he has no longer any inflammable air about him, either in his balloon or himself; it's all gone, isn't it, Doctor?

Fanny. I am very faint. I am sure it is near a month since we left Hyde-park-corner.

1 Lady. Hyde-park-corner!

Fanny. Yes; just by the turnpike going to Knightsbridge.

Johnny. And after sailing a month like a poor schoolboy's kite, we are thrown into the jaws of that d—d cut-throat dog, the Great Mogul.

1 Lady. What do you say?

Johnny. I didn't mean your Mogul, madam.

1 Lady. You must take care what you say; you are my fellow-creatures, and you are brought here by this strange machine—take care, the Mogul's eunuchs are constantly on the watch. The time draws nigh when they will enter this dwelling, be prepared to give an account of yourselves, who, and what you are, and substantial excuses for your being found here, or you assuredly die in misery.

Johnny. Doctor! why, d—e! Doctor, what's the matter with you? you are shipped, Doctor, d—e! I say what's the matter with you? Contrive something to say to the Great Mogul.

Doctor. I cannot contrive anything.

Fanny. You contrived the balloon, and be hanged to you! and you contrived to get us here, now contrive to take us back again.

Doctor. At present I cannot, all my inflammable air is gone.

Johnny. I told you so; it's all over with him, and with us, too, I fear.

Fanny. Oh! dear Johnny, what will become of us? what will become of us?

Johnny. Come, don't cry, Fan; we shall see our children again, never fear.

1 Lady. As to that female, she has nothing to apprehend for herself, she will be saved from death, and most likely be exalted to the embraces of the Great Mogul.

Fanny. I had rather not, madam, if it is all the same to you.

1 Lady. I only speak of what is probable: but prepare an excuse; I must call here the eunuch and inform him of what has happened, or we shall be greatly suspected, and punished with you.

Johnny. Pray, madam, are these eunuchs a good sort of gentlemen?

1 Lady. They are severe, but they do but their duty. They obey their master, who meant them to be severe; if possible, make them your friends, by all means.

Johnny. Doctor, what shall we do? what the devil shall we do?

Doctor. I shall fare the worst; the Mogul will consider me as some important personage, some capital conspirator, perhaps, and have no doubt but he will arrest me, and keep me alive.

Johnny. And I have no doubt but he'll have me, too.

Fanny. Ay, he will eat us all alive. You would come, Johnny.

Johnny. And you would come, Fanny.

Fanny. That was because you should not come alone, Johnny.

Johnny. Zounds! stand back; there's a d—d black fellow coming! I'll say I am a woman in man's clothes.

Fanny. Oh! no, don't, Johnny; who knows but the Great Mogul will fall in love with you?

Enter First Eunuch.

1 Eunuch. What are you, that float in air? you must appear before the Great Mogul, to answer with your lives for this audacity. Who was that being that brought you here?

Johnny. He, that being there, the Doctor.

Doctor. Must the woman go, too?

1 Eunuch. Yes.

Johnny. Oh! sir, we'll follow you. [*Exit Eunuch.*] D—n it! Doctor, this comes of your harum-scarum things. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Another part of the Garden.

Enter the Mogul.

Mogul. Admirable! incomparable! most excellent! In a retreat of the gardens I saw the wretches fall; overheard their conversation. We were amazed at the miraculous manner of their arrival, but such acts I knew had been lately discovered in Europe. I am resolved to have some diversion with them.

Enter First Eunuch.

Where are those Europeans?

1 Eunuch. My liege, the slaves, the sailors of the air, wait your pleasure.

Mogul. What are their situations on this new occasion?

1 Eunuch. Horror and dread.

Mogul. Aggravate their fears as much as possible; tell them I am the abstract of cruelty, the essence of tyranny; tell them the divan shall open with all its terrors. For though I mean to save their lives, I want to see the effect of their fears; for in the hour of reflection, I love to contemplate that greatest work of heaven, the mind of man.

[*Exit.*]

1 Eunuch. Happy for these adventurers is the serene temper of the Mogul. My friends, (to the other Eunuchs) lose no time to put the commands of our master into immediate execution. Here they come. Retire, my friends.

[*Rest of Eunuchs exeunt.*]

Enter JOHNNY, FANNY, and Doctor.

Unhappy man, I pity you! I was once in Europe, and treated kindly there: I wish, in gratitude, I could do anything to serve you; but the Mogul is bloody-minded, and cruel, and, at present, inexorable.

Doctor. Then is our situation desperate.

Fanny. It's all over with us.

Johnny. Ay, 'tis all Dicky with us. Harkye! sir, you have been in Europe?

Fanny. Pray, Mr. Blacky, were you ever in England?

1 Eunuch. Yes, I was; I love the country.

Johnny. Then you must love an Englishman; only help us out of this hobbie, my dear Blacky, and I'll tell you what, I'll do anything to serve you—I'll give you my vote for candidate, and whatever you please to bid us.

1 Eunuch. The Mogul is only to be wrought

upon by his fears, now if you can alarm him with the danger of taking your lives—

Johnny. How the devil can we alarm him, surrounded as he is with thousands, and we are but three of us.

1 Eunuch. He will be in the divan immediately, be firm and bold before him; seem to know yourselves of consequence; seem to have no fear, and that will alarm him.

Fanny. Sir, we are very much obliged to you.

Johnny. Thank you, my dear Blacky, a thousand times. (*Trumpets sound.*)

1 Eunuch. The divan is opening; now mark, and practise all I say, and put forth all your fortitude.

Scene draws and discovers the Mogul on his throne; Slaves and Eunuchs attending.

Mogul. Let those who refused the presents I demanded, be impaled; the nabob who refused his favourite wife, be burnt alive; and let the female who broke my favourite dish, and thereby spoiled my dinner, be torn to pieces.

Doctor. Horror absorbs my faculties!

Johnny. Oh Lord, oh Lord! what shall we do?

Mogul. Where are those bold, audacious ones, those Europeans?

1 Eunuch. Most gracious sovereign, behold the man on whom your anger is raised, and for whom your racks are preparing, comes ambassador from England, which he likewise inhabits, to ask of you his way to the Persian dominions, where he's to meet some legions of warriors. Inhabitants of a new machine, invented for the use of man, called, called—what is it called? (*Apart to Doctor.*)

Johnny. (*Apart to Eunuch.*) Called a balloon.

1 Eunuch. Called a balloon. The king, his master, is now within two days' journey of your mighty realm, in his way to the Persian dominions, which he means shall feel the force of his vast power, for injuries received; but will not stop here to refresh himself and his mighty army on the right of your kingdom, without your permission, which he solicits by this his noble ambassador.

Mogul. Why was not this explained on his first arrival?

1 Eunuch. An accident happening to the machine in which he was conveyed, it unfortunately fell into a place forbidden; fear of your displeasure forbade him to announce himself.

Mogul. Who is this king that thus addresses me as his equal? Take down the roll and read it, that the ambassador may know who and what I am.

1 Eunuch. (*Takes down a roll and reads.*)

"Know, this most glorious monarch before whom you now stand, is Emperor of all India, the Great Mogul, Brother of the Sun and Moon, of the Right Giver of all Earthly Crowns, Commander of all Creatures from the Sea of Cremona to the Gulph of Persia; Emperor of all Estates, and Lord of all the Region on the Confines of Asia; Lord of all the Coast of Africa, Lord of Ethiopia; Grand Sultan of all the beautiful Females of Circassia, Barbary, Medea, and both the Tartaries; Prince of the River Ganges, Zanthur, and Euphrates; Sultan of seventeen Kingdoms, King of eight thousand Islands, and Husband of one thousand Wives."

Mogul. Dost thou hear, ambassador? thou who art less acquainted with the rays of royalty, to whom we have permitted our titles to be read in our presence; now look up your credentials, and tell us who is this king your master.

Doctor. (*Aside to Eunuch.*) What shall I do for credentials?

1 Eunuch. Look on the roll, seem to read it with firmness. (*Aside to Doctor.*)

Doctor. (*Takes the roll and reads.*) "The King, his master, is, by the Grace of God, King of Great

Britain, France, Ireland, Scotland, Northumberland, Lincolnshire, Sheffield, and Birmingham; Owner of all green, blue, red, and pale blue Ribbons; Sovereign of the most surprising Order of the Bath; Sovereign of the most noble Order of St. Patrick; grand Master of every Mason Lodge in Christendom; Prince of the River Thames, Trent, Severn, Tyne, New River, Fleet Ditch, and the Tweed; Sovereign Lord and Master of many loyal Subjects, Husband of one good Wife, and Father of eighteen fine Children.

Mogul. Then who art thou, slave, that dare come into our presence?

1 *Eunuch.* He is no slave; know, my most royal master, this is his highness the Pope of Rome.

Johnny. The devil I am! (*Aside.*) Yes, and please your highness, I am the Pope, at your service.

Mogul. A great pontiff, indeed! Is that the fashion of his robe?

1 *Eunuch.* His travelling dress only.

Johnny. My air-balloon jacket, please your honour.

Mogul. I want no enumeration of his dignity, I have heard it all.

Johnny. Yes, yes, all the world have heard of the devil and the pope.

Mogul. Cruel and rapacious. The actions of his predecessors will never be forgotten by the descendant of Mahomet. I rejoice I have him in my power; his life will but ill repay those crimes with which this monster formerly pestered the plains of Palentina.

Fanny. Oh lord! tell him he's a cobbler, at once, and don't tell him any more lies. (*Apart to the Eunuch.*)

Mogul. They have assaulted my seraglio, and the Greek pontiffs are forbidden the use of women: the English ambassador is under no such restriction: how can I forgive it?

Doctor. Mere accident brought me here, great sir; I have no passion for women, as his holiness will witness.

Mogul. Who is that female?

Johnny. She does not belong to me; she is a nun, and please your highness, taken from a convent in Italy, and was guilty of some crime not to be forgiven; but by severe penance, enjoined to accompany us.

Mogul. In our country dress she would have charms. What say you, sweet one? Give her another dress, and take her into the seraglio; let the other two stay here one day for rest, then let them depart.

Johnny. Your lordship will please to let Fan go, too.

Fanny. Oh! Johnny, you would, my Johnny—

Mogul. Johnny!

Johnny. Yes, and please your holiness, I am Pope Johnny the twelfth.

Fanny. What will become of our children?

Mogul. Children!

Johnny. Yes, yes; children: that was what she was banished for.

Mogul. If tenderness will not drive her, punishment shall; persuade her to go.

1 *Eunuch.* Oh! you are yet undone. (*Aside.*)

Johnny. Please your Mogulship, I will talk to her in private; perhaps I may persuade her to comply with your princely desires, for we popes have never any conversation with women except in private.

Mogul. Guards, keep at a distance, but do not lose sight of them; for one day, rest in our court as friends, then your ambassador and his highness may depart hence, and report my magnificence. [*Exit.*]

Johnny. Oh! Fanny, Fanny, Fan, Fan!

Fanny. Oh! Johnny, Johnny, Johnny! will you leave me here in a strange land, amongst tigers, land monsters, and sea monsters.

Johnny. Oh! Fan, Fan, if we were at Wapping again, mending of shoes, in our little two painted stairs room backwards, with the bed just turned up in one corner of the room—

Fanny. My Johnny and I sitting so comfortably together at breakfast, (when we had pawned our waistcoat to get one,) with one child crying on my knee, and one on your's; my poor old mother shaking with the ague in one corner of the room; the many happy mornings, Johnny, that we have got up together, shaking with the cold: no balloon to vex us.

Johnny. Ay, and the many times after threshing you well, Fan, when we made it up again—

Fanny. Yes, yes, the happy making it up, Johnny, we shall never have that pleasure again.

Johnny. Oh! Doctor, you have none of this to lament; you never knew what these pleasures were.

Doctor. I wish I were in my old climate again, its foulest air.

Johnny. Fan, only seem to comply with the Mogul at present, and put on your fine dress, and I'll try if I can get you away; and if not, Fan, I wish I may never sole a pair of shoes again, if I don't stay with you, rather than leave you here. Oh! Doctor, Doctor! this comes of your fine air-balloon. Oh Lord, oh Lord! we shall be put to death in the end. [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A front Apartment in the seraglio.

Enter the Mogul, and First Eunuch with a letter.

Mogul. Excellent! the intercepting this curious epistle promises a new source of entertainment. Read it, Omar; everything proceeds as I could wish.

1 *Eunuch.* (*Reads the letter.*) "I have been able to procure some inflammable air, and I hope soon to be able to see you in Wapping; don't waste your time in the seraglio, but come and help me to repair the balloon. Contrive, if you can, to bring one of the females with you, as I want to try an experiment—which can live longest in the air, the women of this country or our own."

"N. B. Let her have black eyes, neither too large nor too small, lest my experiment should fail."

Mogul. A most noble stratagem! this is a conspiracy in our government. Let a strong guard instantly seize this Doctor ambassador, and drag him immediately to the place of execution: this requires attention. Let this cobbler holiness, already half-drowned in liquor, be supplied with the richest of my wines, and then, in the high tide of his joys, tempted with the finest of my women; then also let him be conveyed to the place of execution, and let the woman, arrayed in oriental splendour, be made to accompany him thither; there will I appear, to watch the motions of the culprits, and then dismiss them to their own country, in a manner worthy the doctrines of our great prophet, and not unsuitable to my own honour and dignity. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—The Seraglio Garden.

Enter JOHNNY, drunk.

Johnny. Lipperry wine! lipperry wine! Never will drink anything but lipperry wine! (*Sings.*) They say they don't drink wine in this country: d—! 'tis no such matter, for brandy does all the same; though I don't think 'twas brandy, neither, but it

was devilish good, it has made me quite happy; I wish it does not make me fall in love presently, for I am devilish apt to fall in love when I am drunk: there seems to be a parcel of pretty girls, pretty tipptery wenches; (*several Ladies cross*) there they go, so pretty, and so plenty! Zounds! master Mogul, you have a fine time of it here.

Enter Third Lady.

Here, harkye! my dear.

3 Lady. Did you call me, sir?

Johnny. Ay, my love, anybody would call you: do you know that you are a sweet soul?

3 Lady. Sweet soul!

Johnny. Yes, a sweet soul.

3 Lady. Why, our religion tells us we have no souls.

Johnny. Does it? why, then, of what use is your religion? But if you have no soul, d—e! but you have a pretty body, a very pretty body, that I do assure you, and I am a sweet soul, and what is a body good for without a soul?

3 Lady. Have your countrymen souls?

Johnny. They have a d—d deal of spirit.

3 Lady. What's that?

Johnny. Why, I was going to tell you, my sweet creature—
[*Kneels: she runs off.*]

Enter First Eunuch.

1 Eunuch. His holiness upon his knees, and to a woman, too!

Johnny. Oh! yes, sir; though I am a pope, I am not infallible.

1 Eunuch. Why, this is strictly forbidden in your religion.

Johnny. Why, so it is: and you are strictly forbidden to drink wine; and yet, you know, you d—d black dog, you are always drinking, when you think nobody sees you. But this is jubilee; all holiday at Peckham. Here, sirrah, fetch back that lady, Madam No-soul: do it; I cannot do without her.

1 Eunuch. Though I cannot recall the fair fugitive, I can do what you will like as well; take this handkerchief, it is the Mogul's—

Johnny. D—n his handkerchief!

1 Eunuch. Cast this at the foot of any woman you please, and she must accomplish all your desires.

Johnny. Must she? D—e! give me my old Miggy's handkerchief, and you'll see what work I'll make; but there she goes. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter several Ladies.

1 Lady. Here she comes, and looks very pretty; she will be the favourite very soon; but let us plague her, and that will make her look ugly.

2 Lady. A woman never looks well when she is not in temper. (*They all retire up the stage.*)

Enter FANNY, dressed.

Fanny. What are pleasures when those that one loves does not partake them with one! Ah! my dear Johnny, the sky that appears so clear, the sun that shines so sweet, and the wind that blows such rich perfumes, do but increase my sorrow, whilst my dear Johnny is not with me. (*The Ladies come forward.*)

1 Lady. You was sent here for penance, madam, I heard.

Fanny. Ay, and severe penance it was; I lost everything on earth that I love by it.

1 Lady. But what do you say to your fine dress?

Fanny. It is nothing at all to me; I shall fast and pray.

1 Lady. What should you fast for? you may pray, indeed, for the good graces of the Mogul.

Fanny. I am sure I should rather be a poor cobbler's wife—Oh Lord! what have I said! (*Aside.*) I mean, I had rather be doing penance again with the pope, or a dozen popes, rather than be married to one mogul.

1 Lady. Oh! I dare say you had. But men are not so plenty here; they are not to be found by dozens, I assure you.

2 Lady. No, my dear English lady; I have been told, in your country, every woman had a lover a-piece, but here we have but one between us three and ninety-seven of us.

Fanny. And pray, ladies, have you seen anything of the pope lately, or is he gone away?

3 Lady. He was here just now, and making love to me. I'll make her jealous. (*Aside.*)

Fanny. No, he didn't make love to you; and if he did, I'm sure he was tipsy; for though I say it that should not say it, he is never so loving as when he is tipsy.

Enter JOHNNY.

Johnny. D—e! here, they are all here, at my service: you are a set of pretty creatures, upon my soul! Madam, you are a d—d fine girl; and so are you—and you, too, my little No-soul. But that pretty little moppet (*looking at Fanny*) suits my fancy the most; here I fix; and not like an old musty weathercock, till the wind changes about, but here I fix—(*throws down the handkerchief at Fan, who takes it up*) Come and kiss me.

Fanny. That I will with all my heart and soul, my dear Johnny.

Johnny. What the devil! my own Fan! Why, who the devil would have thought of seeing you here, dizen'd out in that fine gown, with a sack round your waist, and a long petticoat trailing on the ground, and a turbot on your head? why, what's become of your straw hat and linen gown?

1 Lady. She is altered in that garb to please the Great Mogul.

Johnny. No, no; that will not do, Madam. No soul; none of your tricks upon travellers, in the air, especially: no, no; Fan pleases none but me, I assure you.

Fanny. But do I please you, Johnny?

Johnny. Do you! yes, that's what you do: why, one morsel of British beauty is worth a whole cargo of outlandish frippery.

Enter First Eunuch.

1 Eunuch. Great sir, if you are at liberty, I come to offer you some amusement; if you will walk to the gate of the seraglio, you may see the execution of some criminals; everything is ready on the platform.

Johnny. Great Blackamoor, I come. You will go, ladies? You shall go, too, Fan. But who the devil are they! what have they done?

1 Eunuch. I cannot tell; these executions happen so frequently, that we have no curiosity to learn. Your highness may inquire from themselves.

Enter Second Eunuch, with a paper and seal on it.

2 Eunuch. In the name of the most mighty the Mogul, I arrest this man and bring him to the place of execution.

Johnny. We are going there, friend. Come along, Fan.

2 Eunuch. This woman must be secured by us.

Johnny. Not she, Blacky; she belongs to me.

2 Eunuch. Belongs to you!

Johnny. Yes, Blacky belongs to me: d—e! she is my property.

2 Eunuch. I have the authority of the Great

Mogul to take her before his presence; there's his signet.

Johnny. And I have the authority of the Great Mogul to keep her; d—e! there's his handkerchief, I throw it there; (*throws it at Fanny's feet*) and now touch her, you d—d black dog, if you dare: as to that great seal, you know, you black thief, you never had it from the Mogul; you have been breaking open his bureau and stolen it.

2 Eunuch. Though he gave it me himself, I cannot disobey the holder of the handkerchief; come with me.

Johnny. Why, d—e! we are going; you are hindering us. Come along, Fan; come along with me.

2 Eunuch. No, she must come along with us. (*Offers to lay hold of Fanny.*)

Johnny. (*Preventing him.*) You are not to lay violent hands upon her; for, lookye! Master Blacky, if you were in a certain corner of the world called Old England, you would know, you dog you, that if the first prince of the blood were to attempt the wife of a poor cobbler, against her will and good liking, he had better take up the whole island by main force, and dash it into the sea again. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

The Mogul discovered on his throne. The apparatus for execution ready, Executioners and Guards attending; the Doctor standing by the wheel, handcuffed, &c.

Mogul. Are the enauchs returned with the prisoners?

3 Eunuch. We expect them every minute.

Mogul. Is his wife with them?

3 Eunuch. She is, my sovereign.

Mogul. Maintain their fears, and place them with his mock excellency, before the tribunal. [*Exit.*]

Enter JOHNNY, FANNY, and Second Eunuch.

Johnny. Come along, Fan; come along, Fan. Where is the ambassador?

2 Eunuch. I'll place you next to him.

Johnny. Sir, I am very much obliged to you. My Doctor, what's the matter? you groan.

Doctor. They are a going to try some experiment upon me; to broil me—to impale—perhaps, to anatomize me.

Johnny. Let me go.

2 Eunuch. You must not go.

Johnny. I'd rather not stay.

Fanny. Oh! dear Johnny, what's the matter? do not burn Johnny.

Enter the Mogul, and sits on his throne.

Mogul. Where are these wretched culprits, doomed to receive their sentence?

2 Eunuch. They are here, waiting your highness's pleasure.

Mogul. Are all the racks ready? the cauldrons of boiling oil, the cages of hot iron, and the trampling elephants?

Johnny. Oh Lord, oh Lord!

2 Eunuch. The water boils and the gridirons are ready.

Mogul. Will these impostors confess who and what they are, if they hope any mitigation? Who art thou, thou pretended ambassador, whose letter I intercepted, wherein you confess yourself an impostor, and wish to ravish from my arms one of my most beautiful females?

Doctor. I am a doctor—I am a doctor of music, universally known and acknowledged; master of Sogerdein, adept in philosophy, giver of health, prolonger of life, child of the sun, interpreter of stars, and privy-counsellor to the moon.

Mogul. What brought you here?

Doctor. A balloon.

Mogul. What is a balloon?

Doctor. It is a machine of French invention, founded on English philosophy; an experiment by air lighter than air; a method of navigation in the clouds with winds, wanting only another discovery, still in *subibus*; and for want of that discovery, brought us here, great sir, against our will, without any intention to seduce away any of the females of the seraglio.

Johnny. Lord! the Doctor would not hurt a hair of their heads.

Mogul. And who art thou, that would have imposed yourself upon me for a venerable pontiff?

Johnny. Lord! your honour, I was only joking with you; I'll be judged by anybody if I look like a pope. I am sure the good man himself would excuse me for taking his name, so long as I did not make free with his character. I am quite sober now, I assure you.

Mogul. And you are no pope?

Johnny. Pope! the devil a pope am I! I am no more Pope Johnny, than my wife is Pope Joan.

Mogul. What art thou?

Johnny. Who, me? I am a poor innocent cobbler, decoyed by the Doctor here, from Wapping, for five guineas.

Fanny. And he's as good a father, and as good a husband, and as good a cobbler as any in London.

Johnny. A cobbler! why, d—e! I'll sole a pair of shoes with any man in your country.

Mogul. Now prepare to die.

Fanny. With all my heart, rather than part with my dear Johnny. If Johnny would die, what should—

Mogul. Keep silence while I pronounce judgment: tremble for your approaching doom. You are not now before the tribunal of an European, a man of your own colour. I am an Indian, a Mahometan, my laws are cruel and my nature savage: you have imposed upon me, and attempted to defraud me; but know, that I have been taught mercy and compassion for the sufferings of human nature, however differing in laws, temper, and colour from myself. Yes, from you Christians, whose laws teach clarity to all the world, have I learned these virtues. For your countrymen's cruelty to the poor Gentoos has shewn me tyranny in so foul a light, that I was determined henceforth to be only mild, just, and merciful. You have done wrong; but you are strangers, you are destitute; you are too much in my power to treat you with severity; all three may freely depart.

Johnny. (*Runs to take the Mogul's hand.*) The Lord bless you, sir! thank you!

Mogul. You have my leave, and I have given instructions to my messengers to give you safe conduct to your native land. [*Exit.*]

Doctor. Oh! thank heaven!

Johnny. Well, then, thank heaven, I shall see dear Wapping again.

Enter Second Eunuch.

2 Eunuch. Everything is ready for your departure.

Fanny. Sir, we are very much obliged to you; and please give my compliments to the Great Mogul, and tell him I am very much obliged to him for not killing my husband.

Johnny. And I am very much obliged to him for not ravishing my wife.

Doctor. And present my compliments to him, and let him know that I will explain the generosity of his conduct in a Mogul Tale, that I intend to publish, giving an account of our adventures in our grand Air Balloon. [*Exeunt.*]

APPEARANCE IS AGAINST THEM;

A FARCE, IN TWO ACTS.



Act I—Scene 2

CHARACTERS.

LORD LIGHTHEAD
MR WALMSLEY
CLOWNLY
THOMPSON

HUMPHRY
SERVANTS
LADY MARY MAGPIE
LADY LOVEALL

MISS ANGLE
MISS AUDLEY
BETTY
FISH

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Room.

MISS ANGLE and FISH discovered.

Miss Angle. There's somebody at the door, Fish. It is Lady Mary Magpie let her in. Even her ridiculous vanity is more supportable than the reflection on my own.

Fish. Lady Mary, madam. (*Opens the door*)

Enter LADY MARY MAGPIE

Miss Angle. Good-morrow, dear Lady Mary. (*Rising.*)

Lady Mary. Nay, sit still and, Mrs. Fish, do you stay. I have brought something to shew your mistress, and you may see it too, if she will give you leave.

Miss Angle. Certainly. Fish, you may stay.

Lady Mary. There! (*Opening a shawl.*) What do you think of that? A present from Mr. Walmsley. A shawl worth, at a moderate valuation, no less than a hundred and fifty guineas. He gave it me this minute. It came over but last night from India—has been on the seas seven months—was in that terrible storm of October

last. Little did I think, when I heard of those dreadful wrecks, and the many souls that perished, that I had a shawl at sea, if I had, I should have suffered a martyrdom! Now, is it not pretty? beautiful? He assures me, his correspondent writes him word, "There is but one more such in all India." And I'm to wear it the first time on my wedding-day.

Miss Angle. It is very beautiful indeed.

Lady Mary. A'n't you well, my dear? You don't seem to understand its value. What do you say to it, Mrs. Fish?

Fish. Oh! madam, I like it of all things!

Lady Mary. I dare say you do—But come, my dear Miss Angle, what's the matter with you? Since you first came to town, you are the most altered creature I ever saw.

Fish. Your ladyship does not think my mistress has lost any of her beauty, I hope?

Lady Mary. As for that, Mrs. Fish, I dare say your lady has made observation enough to know, that beauty is of little weight here, of no signification at all! Beauty in London is so cheap, and consequently so common to the men of fashion, (who are prodigiously fond of novelty,) that they absolutely begin to fall in love with the ugly women, by way of change.

Fish. And does your ladyship think old women will ever come into fashion?

Lady Mary. They are in fashion: they have been in fashion some time. Girls and young women have made themselves so cheap, that they are quite out.

Miss Angle. I believe so. (*Aside.*)

Lady Mary. As soon as the vulgar lay hold of anything, the people of ton leave it off. Such is the case with young women: the vulgar have laid hold of them, and they are quite out.

Fish. Oh, dear me!

Lady Mary. But come, my dear Angle, pluck up your spirits, against you know when—you are to be one of my bridesmaids, you know. Oh! how I long to be away from lodgings, and in a house of my own. Mr. Walsley says, he shall invite you to stay a day or two with us. He likes you (stranger as you are to us both) very much, I assure you. He is a great admirer of virtue in us females; and, notwithstanding his little oddities, would do anything for a woman of character: and your refusing that vile lord's odious addresses, (which I informed him of,) has interested him for you exceedingly. Well, heaven bless you! I can't stay: he'll be quite impatient. (*Going.*) I may tell him you like the shawl, I suppose?

Miss Angle. Beautiful, beyond measure!

Lady Mary. And you, Mrs. Fish?

Fish. Charming, madam.

Lady Mary. Did I tell you there was but one more such in all India? (*Coming back.*)

Miss Angle. You did.

Lady Mary. Only think of it's being in that storm! [*Exit.*]

Miss Angle. Would I had been in the storm, and had fallen its victim!

Fish. Dear madam!

Miss Angle. Oh! Fish, that woman's nonsense, at which you laughed, was graced with sentiments of the strictest truth! Young women are no longer thought of here. How rashly did I give credit to our foolish country people! They told me, that—"Though only admired by them, in London I should be adored; that beauty here was rare—that virtue—"

Fish. Well, madam, and that is rare, everybody knows!

Miss Angle. But is it valued? No. As soon as I gave Lord Lighthouse proofs of my possessing it, what was the consequence? I have neither seen nor heard of him since.

Fish. That's very odd! For my part, I thought him so much in love—and, sometimes, I thought you looked a little—

Miss Angle. That I felt a warmth—a something like tenderness for him, I own; but that it was the effect of love I will not pretend to say. It was, perhaps, the effect of hope; pride, too, had a great share in the agitation of my heart, and gratitude might have confirmed the whole sensation, love; but, in the moment gratitude should have been inspired, resentment, indignation, took possession; and I am now left solely to shame and disappointment.

Fish. Well! it is very odd, that a man should give himself so much trouble to come here after you, so many times as he did, and then, all of a sudden, never to come near you for a whole month. I should not mind losing him, neither, if some duke, or other great man, would come instead of him; or even that strange young man we met on the road, as we came to town, and that was so kind to us when our chaise broke down.

Miss Angle. Honest creature!

Fish. Well, as sure as ever I was in love in my life, that young man and his servant were both as deep in love—

Miss Angle. With me?

Fish. No; the master with you, and the man with me. But we, I thought, were coming to town to make our fortune; and so I was above making it on the road: for, notwithstanding that young man looked so countrified, and had hardly a word to say for himself, he's worth thousands! And poor Humphry, his servant, persuaded me to give him our direction, that his master and he might come after us to London. And yet, to see the fickleness of man! we have heard nor seen nothing of them. But, dear madam, his lordship runs most in my head: perhaps he is sick?

Miss Angle. No; he visits the drawing-room constantly, as we read in the papers. I wonder what he would say, if he were to meet me accidentally?

Fish. He'd fall in love with you as much as ever. Suppose, madam, you were to write to him?

Miss Angle. For shame!

Fish. Dear madam, I know a few lines from you would cheer his heart, and he would be as dying for you as ever. Oh! when I have given him a letter from you, how he has jumped for joy! how he has kissed it! and how he has kissed me!

Miss Angle. Could I write to him with any appearance of prudence—for instance, upon any business—I should have no objection: it would, at least, remind him of me, and bring matters to a decision.

Fish. Then do, madam, contrive to write to him about some business.

Miss Angle. What business can I pretend?

Fish. Dear madam, if you had a handsome piece of silk for a gown, or a diamond pin, or something of that kind, you might return it him back again.

Miss Angle. Return it him again! What do you mean?

Fish. Why, madam, you might send it him back, as if you had received the present from a person unknown; and, concluding that it must come from his lordship, you had thought proper to return it; and so, you might send him with it a fine, long, virtuous letter, that—"you would not receive a present from a king, that had evil designs upon you;" and so on, and so on, and so on. This, I am sure, would make him ten times fonder of you than ever; for he would think that some rival had been sending you the present in that anonymous manner, which had made you think it was him; and I know he would—

Miss Angle. I protest there is something in that scheme which pleases me.

Fish. Do it, madam; do it!

Miss Angle. But how can I? I have nothing of value: nothing that I could suppose he would send for a present, and which I could think of consequence enough to return.

Fish. What's your watch, madam?

Miss Angle. An old-fashioned thing.

Fish. Lud! I have thought of something! the finest thing—

Miss Angle. What?

Fish. Lady Mary Magpie's shawl. You know, madam, 'tis the finest thing in the world: there is but one more such in all the universe.

Miss Angle. But the shawl is not mine.

Fish. No, madam; but I dare say I know where her ladyship has laid it, and I can get it. (*Going to the door.*)

Miss Angle. For shame!

Fish. Dear madam, do you think I'd steal it? It could do it no harm to be a few hours at his lordship's; he'd send it back directly, you may depend upon that. And, then, such a fine thing!

it would make him think that some great man, indeed, had taken a fancy to you; and he'd be so afraid of losing you—

Miss Angle. Well,—I protest,—if I thought—

Fish. I can get it, madam, with all the ease in the world, I dare say. [Runs out.]

Miss Angle. What will become of me? where will my folly end?

Enter FISH.

Fish. Yes, yes, madam, I can get it. Her ladyship has spread it on the bed in the blue chamber, and is gone out for the whole evening, and will sleep at her cousin's, Lady Beach's; her maid told me so in the morning.

Miss Angle. But suppose his lordship should not return it?

Fish. Lud! madam, do you think his lordship will keep it, when he'll know he did not send it you? His lordship is not a thief, I suppose! You'll have it back, madam, I'll answer for it, in an hour or two, and himself with it. The person she'n't leave it, madam, if his lordship is not at home; and then you'll be sure to have it in an hour or two. I'll go steal it! I'll go steal it! [Going.]

Miss Angle. Steal it!

Fish. Take it, madam, not steal it. [Exit.]

Miss Angle. This scheme will, at least, renew our acquaintance, and that is all I want; for if, on the renewal, he appear cold, I will leave London instantly; if, on the contrary, he be as much in love as ever—

Re-enter FISH, with the shawl.

Fish. I have got it! I have got it! here it is! Now, madam, come into your bed-chamber, and write a very affecting letter, while I do it up, and send for a porter.

Miss Angle. I protest I am frightened; though we take it but to return again.

Fish. Dear madam, I am sure it is not in half the danger as when it was in the great storm. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A Chamber at Lord Lighththead's.

Enter MISS AUDLEY and THOMPSON.

Miss Audley. What! his lordship has gone to see Lady Loveall thus early, I suppose? or, rather, has staid with her thus late!

Thompson. Dear madam, I hear Mr. Walmsley's voice; my lord's uncle, madam. They are coming here. What shall we do, madam? My master will murder me, if his uncle should see you! A cross, old man, madam; knocks every body down that he does not like: and he has a great dislike to a fine lady; and if he should see you here, such a life my lord will have of it—

Miss Audley. Oh! you need tell me no more. I know Mr. Walmsley's character well. Where can I go! I would sooner jump out of the window than meet him. A cruel, unfeeling, piece of ice!

Thompson. Here, madam, step into my lord's bed-chamber.

Miss Audley. His bed-chamber! Well, the creature won't stay long?

Thompson. Not above ten minutes, I dare say, madam. [She goes into the chamber.]

[Exit Thompson.]

Enter MR. WALMSLEY and LORD LIGHTHEAD.

Mr. W. Don't tell me, my lord; you are a

bad man; a very bad man. You say, in excuse for your vices, they are fashionable; but I, being out of the fashion, can call them only wicked.

Lord Light. What vices, sir?

Mr. W. Why, you are a fellow that falls in love with every face you see; and yet admire your own more than any one of them. You are a man whose purse is open to every gambler and courtesan, and is never shut, but to objects of real distress.

Lord Light. But how have you been informed of this?

Mr. W. Hear it! told of it by everybody! Do you think anything but conviction would have forced me to the rash step I have taken? Would anything but a certainty that you were unworthy to be my heir, have forced me to the desperate resolution of marrying, notwithstanding my natural aversion to opposition?

Lord Light. I hope, sir, when you marry—

Mr. W. Hope! Psha! I know well enough what marriage is: 'tis a poetry of thorns, nobody knows where to lay hold of; 'tis a stormy sea, where nothing is to be expected but squalls, tempests, and shipwrecks! One cries—"Help!" another—"Lord have mercy upon us!" another—" 'Tis all over with us!" and souse they all go into the ocean of calamity.

Lord Light. Then, for heaven's sake! sir, if this is your opinion, decline your intention of marrying.

Mr. W. I can't; 'tis too late; my word is passed. Your indiscretions put me in a passion, and I took a rash step; a step I never intended to take: I offered a lady to marry her, in the heat of anger, and she took me at my word, before I had time to grow cool and recant.

Lord Light. How unfortunate!

Mr. W. I was not aware she would be so sudden; but I was in such a violent passion—all against you for your follies—I was devilish hot! I don't remember that I was ever in such a heat in my life. I strutted, and fretted, and walked, and talked, all in anger against you; which she took for love to her, and so was overcome in less than ten minutes.

Lord Light. Dear sir, had I been present—

Mr. W. Why, then, I should have broken every bone in your skin! But as it was, I vented my rage—in kissing the lady; and won her heart without further trouble. It's impossible I could have won her so soon, but by my being in that violent rage; for she's a particular, prudent, discreet, reserved, middle-aged woman; and nothing but my great violence could have had that effect upon her.

Lord Light. But, sir, is it possible that you should pay attention to a rash promise in a moment of anger?

Mr. W. My word! My word is as dear to me as my honour. It is my honour; and I cannot keep one, without keeping both.

Lord Light. But now you are cool, sir.

Mr. W. Yes, I am cool; but now the lady is in a passion; and I must keep my word with her, though I am afraid she'll never find me warm on the subject again.

Lord Light. Dear sir! and all this to revenge yourself upon me? A man whose greatest fault arises merely from the report of malicious enemies.

Mr. W. Enemies! Psha! that's always your excuse. But have not I enemies as well as you? And yet, I dare say, you never heard of my being caught gallanting my neighbour's wife? or following fine ladies home to their lodgings? nor did you ever hear me accused of destroying

a beautiful young woman's peace of mind—did you?

Lord Light. I can't say I ever did, sir.

Mr. W. Then don't pretend to deny the reports I have heard of you. Don't I know that you were caught with Lady Loveall and—

Lord Light. I own, sir, I have been very unfortunate as to appearances; appearances, and those alone, have been the ruin of my reputation; accidents so strange, that no human wisdom could prevent or avoid them. I have been found, for instance, with a female, whom I never had the smallest familiarity with, in the most suspicious situations; and only by mere accident.

Mr. W. And pray, was that an accident when I caught you kissing my housekeeper's daughter, as if you'd devour her?

Lord Light. Yes, upon my word, sir, that was an accident; entirely an accident. My servant had just lost me a favourite spaniel; and had the rascal been in the way, I should have broken every bone in his skin; but, happening to meet with this poor girl, I vented my rage upon her.

Mr. W. Then, I have only to say, you have lost my estate by your accidents.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Lady Loveall, sir, is in the parlour.

Mr. W. Is that an accident?

Lord Light. Blundering—(Aside to the Servant.)

Serv. (Aside to Lord L.) I did not see Mr. Walmsley, sir—A fine life I shall have for this!

[Aside, and exit.]

Mr. W. This is another accident? How dare that imprudent woman visit you? My blood runs cold at the thought of her; for she was the cause of this rash step which I have taken! It was hearing of your intrigue with her, that hurried me to the rash step of marrying. Let me get out of the house! she's poison to me! and she knows it, too, and speaks to me, wherever I meet her, on purpose to insult me. Let me get away. (Goes to the door.) Zounds! she's coming here! I won't see her! I shall be in one of my passions if I do. Where shall I go? Put me somewhere.

Lord Light. Here, sir; step into my chamber. I'll take her ladyship to another room immediately, and you may avoid her.

Mr. W. Oh! d—n your accidents! But, thank heaven! you ate no heir of mine; you are out of my will.

[He goes into the bed-chamber.]

Lord Light. And, therefore, may offend you without fear.

Enter THOMPSON.

Thompson. Where's Mr. Walmsley, sir?

Lord Light. In my bed-chamber. What did you want with him?

Thompson. Oh, dear sir! oh, dear! Miss Susan Audley is there, sir? I crammed her in, when I heard your lordship and Mr. Walmsley upon the stairs, for fear he should see her.

Lord Light. Zounds!—But no matter: I'm struck out of his will, and may defy him.—But I don't hear him—(listening)—he can't have seen her?

Thompson. Perhaps, sir, she has crept under the bed?

Lord Light. Very likely; for I know she would rather meet a tiger—What has become of Lady Loveall?

Thompson. William is trying to prevent her coming up, sir: for she says, it is not your uncle

that you have with you, but a lady; and she will see her.

Enter LADY LOVEALL.

Lady Loveall. So, my lord, what is the reason I am not to be admitted!—You have no company, neither!—Oh! you have been hiding, I perceive!

Lord Light. This way; come this way. I'll tell you who it is. Don't speak aloud.

Lady Loveall. None of your arts, my lord. I will see who you have hidden in your bed-chamber.

Lord Light. I assure you 'tis my uncle.—Hush! Come this way. (Leading her off.)

Lady Loveall. My lord, you'll pardon me; but I can't—

Lord Light. Hush! hush!

[Forcing Lady L. off, and exit.]

SCENE III.—A Bed-chamber.

MR. WALMSLEY discovered listening at the door.

Mr. W. Now I'll steal out—no; she is coming again.

Lady Loveall. (Without.) I will see who you have in your bed-chamber. My curiosity shall be satisfied.

Mr. W. Shall it! then, there must be neither closet nor cupboard in the room. (Goes to the closet.) The devil take it, it is locked!

Lady Loveall. (Without.) I will see who you have here.

Mr. W. You won't! I'll get under the bed first—Hold! I can't stoop. No matter; I'll hide myself under the counterpane, and madam shall be disappointed. (He gets in, and pulls the clothes over his head.) Now find me if you can! I believe you'll be bit.

Enter LADY LOVEALL and LORD LIGHTHEAD.

Lady Loveall. Why, here is no one here!

Lord Light. Now, I hope you are satisfied.—Where the devil is my uncle? (Aside.)

Lady Loveall. Did not you tell me your uncle was here?

Lord Light. Yes; but you expected to find somebody else.

Lady Loveall. And there is somebody else! (Goes to the curtain, and discovers Miss Audley.)

A lady! Oh! you deceitful!—(Sits down on Mr. Walmsley. She shrieks, and runs across, while he rises up in the bed.) Ah! Ah! Ah! (Shrieking.) I shall never recover the shock.

Mr. W. Why, why! What is all this? What a strange accident!

Lady Loveall. I say accident, indeed!

Lord Light. Accident, uncle!

Lady Loveall. The severe, puritanical Mr. Walmsley!

Lord Light. Upon my word, uncle, such a thing in my house.

Lady Loveall. Oh! Oh! Oh!

Mr. W. Oh! Oh! Oh! The deuce take your oh's.—My lord, you used to have faith in accidents.

Lord Light. But you convinced me there were no such things. And, indeed, uncle, though you may think lightly of this affair, I am very much concerned at it. My reputation, as well as yours, is at stake. Such a thing to happen in my house! Rat me! if I would have had it happened for the world!

Mr. W. What has happened? Nothing has happened! (To Miss Audley.)

Lady Loveall. Oh, heavens!—My lord, I ask your pardon for all my former suspicions of you and this lady.

Miss Audley. I must cry for vexation; for 'tis in vain to attempt to clear myself. (*Retires.*)

Lady Loveall. See, the lady in tears, Mr. Walsmley!—Oh! what a treat to tease him! (*Aside.*)

Lord Light. I beg that every means may be taken to put a stop to this affair getting abroad: for my part, I declare fonder to breathe the circumstance to a mortal; and I dare say we may so far prevail on Lady Loveall.

Lady Loveall. No, indeed; I am bound to no secrecy. Mr. Walsmley has never been sparing of my reputation, nor will I of his: the world shall know it.

Mr. W. Why, then, nephew, upon my soul!—I wish I may die!—I wish I may never speak again!—I wish—

Lady Loveall. Wish! you used to pretend you had no wishes.

Mr. W. I don't speak to you.—(*To Miss Audley.*) Pray, madam, be so good as to tell me how you came into that bed?

Miss Audley. 'Tis in vain to say; nobody will credit me. (*Exit.*)

Lady Loveall. Well, Mr. Walsmley, I'll bid you good morning; and, though I know you to be no friend of mine, yet permit a poor, weak woman to give you this counsel: that now you are about to enter into the married state, you will not suffer these depraved inclinations, (even in youth a reproach,) to ruffle that tranquillity which ought ever to attend on the honourable marriage bed. (*Exit.*)

Mr. W. Zounds! I have not patience! Honourable marriage bed! why her calling it honourable, would alone have made me shudder at it, if I had not before. That woman is the worst of all human—

Lord Light. Dear sir!—

Mr. W. Why, you know, my lord, if it had not been for her, you would have owned that that gipsy was put there to meet you. But this woman is my bane wherever I go, or whatever I do. Oh! that I could but once be revenged of her!—But I dare say I shall.

Lord Light. No more on this subject, sir. I hope the lady you are going to marry, may prove of a more amiable disposition, and that you will like her.

Mr. W. Why, since I found I must have her, I've been trying night and day to like her; but I can't say I make much progress. However, I'm tolerably civil, and give her a vast number of presents, as a cover for my want of affection. She's expecting me now to go a shopping with her, so, good morning. You'll come to the wedding? (*Sighing.*)

Lord Light. Certainly. When will the happy day be, sir?

Mr. W. How dare you call it the happy day! You just heard me say it was the most wretched, miserable affair I ever had to do with in all my life; and now you are calling it the "happy day!"

Lord Light. The day, then, sir. When will be the day?

Mr. W. Thursday! (*sighing*) the day after tomorrow; the twenty-first of December. (*Lord Lighthead bows.*) Oh! d—e, the shortest day and the longest night. (*Exit.*)

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, this parcel was left about half-an-hour ago, to be delivered into your lordship's own hands, as soon as you were at leisure.

Lord Light. What is it? Is that the bill?

Serv. This is a letter, sir. (*Exit.*)

Lord Light. A letter!—(*Reads.*)—"My Lord,—Although your lordship has had the delicacy not to avow yourself the presenter of this valuable gift, yet, something whispers me it can be none but your lordship to whom I am indebted for so generous an intention. But, my lord, the intention only, permit me to remain obliged to you for: the gift itself—honour, delicacy, and a thousand struggling sensations, force me to return; and to add, that my residence in London has not yet so entirely eradicated those principles imbibed in the country, as to render a gaudy bait even an allurements; except in its being a proof, that your lordship sometimes honours with a thought, the humble, but contented,—LOUISA ANGLE."—Angle! Angle! Which is that? The girl at St. James's, or the girl at Westminster? Oh! the girl at St. James's!—I don't remember sending her a present: but I suppose I did, while I was mad for her; and now I have recovered my senses, I have forgotten it. What is it! (*Opens the parcel.*) Zounds! but it is very handsome; and the very thing to present to Lady Loveall. It will reconcile her to me immediately, for I am afraid she suspects me, notwithstanding her behaviour before my uncle. How came I to be such an extravagant puppy, as to send that little gipsy such a present, and she to return it, now she finds I have given over my pursuit? 'Faith! I am very glad she did.—Richard. (*Calls.*)

Enter a Servant.

Bring me pen, ink, and paper.—(*Exit Servant.*)—I certainly ordered some of my people to send this thing, but it has slipped my memory.

Re-enter Servant, with pen, ink, and paper.

(*Lord Lighthead writes a letter, and gives it to the Servant.*) Here! do up that parcel, and take it, with this letter, to Lady Loveall directly.

Serv. Yes, sir.

Lord Light. Egad! it came back at a very lucky time! Her ladyship dates upon a present. And such a present as that! such a shawl!—Oh! yes, the shawl will make her friends with me at once. (*Exit.*)

SCENE IV.—A Room at an Inn.

CLOWNLY discovered.

Clownly. What a journey have I and poor Humphry taken! and all, perhaps, for nothing! for if he should even find her, she may not be glad to see me.

Enter HUMPHRY.

Why, Humphry, I thought you were lost?

Humphry. Ay, master; and you may think yourself well off I was not.

Clownly. Well, but have you found where Miss Angle lives?

Humphry. Yes; I have found her out; but such a time I was about it! Why, sir, she lives up by St. James's, or St. Giles's, I forget which—but 'tis all the same. And such a thing happened to me as I went along—

Clownly. What?

Humphry. Why, just as I got to what they call the P-H'es, (a pretty place!)—just as I got under cover, three or four, or five or six, (or, egad! there might be a dozen,) fine ladies met

me; and one of them did give me such a slap in the face, the water came into my eyes again.

Clowny. What did she do that for?

Humphry. I can't tell for the life of me! for I pulled off my hat, and made them a civil bow—but, 'faith, as soon as I felt the blow, I forgot my manners; for after madam I ran, and gave her such a shake—

Clowny. You did not?

Humphry. But I did. And that was not the worst of it, neither: I made a sad mistake; for when I came to look, the lady had got a blue gown on, and she that gave me the blow, was in red!

Clowny. How could you make such a blunder?

Humphry. Why, though their gowns were different, their faces were exactly the same colour.

Clowny. But about Miss Angle: have you seen her, or her maid?

Humphry. Yes; I have seen Mrs. Fish; and she says, that her lady has done nothing but talk of you ever since you left her on the road; and she desires you will go and see her lady directly: and she says, too, that she'll get us a lodging in the same house before night; but that is to be kept a secret from her mistress.

Clowny. I am very much obliged to Mrs. Fish for her contrivance; and I shall give her a very handsome present to satisfy her.

Humphry. Lord! sir, there is no occasion for that; I shall kiss her now and then, and I dare say, that will be satisfaction enough. But come, sir, we must go directly.

Clowny. Do you know, Humphry, that my heart misgives me.

Humphry. What, now you are so near seeing the lady! Come, come, master, be merry.

Clowny. Ah! Humphry, if I had continued poor; if I had never been your master; I might have been merry.

Humphry. Never been my master! How can you talk so? Why, there are people in the world would give any money to be my master. Why now, there's my wife, she'd give every farthing she has to be my master; but I tell her—no. "No, Jane," says I; "you shall never be my master."

Clowny. Oh! if I thought I should get Miss Angle—

Humphry. I'll forfeit my head if you don't—Have you not everything to get her with? Fine clothes in your box there, and plenty of money. I never heard of a woman that could not be got with fine clothes and plenty of money; nay, often, without either money or clothes.

Clowny. But, I tell you, that won't do with her; there is something more required: I can't talk to her; I am at a loss for words.

Humphry. You can't be at a loss for words, while you are courting. Women will always give you two for your one: I know my wife did; and, egad! though we have left off courting, so she does now.

Clowny. Come; I'll set off. Call a coach.

[Exit.]

Humphry. Ay, sir; and I'll ride behind it, for fear I should get struck again. 'Tis very odd that any lady should wish to strike me.

[Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Miss Angle's Apartment.

Enter MISS ANGLE and FISH.

Fish. Dear madam, let me persuade you to put on your other gown; for now his lordship has

kept it thus long, I dare say he'll bring it home himself.

Miss Angle. I begin to be uneasy.—Did the porter say he was sure his lordship was at home?

Fish. Quite sure, madam; so we may expect him every minute; for he would certainly have sent it back before now, if he had not intended to have brought it himself. Do, madam, change that ugly gown. And what do you think of your other cap? your becoming cap?—Hark!—No; that's only a single ray. The deuce take him! he has sent it home by a porter, perhaps?

Miss Angle. I don't care how, so I get it again; for I begin to be alarmed, lest by some accident—(Fish looks out of the window.)—Is it that?

Fish. No, madam; 'tis the milk-woman. Perhaps, madam, his lordship mayn't call with it till the morning.

Miss Angle. Well, thank heaven! her ladyship sleeps from home, you say; so, she can't miss it to-night; and, then, if we have heard nothing from him, you shall go after it, Fish; for, as soon as her ladyship comes home in the morning—

Fish. And the worst of it is, I am not sure she is to stay out all night.

Miss Angle. You told me she was.

Fish. I did it for your good. I knew you would not have sent it to his lordship, if I had not said so.

Miss Angle. Ridiculous! and I still worse to listen to you.

Fish. Dear madam, don't fret about it; but think of Mr. Clowny. I am sure he looks very beautiful, and so does his man, Humphry! And pray, madam, did not you see, by his master's looks, that he is in love with you?

Miss Angle. P'sha!

Fish. Nay, madam, you need not sneer at him; for if his lordship should never send back the shawl—

Miss Angle. Heavens!

Fish. We shall stand in need of a rich friend to make it up with Lady Mary. (A loud knock.) There's his lordship! that's his knock! I know it so well, I could swear to it at any time. Now, madam, how do you look? vastly well, I declare! Lord! how well I know his knock!—(Goes to the door.)—I wish I may die, if it is not Lady Mary!

Miss Angle. Oh! I shall faint.

Fish. The first thing she does, will be to look at her shawl.

Miss Angle. Run, fly! Take a coach, and fly to Lord Lighththead's, with my compliments—I made a mistake—he did not send it; but another person, who now has claimed it, and I must return it immediately.

Fish. Well, madam, I'll do all I can.

Enter LADY MARY MAGPIE.

Lady Mary. Oh! Mrs. Fish, where are you going in such a hurry?

Fish. A little way, my lady, on a little business.

[Exit.]

Lady Mary. My dear Angle, I have been shopping. (Sits.) Well, marriage is an expensive thing: it is well it comes but once in one's life.

Miss Angle. With some people, madam, it comes oftener.

Lady Mary. And with some, not at all. Now that was very nearly the case with me, till I struck Mr. Walsley—By-the-by, he grows more and more attentive. He has been taking me to

the jeweller's; and, see there! all these are his presents.

Miss Angle. How profuse!

Lady Mary. But, my dear, you know all this is nothing to the shawl! that, to be sure, is the gentlest, most elegant present—As I live, here is the generous donor!

Enter MR. WALMSLEY.

Mr. W. Ladies, I presume, I don't intrude? *Miss Angle,* how do you do?—I beg pardon for not having called on you lately—I should—but I don't know—one is always happening of one accident or another, to prevent one's designs.

Lady Mary. Very true.

Mr. W. Has your ladyship been shewing *Miss Angle* any of your purchases?

Lady Mary. Yes; and she's quite in love with your generosity.

Mr. W. Psha! psha! no generosity at all—Have you seen the shawl, miss?

Miss Angle. Yes, sir.

Lady Mary. Yes, yes; I told you, you know, how much she admired it. And even poor *Fish* seemed to know its value.

Mr. W. Why, that shawl—

Lady Mary. I'll go fetch it.

Miss Angle. (*Holding her.*) Dear madam, don't trouble yourself.

Lady Mary. What, would you not wish to see it again?

Miss Angle. Yes,—indeed, I would—but—

Mr. W. Are you sure you have seen it?

Miss Angle. Yes, sir, very sure.

Mr. W. (*To Lady Mary.*) Why, then, sit still.

Lady Mary. No, Mr. *Walmsley*; the tea is waiting. *Miss Angle,* you must come and drink tea with Mr. *Walmsley* and me: we came on purpose to fetch you.

Mr. W. Your ladyship will excuse my stepping to a friend's in the next street. I'll be back instantly.

Lady Mary. Certainly. Come, *Miss Angle.*

Miss Angle. I'll wait on your ladyship in a moment.

Mr. W. (*Sighing.*) Will your ladyship honour me with your hand?

Lady Mary. (*Curtseys and smiles.*) The honour is done to me, Mr. *Walmsley.*

Mr. W. So I think (*Aside.*) Heigho! heigho! [*Leads her off.*]

Miss Angle. Their civility distracts me!—How impatient I am for the return of *Fish*?

Enter FISH, out of breath.

You have not been!

Fish. Dear madam, I met with his lordship in the street, going out with a heap of noblemen—Oh! madam, we are undone! (*Weeps.*)

Miss Angle. How! what? Don't keep me in suspense.

Fish. Why, madam, I called his lordship on one side; and, do you know, he had the impudence to say, that he did give you the shawl; and he was much obliged to you for returning it—

Miss Angle. Oh, heavens!

Fish. And, then, when I cried, and took on, he offered to pay me for it. And what do you think he offered me?—

Miss Angle. I don't know.

Fish. Five guineas. He said he had no more about him; so I thought I should get nothing else, and so I had better take that. (*Shewing the money.*)

Miss Angle. You did not?

Fish. Yes, madam; for I thought it might help to hire counsel to plead for us at the bar; for we shall certainly be taken up. (*Cries again.*)

Miss Angle. Heavens! conceal your uneasiness. I must go to *Lady Mary* directly; she expects me to tea.

Fish. Oh! How shall I ever look *Lady Mary* in the face?

Miss Angle. What distress!

Fish. Now, madam, now for it. (*Listening at the door.*) I hear her in her chamber, and now she'll miss it.

Miss Angle. Stay with me, *Fish*, or I shall faint!

Fish. Dear madam, don't look so frightened! if you do, indeed I shall go into fits; indeed I shall! for I know Mr. *Walmsley* is such a cruel man, he'll hang us both, notwithstanding we are two such poor, little, innocent lambs.

Miss Angle. Be more on your guard.

Fish. Ay, madam, we must put a good face on it; for if we don't, she'll suspect us. I won't cry any more, I am determined.

Re-enter LADY MARY MAGPIE.

Lady Mary. My dear *Angle*! and my dear *Fish*! I am terrified out my life! Do you know I laid my shawl on the bed; spread it on with my own hands; turned and looked at it again as I went out of the room, and saw it safe; and now 'tis gone; nor can I find it high nor low!

Miss Angle. Your ladyship does not think it is lost?

Fish. Lost, madam!—Is that likely, indeed?—We have no thieves in this house, I am sure.—You, (*to Miss Angle*) I suppose, madam, would not steal it? And I don't know what a poor servant, like me, should do with a shawl. I could not wear it, if I had it; besides, my character—

Miss Angle. Hush, *Fish*!

Lady Mary. I suspect no one, Mrs. *Fish*; heaven forbid I should! but the thing is gone.

Fish. Dear me, what a pity!

Miss Angle. Is your ladyship sure you laid it on the bed?

Lady Mary. Sure—just as I told you.

Fish. How, my lady, was it? The long ways on the bed, or the cross ways? Thus. (*Folding her handkerchief.*)

Miss Angle. Has your ladyship inquired below?

Lady Mary. Of every creature. But no one comes into my apartments, but my own servant, and she has just stepped out.

Fish. Then she knows where it is, I dare say, madam.

Lady Mary. If she does not, I don't know what I shall do; I believe I shall lose my senses. (*Sitting down.*)

Miss Angle. Dear madam, although it was certainly a most valuable thing, yet consider—

Fish. Ay, madam, consider it was saved from the storm as it came over. You ought to bless yourself you got it at all; though, to be sure, you have not had it long.

Lady Mary. Oh! if I had never seen it, I had been happy! I should not, then, have known my loss.

Miss Angle. But, madam, you are not certain you have lost it; stay till you see your woman.

Lady Mary. I know she has not removed it; I charged her not to touch it.—Oh! 'tis gone! 'tis gone! (*Rising.*)

Fish. (*In the same tone.*) Oh! that I did but know who had got it.

Lady Mary. Come, hither, *Betty*.

Enter BETTY.

You never saw your poor lady in such distress in your life. Did you touch my shawl?

Betty. No, my lady; I never touch anything.

Lady Mary. I told you so. And did you let nobody into my bed-chamber?

Betty. No, my lady; but I saw Mrs. Fish come out there this morning.

Fish. Oh! oh! oh!

Betty. Indeed, Mrs. Fish, I did.

Fish. Oh, dear! oh, dear! oh, dear!

Lady Mary. What do you cry for, child? If you took it, confess, and I'll forgive you.

Fish. I took it, madam! no, madam, that's not what I cry for: 'tis because I am sure I sha'n't live long. For if she saw me come out of your ladyship's room, it was my apparition; and you never live long after your apparition has been seen to walk.

Miss Angle. But were you there? Do you know anything of it?

Fish. No more than you do, madam.

[Exit Betty.]

Lady Mary. Well, I pity poor Mr. Walmsley! It is a hard thing to say; for it will be a great disappointment to him; but I don't think I'll marry, if I have lost it: no, if I have lost it, I won't be married.

Enter MR. WALMSLEY.

Mr. W. Ladies, I come to tell you—

Lady Mary. *(Walking in a rage.)* Don't tease me! don't argue with me! don't attempt to shake my resolution! I won't marry you!

Mr. W. Did I hear right! or did my ears deceive me? You won't marry me?

Lady Mary. No.

Mr. W. The bells shall ring, notwithstanding: the poor ringers sha'n't lose their fee. And I'll give a dinner, too; a very good dinner; a better dinner than I intended.

Lady Mary. Sir?

Mr. W. Here's an accident! Why, it will make me more than amends for that unlucky one in the morning. *(Aside.)*

Lady Mary. What does he say?

Mr. W. I was saying, I must give a very elegant entertainment on Thursday, notwithstanding the match is broken off. And I believe I shall write to my tenants, and have a bullock race.

Lady Mary. There, do you hear him?

Miss Angle. Dear Mr. Walmsley, her ladyship has been only in joke.

Mr. W. And 'tis the best joke I ever heard. Miss Angle, I never asked her to have me but once. I happened to be in a violent passion, and I did ask her once.

Lady Mary. There! he owns his violent passion.

Mr. W. But it was not for you. However, I was in a passion, and she snapped me up. You took me at my word, and now I take you at your's; and we have done with each other.

Lady Mary. Cruel savage! I dare say he has stolen the shawl himself, on purpose to break off the match.

Mr. W. What shawl?

Fish. Why, sir, the fine grand one you were so good as to give her ladyship: some wicked wretch has been making free with it.

Lady Mary. Yes, 'tis lost, 'tis gone! Don't you pity me?

Mr. W. No; I am vastly glad.

Lady Mary. Oh, heavens! This is the man that is to be soon my husband! the partner of all my joys, and all my sorrows!

Mr. W. No. Your ladyship's sorrows are too violent; and if your joys had proved the same, egad! I don't know which would have been the most insupportable.

Miss Angle. Dear sir, her ladyship was so much agitated merely because it was a present from you.

Mr. W. Well, miss, but where the deuce is it? Who has been in the house?

Miss Angle and Lady Mary. No creature.

Fish. The rats carried away one of my shoes last night, and ate a great hole in my apron.

Mr. W. I will find out what rat has got it. I'll go to Bow-street directly. You are sure nobody has been here to-day? Who was that countryman I met on the stairs this morning?

Fish. A Mr. Clownly, sir. A gentleman that called to see my mistress, because we all happened to be fellow-travellers on the road. Lord! sure, he did not take it?

Mr. W. I'll be d—d if he did not!

Miss Angle. Dear sir!

Mr. W. Write me down his name, Mrs. Fish, (or at least, the name he goes by,) and where he is to be found, if you know.

Fish. Oh! yes, sir.

Miss Angle. Heavens! dear sir, you judge wrong. I am sure he did not take it.

Fish. Now I have some little reason to think he did. Here's his direction, sir.

Lady Mary. The country gentleman you told me of! Do you suspect him, Miss Angle?

Miss Angle. No, madam, no. What can I do? I dare not confess. Lord Lighthead may justly say I sold it him. What will become of me? *(Aside.)*

Mr. W. Well, Miss Angle, I can do this gentleman no harm in having him taken up, and hearing what he has to say for himself; and I'll about it directly. Her ladyship has had one loss already, in losing me, and I don't think 'tis right she should have another. Besides, I have now a value for the thing. Who would have thought that little shawl would have turned out of such consequence? Providence preserved it from the storm at sea, to save me from a worse storm on land. *[Exit.]*

Lady Mary. I'll be as gentle as zephyrs. Plead for me, speak for me, dear Miss Angle.

Miss Angle. I will, madam; it is my duty: depend upon it I will reconcile you.

Enter BETTY.

Betty. Dear my lady, as Mr. Walmsley went out, he bid me observe if I should see the country gentleman, or his man, who were here this morning; for that he believed they were both no better than two highwaymen; and so, madam, the servant is just come up to the back door; and so, I am come to let your ladyship know.

Lady Mary. I am sorry Mr. Walmsley is gone.

Betty. Shall I go for a constable, madam?

Lady Mary. No; we'll proceed by fair means first. Fish, you know the servant, go you and call him in, and I'll question him.

Fish. Dear, my lady! a poor, ignorant creature! he knows nothing. You won't understand him, nor make him understand you.

Lady Mary. Oh! that ignorance may be pretended—put on for the time. Call him in. Why don't you go?

Fish. *(Aside.)* What can I say to him? If she should call him a thief, he'll, perhaps, serve her as he did the woman in the Piazza. *[Exit.]*

Miss Angle. These harmless creatures are no thieves.

Lady Mary. Dear Miss Angle, I wish to do them no injury; for if I could but secure Mr. Walmsley once more, I should not care if every thief in London were set at liberty. Here the man comes: what a hanging look he has! I hope he has not got pistols about him. Let us draw this way. *(They retire.)*

Enter FISH and HUMPHRY.

Fish. Lady Mary, my mistress's particular acquaintance, wants to ask you a few questions. What shall I say to him? *(Aside.)* She is a comical kind of a woman: you must know, she has been out to dinner; and whenever that is the case, she always—*(putting her hand up to her mouth as if she were drinking)*—you understand me? and then she comes home in such an ill temper, there is no peace or quietness for her.

Humphry. That is so like my wife.

Fish. She'll ask you a heap of foolish questions, but don't you mind her; only say yes, and no, and so on.

Humphry. Ay, that just suits me. I can say yes, and no, and am never at a loss. But, harkye! she don't fight in her cups, I hope; I've had one blow already, you know.

Lady Mary. *(Coming forward.)* So, Mr. Humphry! What shall I say to him? *(Aside.)* Your name is Humphry, I think?

Humphry. Yes, madam, I am much obliged to you.

Miss Angle. This is insupportable. *[Exit.]*

Lady Mary. And pray, how do you like London?

Humphry. Very well, I thank you, madam; pray, how do you like it?

Lady Mary. This folly is put on. *(Aside.)* Pray, Mr. Humphry, have you any acquaintance in town?

Humphry. None, except your honour. I have no acquaintance to give me a drop of anything to drink; and, you know, your honour, that's a sad thing.

Lady Mary. I do know it; and you sha'n't want for something to drink. Better prevail on him by kindness, and he may discover all. *(Aside.)* Here is something for you to drink. *(Gives money to Humphry.)*

Humphry. Thank your honour. Well, I declare, your staunch drinkers have more generosity than any people in the world. *(Aside.)*

Lady Mary. I am at a loss how to accuse this man, though I am sure either he or his master is guilty. *(Aside.)* Mr. Humphry, I am very sorry—

Humphry. Your honour?

Lady Mary. I sly, I am very sorry, very sorry, indeed—

Humphry. Oh! madam, never be sorry about it: for my part, I should hardly have found it out, if I had not been told of it; besides, nobody has anything to do with it but yourself; and if they had, you are such a good companion *(looking at his money)* nobody can be angry with you.

Lady Mary. What do you mean? No cross-purposes; but answer me directly. Do you know anything of my shawl?

Humphry. Your what, madam? your shawl? Ha, ha, ha! Oh! you'll have a fine head-ache for this to-morrow morning.

Lady Mary. What?

Humphry. I would not be so ill as you'll be for five guineas.

Lady Mary. The fellow is laughing at me. Fish, call a constable; I'll have him taken up.

Humphry. Take me up! Lord! madam, do

you lie down, only for half-an-hour, only just for half-an-hour, you can't think how refreshed you will be. It will clear all this away; *(pointing to his head)* and you'll be quite another woman.

Lady Mary. What do you mean?

Humphry. Nay, I know a nip is of vast consequence to me at these times; especially when my liquor makes me ill tempered.

Lady Mary. The man's mad. I'll have him secured directly. Call a constable.

Humphry. Do, your honour, let me persuade you to take a basin of camomile tea.

Enter MISS ANGLE.

Lady Mary. Miss Angle, come hither. Did you ever hear such an insult? Fish, Fish! call all the people of the house. Who's there? Come and secure this robber. My anger is roused, and I'll be revenged.

Humphry. How like my wife!

Miss Angle. Dear madam—

Enter CLOWNLY.

Clownly. What's the matter?

Miss Angle. Mr. Clownly, I rejoice to see you. Lady Mary has had some altercation with your servant, but I believe he has not been to blame.

Humphry. How her poor head will ache for this.

[Exit with Fish.]

Clownly. *(To Lady Mary.)* Dear madam, have the goodness—

Enter MR. WALMSLEY.

Mr. W. I have done the job: the thief is taken; and who do you think it is? The very person in the world—by Jupiter! I would not have lost the pleasure of taking her up for fifty times the value of the thing. I caught her just as she was going into Covent-garden theatre, with the goods upon her; so, with the help of one of the playhouse constables, I handed her *(in spite of her squalling,)* into a coach, and have brought her here that she may be properly exposed.

Lady Mary and Miss Angle. What can this mean?

Mr. W. *(Calling out.)* Desire the constable to bring up the woman in custody. Sir, *(to Clownly)* whoever you are, I beg your pardon; you are not a thief, that I know of; if you are, that's best known to yourself. I'm a little busy, sir, at present; you'll excuse me. Constable, bring up the prisoner! why don't you come? Surely there never was such an accident.

Enter Constable with LADY LOVEALL.

There! you see the goods are upon her.

Lady Loveall. Insupportable! Have not I affirmed that it was presented to me by Lord Lighthed?

Miss Angle. I am tortured! *(Aside.)*

Lady Loveall. It is not to be borne! Sir, you know his name. This is only a scheme, on purpose to distress me, in revenge for what I discovered this morning.

Mr. W. Ay, you were vastly pleased at that; and now 'tis only evening, and I have discovered something that pleases me.

Lady Loveall. Very well, go on: but I have sent my servant to Lord Lighthed, to inform him of the affair, and I am certain the moment he has found him, his lordship will come and clear me.

Mr. W. There wants no clearing: everything is clear enough.

Enter LORD LIGHTHEAD.

Lord Light. Dear uncle, dear Lady Loveall, what's the matter? Just as I was stepping into my coach, a summons came to me to attend you upon life and death. What's the matter?

Mr. W. No; no death in the case; I believe nothing more than hard labour on the Thames.

Lord Light. Sir, although you are my uncle, this insult to a lady with whom I have the honour to be acquainted, is not to be suffered. I presented the lady with that shawl; it was sent to me by this lady, (*pointing to Miss Angle*) and a few hours after she sent it, her servant received five guineas for it.

Miss Angle. 'Tis true; I confess it. Guilt and shame overpower me.

Mr. W. (*To Miss Angle.*) Why the devil did you confess? Nobody would have seen it in your face. Besides, you have robbed me of the pleasure of conducting her ladyship to a prison; and d— if ever I met with so great a disappointment.

Miss Angle. Conduct me, sir; I am ready to attend you.

Lady Mary. She has destroyed my peace, and I shall see her go to prison without a sigh.

Clownly. But I would not, without losing my life. Madam, I'll satisfy you for whatever loss you may have sustained by this lady.

Lady Mary. You can't satisfy me: I've lost Mr. Walmsley.

Mr. W. Ay, now ask her what she demands for me.

Lady Mary. I shall take nothing less than the gentleman himself.

Mr. W. Well, I like her for that; she does not undervalue me.

Miss Angle. Mr. Clownly, while you imagine you are giving your protection to a thief only, you are protecting a more despicable character. Had poverty seduced me to the crime of which I am accused, less would have been my remorse, less ought to have been the censure incurred; but vanity, folly, a mistaken confidence in that gentleman's honour, and my own attractions, prompted me to avail myself of a contemptible scheme in order to regain his acquaintance, which (admitting what he professed to be real) he himself would have rejoiced at. But the event has proved and discovered both our hearts; nor can I reproach him with the cruelty of his, while I experience the most poignant reproofs of an inward monitor for the guilty folly of my own.

Lady Loveall. And so this was only a scheme for the lady to procure a husband. Here, Lady Mary, is your beloved shawl. Take it, and take care—

Mr. W. Yes, do you take care of that, and I'll take care of myself. Yet, I don't know; perhaps I may have her; but if I may judge by appearance—

Lord Light. On that witness, who in company has not, throughout the adventures of this day, appeared culpable?

Mr. W. Very true. Even I myself, at one time, made no very innocent figure. These adventures shall, then, be a warning to us, never to judge with severity, while the parties have only appearances against them. [Exeunt.]

ABROAD AND AT HOME;

A COMIC OPERA, IN THREE ACTS.—BY J. G. HOLMAN.



Act I.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

SIR SIMON FLOURISH
OLD TESTY
YOUNG FLOURISH
YOUNG TESTY
CAPTAIN O'NEILL

HARCOURT
SNARE
BLUFF
KEEPER
DICKY

FOLLOWERS
SERVANTS
LADY FLOURISH
MISS HARTLEY
KITTY

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Room in Sir Simon Flourish's house.

Enter SIR SIMON FLOURISH and OLD TESTY.

Sir S. But, my good friend Testy, do lower the pitch of your voice a little; for to speak so very loud is really not well-bred.

Old T. I'll speak as loud as I like, and say what I like. D— your breeding! an ounce of honesty is worth an hundred weight of it.

Sir S. There now! ounce and hundred weight! Can't you contrive to think and talk a little like a man of fashion? When you quitted business, you should have disposed of your vulgarity with your stock in trade. Copy me. Do you find anything vulgar about me?

Old T. Psha! you and I lived too long together to think of cajoling each other: you are as vulgar as I am; I wish you were half as honest.

Sir S. My good friend, if we are not to attempt cajoling each other, the less you say about your honesty the better.

Old T. Why, what have you to say against my honesty?

Sir S. Nothing; I am too well bred: beside, I was your partner in trade for twenty-five years, I reaped half the profits of your ingenuity, and had you been honest, I might be poorer. But, my dear friend, let us settle our business a little quietly, if you will be so kind. Your son, you say, is come to town: good. You insist he may be introduced to our ward, Miss Hartley: he shall.

Old T. That's fair.

Sir S. I thought you'd say so; because 'tis very unfair to my own son, who, being absent from England, ought not to have a rival introduced to the lady I wish to be his wife. But remember, as she cannot marry without our joint consent, we must agree that which ever she prefers shall have our mutual approbation.

Old T. Why, yes.

Sir S. Ah! mine is the boy that will win her! Educated with every advantage; now receiving the last polish, the finishing stroke to his accomplishments, in a tour through Europe. Oh! he is a—

Old T. Yes, he is a pretty boy. That youth will put foreign ingenuity to the test. If they can send him away more dissipated than they find him, I will give them credit for one miracle.

Sir S. Leave your growling, good Mr. Bear, and look after your own unluckied cub. His country breeding will render him vastly pleasing to a young lady.

Old T. He is a model of perfection. Innocent himself, he will never suspect that evil exists; that may make him liable to imposition: but I have adopted a remedy in my choice of a profession for him.

Sir S. As how, pray?

Old T. To render him in some degree a match for the rogues of the world, I shall make him a lawyer.

Sir S. And I dare say his Yorkshire simplicity will qualify him admirably for the profession.

Old T. Well, Flourish, the only thing we want ever in one mind about was parting, and I conclude you have no objection to it now.

Sir S. None in the least.

Old T. I shall send my son; and mind, fair play's the word.

Sir S. Certainly. Let me see you out.

Old T. Oh! d— your civility! Stay where you are. [Exit.]

Sir S. Oh! you pretty behaved, accomplished creature! Is it not strange, that in so many years acquaintance the polish of my manners should not have induced him to rub off his vulgar rust?

Serv. Captain O'Neill, sir.

Sir S. Shew the Captain in. [Exit Serv.]

Enter CAPTAIN O'NEILL.

I rejoice to see you, Captain O'Neill. You are welcome to town.

Capt. Sir Simon Flourish, your most obedient. Permit me to inquire after her ladyship, and your lovely ward, Miss Hartley.

Sir S. Both in fine health and spirits; and they will very much regret not being at home to receive you.

Capt. Proud as I always am to pay them my profound respects, at this moment my business lies entirely with you, Sir Simon.

Sir S. Oh Lord! I hope he doesn't want to borrow money of me. (*Aside.*) Your commands, if you please, Captain.

Capt. An affair of honour compels me to be troublesome to you.

Sir S. An affair of honour compels him to be troublesome to me! Oh! that is worse than borrowing money. (*Aside.*)

Capt. My wounded reputation must be healed.

Sir S. Oh lord! Oh lord! How have I offended him? (*Aside.*)

Capt. Slander can only be washed out with blood.

Sir S. Oh! my precious blood! Oh dear, oh dear! I suppose I have said some ill-natured thing of him behind his back, for I am sure I never durst affront him to his face. (*Aside.*)

Capt. A little after your leaving Bath—

Sir S. A little after my leaving Bath! Oh! yes, some d—d good-natured friend blabbed when my back was turned. (*Aside.*) Why, really, Captain, I don't recollect what can have given you offence at Bath.

Capt. That I readily believe; for it would be hard to expect you to recollect what you never heard.

Sir S. Eh!

Capt. I say, Sir Simon, you cannot be expected to know the insult offered me by a man who did not arrive till you were gone.

Sir S. Oh! the man that insulted you did not arrive till I was gone? Lord! what a load is off my mind! (*Aside.*) And so, Captain, a villain had the audacity to insult you?

Capt. I was insulted, Sir Simon.

Sir S. You'll not let him live. You'll tear him to atoms; I know you will. Blood and thunder! if it were my case—

Capt. Be cool, Sir Simon; you are too desperate.

Sir S. I am; I know it is my fault; but—fire and fury!—Can I assist you in this business?

Capt. That is the very cause of my visit to you. Will you honour me so far as to deliver a bit of a message for me?

Sir S. What, carry a challenge for you?

Capt. Exactly.

Sir S. What, and be your second?

Capt. If I may take the liberty to ask such a favour?

Sir S. My dear Captain, give me your hand. I am the happiest man alive to serve a friend. I'll see you through this affair; I'll take care of you. Where am I to go? What am I to do first?

Capt. Why, first of all, there is a little preparatory business. Before I can receive satisfaction for the injury done me I must put it in the power of my adversary to give it me.

Sir S. As how, pray?

Capt. You must know, the young man is unlookingly in prison for debt; and as he has friends who are able to release him, I thought it would be taking a liberty to rob them of a pleasure they have the best right to; but they scorn to be outdone in politeness, and I believe, would let him remain till doomsday, before they would dispute the point with me.

Sir S. And so, you mean to pay his debts on purpose to fight him?

Capt. I do, and I wish I had a better motive; for though injured honour demands atonement, I would rather do one little bit of a kindness than revenge a thousand injuries.

Sir S. Will it cost you much?

Capt. More than is quite convenient, and therefore, I must trespass on your goodness in a second instance.

Sir S. Eh! what, how?

Capt. I shall be under the necessity of troubling you for three hundred pounds.

Sir S. Lord! it is a vast deal of money; I think you had better not fight him till there is an act of insolvency. Or, couldn't you get a snug little room in the prison, and fight him at his own home? that would be more genteel and accommodating. No, no; plague take it! that won't do; for, if you kill him, they will keep us there. I should like to see you fight amazingly; but then, to pay three hundred pounds for it, it is very dear: I only paid a guinea to see Johnson and big Ben, and their way of fighting is quite as fashionable now-a-days.

Capt. Understand me, Sir Simon. I don't intend to be under an obligation to you or any man. I have brought my commission as security for the sum.

Sir S. Security! My dear friend, do you think I want security? That is like a trader: there is no security with people of fashion. Yet I may as well take it by way of memorandum. (*Takes the commission.*) Well, tell me who he is, and where he is to be found. I'll carry him the money and the challenge.

Capt. Oh! by no means. He must not know the money comes from me. He may feel it unpleasant to be under an obligation to a man he has wronged; and to know that I had injured his feelings, would not be the way to satisfy mine.

Sir S. You are a very strange man! There is the money, manage it your own way. (*Gives him notes.*)

Capt. I thank you; and as soon as he has got the miseries of a prison a little out of his mind, you shall wait on him.

Sir S. As soon as you please. The sooner the better.

Capt. You are too impetuous, you fiery little fellow! We must not be in a hurry, for misfortune is apt to lower a man's spirit, and I scorn to meet a foe in a state of degradation.

Sir S. Well, you must act as you choose, only fight soon, for I shall think of nothing else. I know I am a desperate dog. When I was at school, they used to call me the little game cock. You are to do as you like, but were it my own affair, I should stand close, muzzle to muzzle, toe to toe. D—! I'd fight him in a saw-pit. I wonder I have not fought yet. I never was even asked to be a second till now; but, I believe, I know pretty well from the newspapers what a second has to do. To load the pistols, measure the ground, take care they stand near enough, and let them fire as long as they like. I believe that is all. Oh! no; if the parties are wounded, he is to leave them on the

ground, to the mercy of chance, and take care of himself.

Capt. I am not to dictate your conduct, Sir Simon; only it might be as well if every second would consider that his office is that of a friend to adjust an affair of honour, not of a sheriff to witness an execution. Good morning, Sir Simon. [*Exit.*]

Sir S. What a lucky dog I am! To be concerned in a duel was the only thing wanting to complete me as a man of fashion. I shall state the case next day in the newspapers, with my name at full length. Then a glorious confusion always takes place! People just remember the names, but forget whether they were principals or seconds. Oh! my character will be up: I shall be a man of fashion, indeed!

Enter LADY FLOURISH and MISS HARTLEY.

Lady F. My dear Sir Simon, how glad I am you're at home! If I am ever so little a while away from you, my darling, it appears a long, tedious age. How does my lovey do? Do look tender: 'tis so becoming to you; and beside, if you don't, you know you break my heart.

Sir S. Now really, Lady Flourish, you are too fond before company, indeed you are. 'Tis your only fault, my dear. But you ought to consider, that to be fond of a husband at all, is very unfashionable, and therefore, when a wife feels that amiable weakness, she ought never to expose it before people.

Lady F. But I can't help exposing it. Miss Hartley knows I have been talking of nothing else but my dearest the whole time I have been out: all the while I was buying my china, and my gold muslins, and my lace, I was longing to be at home with my darling.

Sir S. Lord! my dear, I wish you had indulged your longing, and then you wouldn't have laid out so much money. And how is my dear Miss Hartley? You don't seem in spirits.

Miss H. Indeed I am not; but the cause of my want of spirits must remain a secret to you. [*Aside.*] They, sir, who, like me, never knew misfortune, are apt to trifle with their felicity.

SONG.—MISS HARTLEY.

*The heart that has ne'er tasted sorrow
E'en happiness often will cloy;
And ne'er from misery borrow
Our knowledge of exquisite joy.*

*To those who all anguish would smother,
The best use of life is unknown;
To feel for the woes of another,
Or value the bliss that's their own.*

Sir S. Old Testy's stupid bumpkin of a son is to be introduced to you this morning: but there is no fear of his rivalling my boy Jack. How I long to see the rogue again! Where is he now, I wonder? May be, eating macaroni with the grand duke, or having the honour of kissing the toe of his holiness the pope. Oh! what high fellows my son is living with!

Lady F. Wherever he is, my dearest, he can meet nobody so fine a gentleman as his papa.

Sir S. Oh! you are too partial, Lady Flourish, a great deal; a great deal too partial. I have news for you: Captain O'Neill has been here.

Lady F. Captain O'Neill in town?

Sir S. I should like to tell them of his engaging me to be his second. [*Aside.*] You know the Captain is a man of great bravery, and knowing me to be of the same turn—um—um—we have had a good deal of conversation on the subject of duelling.

Lady F. I hope the Captain is not going to fight a duel? [*Alarmed.*]

Sir S. Oh dear! no.

Lady F. I am glad to hear you say so. I was quite agitated at the thought of any friend of your's being engaged in so horrid a business.

Sir S. I must not blab, I find. She'd lay an information, and destroy my renown. Were I a principal instead of a second, I should be vastly obliged to her. [*Aside.*] I wonder how many duels Jack has fought abroad—that is, fought, or been second in. 'Tis just the same thing. The credit is the same, and so is the danger, pretty nearly; for the principals are often so cursedly frightened that it is an even chance whether they hit their antagonist, or their own second.

Miss H. Though I abhor the practice, yet when men deem such trials necessary, I hope they conduct themselves with proper courage.

Sir S. That is mighty well of you. You don't know what it is to receive a man's fire, or you would not talk so lightly about it.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Young Mr. Testy, sir.

Sir S. Very well.

[*Exit Serv.*]

Lady F. Come, my dear, rest yourself a little before you encounter the fatigue of this bumpkin's conversation.

Sir S. Ay, do; I'll talk to him first.

[*Exeunt Lady F. and Miss H.*]

Enter YOUNG TESTY.

Well, Tom, I'm glad to see you: you are welcome to London. Oh! what a quiz it is! [*Aside.*]

Young T. Thank you, thank you, Sir Simon. Lord, Lord! why, you be quite another guise kind of a man than what you used to be. I remember, as thof it was but yesterday, when father and you used to weigh I and Jack Flourish in the great warehouse scales, and I always were heaviest.

Sir S. Yes, and you'll continue heaviest as long as you live. But, Tom, don't talk about weights and scales; 'tis so vulgar. D—trade, and all that belongs to it. I am a gentleman and a knight now.

Young T. Yes, Sir Simon, so they tell me; but for all that, don't d—trade; for I don't think as how you'd ha' been a gentleman and a knight, if the money you got by the warehouse had not given you a bit of a lift.

Sir S. Oh! the vulgar young dog! [*Aside.*]

Young T. Well, Sir Simon, father sent me a courting; and so, you see, I am come; so no more words, let's set about it.

Sir S. Oh! yes, with all my heart. I'll see if Miss Hartley is ready to receive you. What a young savage! I dare say they would buy him at Exeter 'Change. [*Aside and exit.*]

Young T. Well, faint heart never won fair lady. Dang it! I'll show her a Yorkshire boy is not afraid of a pretty girl.

SONG.—YOUNG TESTY.

*I ne'er by a lass yet was scouted,
I know the right method to get her;
No cringing for me,
I'll soon let her see
That I'm bold, and she'll like me the better.*

*I'm a boy that's not easily flouted,
If she give herself airs, why, e'en let her;
When to kiss her I try,
"You're rude, sir," she'll cry,
"Why, I am, and you like me the better."*

*When she finds that I'm not to be routed,
And at morn, noon, and night I beset her,
She'll alter her tone,
And readily own,
Though I'm rude, that she likes me the better.*

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*Another Room in Sir Simon Flourish's house.*

Enter SIR SIMON FLOURISH and KITTY.

Sir S. And now give me Miss, you little rogue you. (*Kisses her.*)

Kitty. Lard! Sir Simon, how can you be so rude!

Sir S. Now, Kitty, mind you say all the ill-natured things you can to your young mistress of this country blockhead. Always praise my son Jack to her, and he'll bring you over trinkets enough for you to set up a raffle-shop at Margate. Here the booby comes. Now you may go and fetch Miss Hartley.

Enter YOUNG TESTY.

There, Mr. Testy, good bye: I leave you to your love-making. What a lout it is!

[Aside to Kitty, and exit.]
Young T. So, this be young madam that father wants me to marry. Egad! she is a tight lass enow! (*Aside.*) Well, miss, and so father says as how he wishes I'd marry you; and so, d'ye see? if you've no mighty objection, we may even be axed in church together.

Kitty. What does the booby mean? I ord! he takes me for my mistress. Not such a booby as I thought him. (*Aside.*)

Young T. Why, you don't answer, miss. Speak out: don't be shame-faced. So, as I was saying, I have no disliking to you, nor liking for anybody else, and if you have no particular disliking to me more than to other people, I dare say we shall be as happy a couple as goes.

Kitty. Gemini! what a flutter I am in! If I can but make him believe I am my mistress, my fortune is made. I must try to behave like a lady; but if I am modest, like my mistress, I shall never pass upon him. No, no; I must be free and dashing, as fine ladies are in general. (*Aside.*) Why, young man, I have been considering what you have been saying; and, as I don't think you quite so great a brute as I expected you to be, I don't much care if I take you upon trial.

Young T. Take me upon trial! What, does she make a horse of me? But, dang it! free and easy! I like her the better. (*Aside.*) But mayhap, miss, if I am not so great a brute now, I may be a greater when I am married. Ah! what do you say at, my tight filly?

Kitty. I'll do all I can to make you fashionable.

Young T. Thank you, thank you. I'll do as much for you. Dang it! I didn't think I should have been so much at home with a fine lady.

Kitty. What is your name, young man?

Young T. Tom Testy.

Kitty. Well, Tom—

Young T. Tom! How familiar and kind!

Kitty. I'll have you; Tom. 'Tis a bargain.

Young T. Is it? There's my hand, and my lips, too. How little we know in Yorkshire about London folk. They told me, your fine ladies were squeamish and shy, and all that nonsense.

Kitty. No, Tom. That is quite gone by in high life.

Young T. So much the better. Well, but miss, and when shall we be married? eh! Let it be soon.

Kitty. When you like; 'tis all one to me. Only, Tom, don't mention it, let us be snug. We'll steal a march; marry first, and tell the old ones after.

Young T. So we will: that will be good fun.

Kitty. Now mind, when you go home to your father, you don't tell him what we have settled.

Young T. No, not I; but I don't live at father's; I've got a place of my own, do as I like, live in the Temple. I am to be a counsellor, father says, and a plaguy good one I shall make; for it is all done

by eating, and I have a fine appetite, if the London air don't spoil it. Lord! what a happy life we shall lead!

DUETT.—KITTY and YOUNG TESTY.

Kitty. When I'm married, ~~I'll~~ be gay,
Still flaunting as shall please me;
Careless what I do or say,
No power on earth shall tease me.
If you e'er, in jealous spite,
Should hint at horns ideal,
Then my way to set you right
Will be to make them real.

Young T. Husbands, now, for horns you care,
Must be less wise than nice, ma'am,
While, at market, horns will bear
So very high a price, ma'am:
And for lawyers, too, like me,
No trouble it at all is,
Since Horn-fair remov'd we see
To Westminster old hall is.

Both. Then since we agree so easy to be,
Let's marry as soon as we can;
For, not to demur, whate'er may occur,
Is, surely, the very best plan. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The King's Bench Prison.*

Enter HARCOURT.

Har. Was ever man more miserably circumstanced? Bred up as heir to a splendid fortune, and all my hopes destroyed by the caprice of a splenetic old uncle. Shut up here, in the King's Bench, for debt; and, not only deprived of the happiness of beholding the woman I adore, but ashamed to acquaint her with the wretchedness of my situation.

AIR.—HARCOURT.

Once, all that could enchant the sight
Enraptur'd fancy drew,
And deck'd each prospect of delight
With tints of brightest hue.
In fairy loveliness array'd,
The brautious objects shone,
While charm'd I gas'd, Hope sweetly said,
"These prospects are thine own."

But fancy, now, from forms of joy,
Averts her sick'ning sight;
Her pencil horrors wild employ,
And scenes of blackest night;
The dismal pictures rise to view
Where direst ills combine,
Despair exclaims, "Bid Hope adieu,
These prospects now are thine."

Enter a Servant belonging to the Prison.

Serv. Mr. Flourish, sir has sent you the book of travels he borrow'd; and says he will call on you presently.

Har. That good-humoured, whimsical fellow, Flourish, is always welcome to me.

Serv. It is queer enough that his father, Sir Simon Flourish, should be hummed so as to think he is going the tour of Europe, when, all the while, he never got a step farther than St. George's Fields. [*Exit.*]

Young F. (*Singing without.*) "Over the hills," &c.
Har. Here he comes.

Enter YOUNG FLOURISH in a shabby light-coloured coat, with black breeches and boots.

Young F. Ah! my boy, Harcourt, how are you?

Har. Why, Jack, what makes you footed?

Young F. A man ought to be footed when he's on a journey. A'n't I going the tour of Europe?

Har. Oh! I beg your pardon; I had forgot: but you don't seem furnished with a very elegant riding dress; boots and black are not very correct—ah!

Young F. The customs of countries differ: but to tell you the truth, so much travelling has made vast havoc among my leather, and as for my black small-clothes, I wear them as mourning for the demise of my last coloured pair.

Har. But, my dear Jack, what can be the joke of your staying in this sad place?

Young F. All the joke was in getting here. Staying is not quite so comical.

Har. But, Jack, I must know what brought you here?

Young F. Poll.

Har. Poll! What Poll?

Young F. Not know Poll! Where the devil have you lived? Not know Poll? Why, Poll is the rage—in Hyde Park every morning—rides the best horse—drives the best curriole—gives the best dinners; d—e! the first duteess in the land envies Poll.

Har. I beg Poll's pardon for not knowing her.

Young F. So you ought, for Poll's familiar and kind, she'd have no objection to knowing you. But the thing is, father said I should be a man of fashion, and so I am, a'n't I? D—e! you still look at my legs: well, black-legs don't make a bit less a man of fashion.

Har. Oh! by no means.

Young F. Well, but about Poll. As I was to be a man of fashion, who so proper to make me one as Poll? Poll has made and unmade half the fine men of the day. I kept Poll when I was at school; Poll stuck to me at college; and when father fixed I should travel, and see the world, who so fit to shew it me as Poll?

Har. Well, why didn't Poll shew it you?

Young F. She did, she shewed me here.

Har. But why not take her abroad with you?

Young F. She would not go. Poll said she would do anything but cross the water with me. And I could not find in my heart to go abroad without her. So I touched father's cash, and resolved to finish my education in my own country.

Har. Very patriotic, truly!

Young F. Well, father went to Bath—I staid in town—the money flew—Poll knew how to dash it. When all was gone, it was natural enough to come here, you know.

Har. But how were you able to leave Poll?

Young F. She did not trouble me to think about that: when the money was gone, Poll left me.

Har. So Poll would not follow your fortunes to the King's Bench? How unkind!

Young F. So I told her: "Ah! Poll!" said I, "'tis d—d ill-natured to leave me."

Har. And what did she say?

Young F. She only laughed, and said, she told me at first, she'd do anything but cross the water with me.

Har. You must throw yourself on your father's mercy at last, and the sooner you do it the better.

Enter Servant with a letter.

Young F. For me?

Serv. No, sir; for Mr. Harcourt.

Young F. Ah! nobody writes to me.

Har. (Reads.) "I am led to believe the enclosed notes will liberate you. They are sent for that purpose." Astonishing! No name! Does anybody wait?

Serv. No, sir.

Har. This must be from my dear girl. [Exit.

Young F. Ah! you are a happy fellow! Your dear girl writes to you. Though Poll would not cross the water, she might send me a letter now and then. It is d—d unkind. But no, no, poor

girl, I shouldn't scold her for what she can't help; I ought to remember Poll can't write.

Har. This must be my Harriot's generosity. Charming girl! How could she discover my situation? But what will ~~not~~ love discover?

Young F. So, you're going to leave me. 'Tis devilish hard to be cut by everybody.

Har. Depend on it, my dear fellow, I will be with you soon.

Young F. Ah! do come and see me. Don't be like Poll, afraid of crossing the water.

Har. No, Jack, depend upon it. Adieu! Now, to my charming girl. [Exit.

Young F. Ah! your's is a charming girl, indeed, to send you money. If Poll had a million, I dare say she wouldn't think of sending me a shilling, and yet she used to say she loved me vastly.

SONG.—YOUNG FLOURISH.

*When to my pretty Poll I went,
And I to travel sought her,
"Ah! stay at home, dear Jack," says she,
"I cannot cross the water."
What could I do? Away I flew,
A curriole I bought her;
Six smoking bays, all Hyde Park's gaze,
From Tattersall's I brought her.
"Dear Jack," says she, "how kind you be!
(She'd coax like Eve's own daughter,)
With you I will both live and die,
Do all but cross the water."
Then dashing, dashing through the town,
She drove, the stars of all;
The echo of her rattling wheels
Was, "There goes pretty Poll!
Oh! pretty, pretty Poll!"
From ev'ry tongue the echo rung
"See, there goes pretty Poll!"
What a lad then was I!
All to dress at me try,
And my praise to withhold none so currish,
With a girl so divine!
Such dinners! such wine!
What a d—d clever dog was Jack Flourish!
But an end to my cash,
And my fame goes to smash,
No friends my good qualities nourish;
For they, once so kind,
Now agree in one mind,
What a d—d stupid flat was Jack Flourish!
Thus cut by my friends, by bailiffs seiz'd,
And this vile timbo wear,
Yet with one hope I still was pleas'd,
That Poll my cage would cheer.
To Poll I told where I must go,
And not to leave me sought her;
She, laughing, cried, "Dear Jack, you know
"I cannot cross the water." [Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Garden belonging to Sir Simon Flourish's house.

MISS HARTLEY discovered.

Miss H. How distressing is my Harcourt's absence! and the mysterious concealment of his residence increases my anxiety. Can he think so meanly of me, as to suppose his loss of fortune will lessen my affection?

AIR.—MISS HARTLEY.

*Not mine the narrow soul, assur'd,
In riches joy to find;
Not mine by tile's glare allur'd,
To genuine merit blind.
In wealth and rank who seek for bliss,
Contempt or pity move,
They never choose so much amiss,
Whose hearts were form'd for love.*

Enter HARCOURT.

Har. My life!

Miss H. Oh! Charles.

Har. My angel, what a tedious absence!

Miss H. If my Charles thought it so, why not sooner fly to his adoring Harriot?

Har. I followed you to Bath, but unluckily you had left it the day before I arrived; and what then happened I could not prevail on myself to disclose to you: I was resolved to bear my misfortunes alone; but your kindness has dispelled them, and now I fly with gratitude to thank my deliverer.

Miss H. Your deliverer!

Har. Yes, my Harriot; attempt not to conceal your generous conduct. But for you, a prison would have been my habitation for life.

Miss H. A prison, Charles! Has such been your distress, and yet conceal it from me?

Har. Can it be possible that I am not indebted to you for my deliverance?

Miss H. By concealing from me your situation, you prevented me from being your deliverer. Oh! Charles, that was a false pride, which avoided the assistance of her who loves you. True affection should seek occasions for receiving kindness, conscious it bestows most delight when it affords the power of obliging.

Har. Pardon me, Harriot. Poverty will be proud. But what am I to think? See here, my love, this cover enclosed notes sufficient to discharge my debts.

Miss H. Whoever has had the pleasure of releasing you claims my gratitude, yet excites my envy.

Har. Generous girl! To avoid suspicion, I had better leave you now, my Harriot.

DUETT.—HARCOURT and MISS HARTLEY.

Miss H. Ah! must you away while nature's so gay,

And all things to happiness move?

Hark! the feather'd warbler's throat

Pours of joy the swelling note,

'Tis inspir'd by the spirit of love.

Har. Ah! wert thou away, 'twould cease to be gay,

No longer to happiness move,

'Tis thou art the soul

Gives life to the whole,

And infuses the spirit of love.

Miss H. Hark! the tuneful current near

Sweetly steals upon mine ear;

And its gentle murmurs prove

'Tis inspir'd by the spirit of love.

Har. Ah! dear girl, wert thou not here,

No more these sounds would sweet appear,

The murmur'g stream would cease to prove

'Tis inspir'd by the spirit of love.

Both. Ah! dear youth, wert thou away,

Ah! dear girl, wert thou away,

No more would nature's face be gay;

No more each sound would sweetly prove

'Tis inspir'd by the spirit of love.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Sir Simon Flourish's house.

Enter LADY FLOURISH and KITTY.

Lady F. Kitty, did you see old Testy's Yorkshire prodigy when he was here?

Kitty. Yes, my lady.

Lady F. I conclude he is a shocking Saracen.

Kitty. Yes, my lady.

Lady F. I suppose Miss Hartley votes him a sad bore.

Kitty. Lard! your ladyship, I could not think of Miss Hartley being troubled with such a brute of

a fellow; especially, my lady, as his honour, Sir Simon, designs miss for his own son; so, an't please you, my lady, I sent him away with a flea in his ear.

Enter CAPTAIN O'NEILL.

Lady F. Captain O'Neill, I am prodigiously happy to see you. Kitty, you need not wait.

[*Exit Kitty.*]

Capt. I protest and vow, that meeting your ladyship gives me the most superlative pleasure.

Lady F. Why, then, I protest and vow the pleasure is mutual.

Capt. Your ladyship does me a great deal of honour. I will beg of her ladyship to say a kind word for me to Miss Hartley, for I want very much to be thought well of by that lovely girl. (*Aside.*) I am glad to find your ladyship alone.

Lady F. Glad to find me alone, Captain?

Capt. Prodigiously so, my lady. I have a favour to beg of your ladyship.

Lady F. A favour of me! I hope, Captain, you are not going to ask anything improper.

Capt. I hope your ladyship will not think it so.

Lady F. Indeed but I shall, if I ought to think it so; for though you are a very pretty man, and very much of a gentleman, and dance delightfully, and have a profusion of elegant accomplishments, and—

Capt. Oh! madam, madam, you confuse me.

Lady F. Do I? Well, I protest, 'tis very becoming to you. Confusion seems quite natural to you; but I will have compassion on your modesty.

Capt. It is very generous in your ladyship to compassionate a national infirmity. Bashfulness and the brogue always go together. But let me intreat you to take an interest in my happiness.

Lady F. I take an interest in your happiness! You'll absolutely make me faint.

Capt. What should your ladyship faint about? Why, my lady, I but desire—

Lady F. Oh! you should conquer your desires!

Capt. But I only wish—

Lady F. Fie, fie! I must not gratify your wishes. Don't press me any further; for though I have a great deal of resolution, you have an infinity of insinuation.

Capt. I wish you would let me insinuate my meaning.

Lady F. Don't shock me. I know what you want to insinuate. Think what a dreadful thing it is to seduce the wife of your friend.

Capt. My lady—

Lady F. Oh! Captain O'Neill, how can you go to persuade me to be unfaithful to poor, dear, little Sir Simon?

Enter SIR SIMON FLOURISH.

Sir S. Can I believe my ears? Why, fire and fury! Captain O'Neill, how durst you think of such a thing?

Capt. Here's a blessed piece of a blunder!

Lady F. Sir Simon, I'm quite shocked at your intrusion. How can you be so ill-bred? I beg you'll not interfere with my concerns. I am myself the guardian of my honour, and will not brook so insolent a monitor. [*Exit.*]

Sir S. Oh! you violator of friendship! Oh! you seducer! Why, Tarquin was a Joseph to you.

Capt. Sir Simon, upon my honour, I meant not the least harm.

Sir S. Why, did I not hear her say you wanted her to be unfaithful to poor, dear, little Sir Simon?

Capt. Will you hear me, Sir Simon?

Sir S. No, you monster of iniquity! you wanted to separate a pair of fine turtle-doves. You deluder of innocence, you destroyer of the peace of families!

Capt. Very well, Sir Simon, I plainly see what you mean. You are too fond of fighting to listen to reason; and since nothing but spilling my innocent blood will appease you, I must submit. There, Sir Simon; (*pulling out pistols*) I little thought to cock either of these against you.

Sir S. Cock them against me!

Capt. Take your choice, sir.

Sir S. Take my choice! No, I sha'n't take my choice.

Capt. Oh! you may trust to them; they have done execution in their time. But may be, you don't think one a piece enough? Well, then, fetch a pair of your own; I'll measure out a few paces while you are gone.

Sir S. A few paces!

Capt. Oh! I beg your pardon; I had forgot: you like to fight muzzle to muzzle.

Sir S. Muzzle to muzzle! Oh Lord! Oh Lord!

Capt. Well, I must assent to your savage propensities. I must fight you how you like.

Sir S. But d—e if I'll fight at all!

Capt. Not fight me? Oh! the patience of St. Patrick could not brook such contemptuous treatment. You won't even fight me?

Sir S. I won't upon my soul.

Capt. You positively refuse to treat me like a gentleman? Oh! what extremities you drive me to! (*Strikes Sir S. with his cane.*) How can you distress me so?

Sir S. How the devil can you distress me so?

Capt. Not fight me? Oh! 'tis cruel treatment!

Sir S. It is, upon my soul.

Capt. Now will you fight me?

Sir S. You are taking the worst way in the world to persuade me.

Capt. I'll try it a little more, however.

Sir S. Hold, for mercy! I'll ask your pardon—anything. What will satisfy you?

Capt. Nothing that a poltroon can offer. I am sorry I have degraded myself by striking a coward.

Sir S. So am I—very.

Capt. Oh! you are a desperate dog! You would stand close, toe to toe, muzzle to muzzle. D—e! you'd fight in a saw-pit. Oh! you are a pretty fellow for a second!

Sir S. Very well for a second, but not quite so well for a principal. But, Captain, I hope you'll be kind enough not to mention this trifling affair; for 'tis a pity the reputation a man has been collecting his whole life, should be whisked away in a moment. What a vapour honour is, that it will fly away in the dusting a coat! Do be tender, Captain; pray, don't mention this.

Capt. In my opinion, you are too contemptible to be mentioned at all.

Sir S. Your opinion I shall always have the highest respect for.

Capt. Good b'ye, my little game cock! I shall remember you always stand muzzle to muzzle. Oh! you are a desperate dog, indeed! [*Exit.*]

Sir S. I have been very unlucky. I am afraid I have not acted quite like a man of fashion. In the first place, to interrupt a gentleman's making love to my wife, was not at all like a man of fashion; no, that was very low breeding, indeed. As to getting a beating, that will happen to men of fashion, now and then. But one part of my behaviour, I hope, acts all to rights—I behaved very ill, and I asked pardon. If that is not like a man of fashion, the devil's in it. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*Inside of the King's Bench Prison, with a view of the high wall.*

Enter YOUNG FLOURISH.

Young F. I have been puzzling over maps, these two hours, to find out where I have been, or rather,

where I ought to have been; and 'tis a great deal more troublesome to travel in imagination than in reality: for I must keep my eyes open, while I am tracing my journey on paper; but if I had gone it in earnest, I might have slept comfortably from post to post, as most travellers do.

Enter HARCOURT and CAPTAIN O'NEILL.

Ah! Charles, my boy! coming to see me so soon is kind, indeed.

Har. And I have brought a friend to see you.

Capt. What a mighty queer world we live in! This is a gentleman I am proud to hear call me friend, and yet, half-an-hour ago, I was ready to cut his throat.

Young F. Cut your friend's throat?

Capt. Why, it happens every day, don't it? Your making a wonder of that proves you live out of the world.

Young F. By your account, to live out of the world seems the only chance one has to live at all.

Capt. You are pretty right there; for between those who, having too little courage, want to be thought to have enough, and those who have so much 'tis always boiling over, a quiet man's life is in a constant state of requisition.

Young F. But how came you two to quarrel?

Capt. The only way that two honest men can quarrel—by mistake. However, before we troubled our pistols to speak for us, we thought it no dishonour to speak a little for ourselves; by which means we found out that though we met to settle a dispute, devil a dispute we had to settle.

Young F. How was that?

Capt. Why, it appears that this same good-looking countenance of mine is unlucky enough to resemble the phiz of a gentleman blacklegs, who by a little trick or two in the way of his trade, disburthened our friend of his cash. He thought, when he met me in the rooms at Bath, (and the place, to be sure, was not much in my favour,) that he had nicked his man, and accosted me accordingly. We lost one another in the crowd, and he departed in his error. I learnt his name, and followed him to London; where, if I hadn't had wisdom enough to ask an explanation, I might have been sent out of the world for the misfortune of resembling a scoundrel.

Har. How much I must ever feel bound to you!

Capt. Ah! Harcourt, appearances are very deceitful, and he who forms his opinions from them will blunder on in the dark, let the sun shine ever so bright.

Young F. And that is blundering, indeed.

Har. Captain O'Neill, my friend, Jack Flourish, is a very whimsical fellow: if he had been out of limbo you would have seen him earlier; for I should have brought him for my second.

Young F. No, you would not: for to be second in a duel is, in my mind, an employment pretty nearly as honourable as to be Jack Ketch's deputy.

Capt. All the Flourishes are not of that opinion. I presume, you are no relation to that little game cock, Sir Simon?

Young F. My father's little game-cock?

Capt. Sir Simon your father! Why, Sir Simon's son is on his travels.

Young F. Yes, Sir Simon's son travels like a mill-horse, a great deal in a small space. But here he is; here's Jack Flourish; and if he had not had the wisdom to stay at home, he would have lost the good fortune of becoming acquainted with you. He is a fool who quits Old England, for d—e, if he'll find such fellows anywhere as he leaves behind him.

Capt. I should be jealous of your praise if Old England and Old Ireland were not exactly the same spot of ground. So you are, really and truly,

the fine travelled young gentleman, Mr. Flourish? Oh! you are a hopeful boy! I assure you, your father believes you have been seen and admired in every court in Europe.

Young F. So I ought to have been seen and admired in every court in Europe, but I was unluckily introduced at the court of King's Bench, and am not likely to visit any other court in a hurry.

Har. You must contrive to be on terms with your father, to assist me in obtaining his sanction to my passion for his ward, Miss Hartley.

Capt. What! you have a passion for Miss Hartley? So have I too. That is unlucky.

Har. A passion for Miss Hartley?

Capt. Yes: but I am by no means sure she has a passion for me; so, if you can prove she has for you, there are two to one against me.

Young F. I'll lay the odds.

Capt. Is it so? Enough said, then. He that can't make sport, never let him spoil it. 'Tis true, I had a liking for the young lady, but the first principle of my liking was to make her happy; and as long as that is brought about, whether by you or me, is the same thing among friends. Ha, ha, ha! My young traveller, I can't help laughing to think that this very morning I was dusting the coat of a relation of your's.

Young F. That was very kind of you; and while your hand is in I'll thank you to dust mine, for I'm sure it wants it.

Capt. Farewell, my young traveller; every assistance I can give, you may depend on. Well, Charles, you are a lucky dog to get such a sweet girl as Miss Hartley. Oh! the dear creatures, how I love them!

SONG.—CAPTAIN O'NEIL.

*In the smiles of the fair
Is the best cure for care,
If ruffled our bosom, they charm it to ease;
Or with eye sweetly glancing,
Our hearts they set dancing,
They calm us and rouse us e'en just as they please.*

*The wise prop of a state,
Or the warrior so great,
Oft bows down to kiss beauty's rod on his knees;
'Tis the province of beauty
To teach men their duty,
For women can do with us just what they please.*

*E'en the miser quits gold,
Their bright charms to behold,
And gives them his soul, for he yields them his keys;
The dear rogues are so clever,
Oh! bless 'em for ever,
And may they rule over us just as they please. [Exit.]*

Har. Jack, I've been thinking how you are to get at liberty.

Young F. Have you? Well, how?

Har. Acquaint your father that you are returned from abroad, then get a rule for the day, and see him: his joy at the sight of you may soften his heart, and pave the way for your forgiveness.

Young F. Well said. I'll do it: I'll have a rule: I'll hire a horse, as we call it.

Har. Well, my boy, success attend you. All the assistance I can give you, depend on. Farewell, my young traveller! [Exit.]

Young F. D—e! 'tis a lucky thought. Ay, but they won't trust me out alone. I must take one of their watch-dogs along with me. How shall I manage that? I have it. Yonder goes little Dicky. That's lucky! He's the man for my purpose. I must go to Monmouth-street myself to brush up appearances, and so I'll take little Dicky with me, dress him smartly, and introduce him to my father as a foreign nobleman who came over with me.

Well said! Huzza! Dicky, Dicky! I am so happy that I shall see the outside of that d—d wall once more!

Enter DICKY.

Dicky. Do you want me, Master Flourish?

Young F. Dicky, my boy, you are a clever little fellow; you are the only man that can serve me.

Dicky. Vy, then, make it vorth my while, and nobody readier.

Young F. I am going to have a rule: hire a horse, as we call it; and you shall get up behind. There is nobody else in your way fit for a gentleman's companion: you are the only genteel article.

Dicky. To be sure, they are d—d vulgar.

Young F. I am going to take you to my father's, and you must pass for a man of fashion.

Dicky. Well, my master, I'll try. I shall look it very well.

Young F. No, no: I must put you on a laced coat.

DUETT.—YOUNG FLOURISH and DICKY.

Young F. Dicky, I shall smartly dress you.

Dicky. Why, I'm smart enough, Lord bless you!

Young F. No, no.

Dicky. Why so?

What am I to pass for, pray?

Young F. For a man of rank, I say.

Dicky. Why, then, don't I hit it quite?

Sure, I'm dress'd exactly right.

*Young F. Why, really, Dicky, I must own
You're in the style of men of ton;
In side-boxes oft we view
Men of fashion dress'd like you.*

*Dicky. In side-boxes oft you see
Men of fashion dress'd like me.*

*Young F. Very true,
Just like you;
But that will not with daddy do.*

Dicky. Why so?

*Young F. You must know,
Dad's a bit of the old beau,
And thinks it most becoming when
Men of fashion dress like gentlemen.*

*Dicky. In side-boxes oft you see
Men of fashion dress'd like me.*

*Young F. Dad thinks it most becoming when
Men of fashion dress like gentlemen.*

[Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.—Young Testy's Chambers in the Temple.

YOUNG TESTY and SNARE discovered.

Snare. And so you like London prodigiously?

Young T. Hugely! What did my quiz of a father mean by keeping me in the country so long? I ought to have been as wise as I am now five years ago.

Snare. To be sure; and your knowledge would not have surprised people either.

Young T. No, not at all. I am not half so knowing as I ought to be, for all I was bred in Yorkshire.

Snare. That was in your favour.

Young T. Oh! 'twas heaven's mercy I was pitched into a 'outish country, or I should never have been able to shew my face here. Why, boys of sixteen here know a great deal more than I do.

Snare. Boys of sixteen! Men of sixteen, you mean. Sixteen! why, 'tis the prime of a man's life. Who are your greatest men on the turf? your men of sixteen. Who keep your dashing women in the greatest style? your men of sixteen.

SCENE 5.]

ABROAD AND AT HOME.

Young T. So I thought. It came into my head that keeping your dashing women was a very young trick.

Snare. Everything is now in a state of forwardness unknown to our ancestors. London may be termed an immense hot-house, where everything is forced. You eat your fruit before it is in season. You run through your constitution before it is matured. You spend your estate before you are in possession, and get divorced from your wife before you ought to have married. 'Tis a lively system, is it not?

Young T. Ay, a short life and a merry one.

Snare. But you were out of luck last night.

Young T. Yes, a little; and when I had lost all my money, it was vastly friendly of you to lend me the two hundred pounds; but I lost them too.

Snare. It will happen so sometimes. A lad of spirit does not mind such trifles. I will thank you, though, to return me the money: for I am rather out of cash.

Young T. Eh!

Snare. I'll thank you for the two hundred pounds I lent you.

Young T. My dear friend, I could as soon give you a million. My father does not allowance me in such a grand style as that comes to. I must catch him in a devilish good humour, ay, and in a great many of them, before I get two hundred pounds of him.

Snare. 'Tis d—d shabby of you to borrow money you can't pay.

Young T. Is this your friendship? Why, did not you force it on me? Did not you tell me you only lived in obliging your friends?

Snare. You make a small mistake; I told you I only lived by obliging my friends. But as it is not convenient to you to pay the money, give me your note, and it will do just as well.

Young T. Ah! now you are my friend again. I thought you would not desert me so soon. You who so kindly took me by the hand, taught me to punt at faro, told me the nicks and crabs at hazard, and though you never play yourself, were so kind to introduce me to all your friends that do.

Snare. Here's a stamp; sign your name: I have filled it up. I thought you couldn't pay me directly.

Young T. What is this? (*Reads.*) 'On demand, I promise to pay Nic. Snare, Esquire, four hundred pounds. Value received.' Dang it, man, you lent me but two.

Snare. And do you think I'm to be paid nothing for my risk? Your father may disinherit you, and I may never get a doll. No, no; I shall never live by obliging my friends at that rate.

Young T. Oh! this is d—d scandalous! pay four hundred pounds for two, and not have the worth of a sixpence to shew for it! D— London! I wish I had staid in Yorkshire all the days of my life.

Snare. It is very ungrateful of you to put yourself in a passion with me, who have taught you so many pretty games.

Young T. Yes, and you want to teach me another pretty game: to shew me that one and one make four.

Old T. (Knocking without.) Tom, let me in.

Young T. Zounds! my father! I must open the door.

Snare. (Holding him.) No, you sha'n't till you have settled our business.

Old T. (Without.) Tom, I say, let me in.

Young T. Coming, sir.

Snare. If you don't sign, I'll tell him all your pranks.

Young T. (Signs.) There, and the devil do you good with it. D— gaming! d— swindling! and d— (*Opens the door.*)

Enter Old Testy.

How do you do, sir?

Old T. How do I do! You made great haste to ask me. Why, you have company. Is this the way you pass your mornings? You ought to be at study, sir.

Young T. This gentleman comes to assist me in my studies, sir.

Old T. Oh! that is very kind of him. Thank you, sir, for all you have taught my son.

Snare. Oh! sir, 'tis a pleasure to me.

Old S. Do you practise much at the bar, sir?

Snare. Not much now, sir. I have had in my time a pretty deal of Old Bailey-practice.

Old T. And retired from it with your just deserts?

Snare. Not exactly, sir, or I must say I should have been in a more elevated situation. Men often retire from the bar with less than they merit.

Old T. More's the pity. Well, I will not intrude any longer, Tom. I called to give you money to pay for your furniture and your books: never be in debt longer than you can help. Always pay your way. There's a draft for four hundred pounds. And so, good morning, and thank you kindly for all you have done for my son. (*Exit.*)

Snare. A very good kind of an old gentleman that father of your's: mind what he says—"Never be in debt longer than you can help. Always pay your way." That four hundred pounds will just balace our little account.

Young T. Why, you a'n't such a rogue?

Snare. You had better be correct in your language, young gentleman, or you must satisfy my honour.

Young T. Oh! d— your honour! Did not you hear my father say, it was for my upholsterer and bookseller? They have been for their money already, and if I don't pay them, who knows but they will send me to gaol?

Snare. Oh! no. Tradesmen are used to go without their money; but gentlemen like me, must touch the ready, or your character is lost for ever. So at once pay me, or I'll expose you.

Young T. There—plague take you!—there is the money. And now if I don't marry directly, I may hang myself; and of two evils—

Snare. Marry, by all means. Good b'ye, Tom. Remember, I live by obliging my friends. (*Exit.*)

Young T. The devil fly away with such friends! Oh! I'm in a pretty mess! If Miss Hartley hadn't taken such a fancy to me, what would have become of me! 'Tis heaven's mercy I was a likely lad! My beauty has saved my bacon. I'm in a fine way! I shall certainly be arrested; I can't save my liberty, that is certain. All I can do is to try to lose it my own way. Of the two, 'tis better to marry than go to gaol; but at whose suit I shall be obliged to surrender myself, my wife's, or my tradesmen's, depends entirely on whether the bailiff or the parson does his business quickest. (*Exit.*)

SCENE V.—*Lady Flourish's Dressing-room; a sofa, and sash-window with curtains.*

KITTY discovered.

Kitty. Well, thank my stars, I sha'n't long be obliged to do such menial business. Called here, and called there. No, no; I shall soon be young Mr. Testy's wife; and then Madam Testy will call her servants about her as haughtily as the first lady in the land.

AIR.—KITTY.

*What a hard lot is ours now, indeed and indeed,
'Tis a terrible life that we poor servants lead;*

*Up early and late,
To toil and to wait,*

To do as one's bid,
Yet sure to be chid,
Ill humours to bear,
And yet not to dare
Tho' with anger we burn,
To be spiteful and cross in return.

What a hard lot is ours, then, indeed and indeed!
'Tis a terrible life that we poor servants lead!

To be sure, when one happens a service to get in,
Where, to aid madam's frolics, her secrets we're let in,
Why, then, I must own, of our blabbing afraid,
The maid is the mistress, the mistress the maid.

They coax one so pretty!

'Tis "dear Mrs. Kitty!"

You're so kind and clever,

I'll love you for ever."

Our wages they double,

Yet give us no trouble;

And, while they're so civil,

We're as saucy and pert as the devil.

What a hard lot is theirs, then, indeed and indeed!

'Tis a terrible life our poor mistresses lead!

But the times are so alter'd, these places are rare
now,

For who knows their intrigues, there're few ladies
care now,

A faux-pas to conceal they will use little labour,
While each lady's in countenance kept by her neighbour.

Their spouses so kind, too,

Such foibles are blind to;

Nay, some will assume our vocation;

If a go-between's needed,

We're pass'd by unheeded,

The husband takes our occupation.

What a strange lot is theirs, then, indeed and indeed!

'Tis a whimsical life that some husbands lead!

Enter OLD TESTY.

Dear me! here comes my papa that is to be.

Old T. What, I have found somebody at last: I have been hunting from room to room, and the devil a soul could I see.

Kitty. Sir, my master and mistress are not at home.

Old T. Since I can't prove to the contrary, I incline to believe so.

Kitty. Pray, sir, let me shew you out. You have intruded yourself into my lady's dressing room.

Old T. Don't hurry me, you young baggage! and, pray, who are you, with that pretty face?

Kitty. Your daughter that is to be. (Aside.) "I am Kitty, sir."

Old T. Kitty, you are a pretty girl. Give me a kiss, Kitty.

Kitty. Lord! sir, don't be rum-bustical.

Old T. I say, Kitty—this is what I have wanted a long while. (Aside.) I say, Kitty, do you like your place? Should you have any objection to quit it, to live with a middle-aged gentleman as a kind of a housekeeper? eh!

Kitty. Lord! sir, I hope you have no design upon my honour.

Old T. No, not I; I dare say your honour has been long out of the way of anybody's design. But tell me, could you like such a plain-spoken, comely-looking, matter-of-fact man as myself? eh!

Kitty. This is lucky: I'll humour the old fellow, and when I marry his son, he'll not be angry with me, for fear of my exposing him. (Aside.)

Old T. Well, what do you say, my pretty?

Kitty. I don't know what to say, sir. If I could have it under your hand that you wouldn't forsake me—

Old T. Under my hand—hum! D— it! there is no making love now without signing and sealing.

A love-lettre will be sent back unopened, unless 'tis on stamped paper; and Cupid himself would not be half so good a go-between as a common attorney.

AIR.—OLD TESTY.

Woman now, by grace and feature,
Sighs and vows, will not be caught,
If you'd have the pretty creature,
The pretty creature must be bought.
You may swear,
You may tear,
You may cry,
You may lie,
You may kneel,
You may feel

All the pangs that from love's raging fervours arise,
And proclaim her an angel dropp'd down from the skies.

No pity she shews

For your budget of woes;

She scoffs at your tears, and derides all your pain,

And 'en darling flattery assails her in vain.

Who then finds the way

His addresses to pay,

In a style which this whimsical creature can fix?

He who drives to her door

In a chariot and four,

Or old Nick himself in a fine coach and six.

Well, what am I to give to you under my hand?

Kitty. Only your promise that you love me, and won't forsake me.

Old T. Come, there is no great harm in a promise without a penalty. (Aside. Takes out his pocket-book, and writes on a leaf.) There, there's my written promise, and now, my pretty dear—(Going to kiss her.)

Sir S. (Without.) Kitty! Is your lady come home, Kitty?

Kitty. Oh, dear me! here is Sir Simon. What shall I do? Coming, sir. I wouldn't have him see you and me alone together, for the world.

Old T. Nor I neither. The rascal would banter me to death.

Kitty. And I should lose my character. Oh! dear sir, hide yourself.

Old T. Where, where?

Kitty. Anywhere, sir.

Sir S. (Without.) Kitty!

Kitty. Coming, sir. There, under the sofa, sir.

Old T. Zounds! I shall be cramped to death.

Sir S. (Without.) Kitty, I say!

Kitty. Make haste, make haste.

Old T. Well, if I must, I must. (Gets under the sofa.) Send him away directly.

Kitty. Yes, sir, yes.

Enter SIR SIMON FLOURISH.

Sir S. Why, Kitty, what are you in such a bustle about? My lady is not at home, is she?

Kitty. No, sir, no.

Sir S. I'm glad of it. I came home on purpose to catch you alone, Kitty.

Old T. (From under the sofa.) Oh ho! you did, did you?

Sir S. You are the prettiest little rogue in the world, Kitty. You know how long I have been in love with you, Kitty; now, do have compassion on me.

Kitty. Pray, sir, be quiet, and don't take such liberties.

Sir S. Why, my dear, charming Kitty—

Lady F. (Without.) Pray, Captain O'Neill, do me the kindness to walk this way.

Kitty. My lady's voice!

Sir S. By all that's discordant! She must not see me here with you. I told her I should not be at home till night. She'll suspect something.

Kitty. Well she may, if she sees me in this rumpled condition. Oh dear! what shall I do! where shall I run?

Sir S. Here, here; come, quick.

Kitty. Oh dear! oh dear! (*Both go behind the window-curtain.*)

Enter LADY FLOURISH *and* CAPTAIN O'NEILL.

Lady F. This way, Captain O'Neill. Allow me to shew you into my little dressing-room.

Capt. Your ladyship does me great honour.

Lady F. Pray, sit down. I conducted you here, Captain O'Neill, that I might not be agitated again by Sir Simon's intrusion.

Sir S. Vastly well.

Capt. Madam, the reason of my now calling is—

Lady F. I know your reasons very well, you can't impose upon me, though you have on my husband.

Capt. My dear lady, I wish to be understood—

Lady F. I don't in the least doubt it: but gentlemen of your country, with the best intentions in the world, sometimes find it a very difficult matter. But I understand you perfectly; the passion you ventured to intimate this morning—

Capt. I have, now, my lady, entirely relinquished—

Lady F. What, you barbarous man, have you ensnared my susceptible heart, and do you now abandon your conquest?

Capt. I ensnare your susceptible heart!

Lady F. Yes, you inhuman creature! Oh, oh! (*Crying.*) 'Tis too much, too much to bear!

Sir S. (*Rushing from behind the curtain.*) 'Tis too much for me to bear. To hear one's wife make love to another man, is too much for anybody to bear.

Capt. Sir Simon!

Lady F. Sir Simon!

Sir S. Yes, the wronged Sir Simon. Is this the way you reward my faithful love, my fond attachment? (*Lady F. sinks on the sofa, fainting.*)

Capt. Get her a little water, Sir Simon: I'll give her some air. (*Going towards the window.*)

Sir S. Don't give her any air, she'll be better without it. (*Captain O'Neill runs to open the window, throws aside the curtains, and discovers Kitty: she screams, which calls the attention of Lady F.*)

Lady F. Very well, Sir Simon. This is your faithful love, your fond attachment!

Capt. Oh! the blessing of mutual affection! These are the fond turtle-doves! 'Faith! you are well paired.

Lady F. I shall never recover this terrible shock.

Capt. Now the impediment is removed, let me recommend a little ventilation to your ladyship. (*Opens the window.*) Pray, sit and enjoy it as comfortably as you can. (*Runs to the sofa, and draws it back towards the window, by which Old Testy is discovered.*) What have we got here? It looks like a great turtle, left on the shore by the retiring of the tide. Favour me with one of your fins. (*Raising him up by the arm.*)

Sir S. Mr. Testy, what the devil do you do here?

Lady F. Mr. Testy, what is your business in my dressing-room?

Old T. Your dressing-room is a place of wonderful business, indeed!

Capt. Pray, to which party do you belong?

Old T. Which party! You see I am out now; and what is not uncommon, I kept my place as long as I could.

Sir S. What do you mean by your outs and ins in my house? I have a great mind to make an example of you. To be found under the sofa in

my wife's dressing-room! why, the bank of England could hardly pay the damages a liberal crim. con. jury would give me.

FINALE.

Sir S. I'll teach you to play the antic.

Old T. So you can for you know how.

Lady F. They will surely drive me frantic.

Kitty. I am innocent, I vow.

Capt. Oh! be quiet;

Make no riot.

Sir S. Make no riot! but I will.

Capt. You've forgot.

Sir S. No, I've not;

No, with you I'm very still.

Capt. Come, agree,

For I see

You had all the self-same plan,

All but the modest Irishman.

Sir S. * For no good he came, 'tis certain.

Lady F. I know nothing why he came;

Old T. Why went you behind the curtain?

Lady F. Ah! Sir Simon, blush for shame!

Old T. Oh, the curtain!

Lady F. Pretty flirting;

Sir S. True, my tender, darling wife,

Constant dove!

Lady F. Faithful love!

Capt. Psha! leave off this foolish strife,

For you had all the self-same plan.

Sir S. But me and the modest Irishman.

Kitty. Ma'am, forgive me;

Lady F. That I'll never.

Kitty. Don't forget your freaks are known:

Lady F. Character you've lost for ever:

Kitty. Pray, my lady, where's your own?

Lady F. I don't heed it,

Servants need it,

Ladies do as well without.

Capt. Come, give o'er,

Talk no more,

Why keep up this foolish rout,

When you had all the self-same plan.

Lady F. } But me and the modest Irishman.

Kitty. }

All. Suspicious certainly appear,

But I'm in my conscience clear,

And therefore nothing have to fear;

For you had all the self-same plan,

But me and the modest Irishman.

'Tis quite shocking,

You're but mocking,

You to innocence pretend!

You're found out,

Past a doubt:

Cease your folly to defend;

For you had all the self-same plan,

But me and the modest Irishman.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Garden.

HARCOURT and MISS HARTLEY discovered.

DUETT.—HARCOURT and MISS HARTLEY.

Tell me, my love, wou'd'st thou forego

Transports, which only lovers know

To heal at once the poignant smart

That still must rack the anxious heart;

*Trembling, lest all its scheme of joy
Fortune for ever shou'd destroy.
Ah! no, the throbbings of delight,
Which in each pulse proclaim thy sight,
The bounding heart's tumultuous beat,
Swelling its kindred heart to meet,
Are joys for which all pain I'd prove,
And never, never cease to love.*

Miss H. Here comes Sir Simon. Heavens! how shall I account for your being here?

Har. Don't be alarmed, my love; I'll think of some excuse.

Enter SIR SIMON FLOURISH.

Sir S. Eh! who have we here? a young man tête-à-tête with my ward! Well done, it runs through the family; I'll be bound there is not an unpaired turtle in my whole establishment. This is a worse business than my wife's a great deal, for this young lady will wish to carry her fortune as well as her inclinations, out of my family. Now, though my wife may send her affection on a visit, I still keep at home all I married her for. Pray, *Miss Hartley*, have I the honour of knowing this gentleman?

Miss H. The gentleman, sir, has business with you. (*Retires.*)

Har. Sir, your son, who is my particular friend, both of the same college, has commissioned me to acquaint you of his safe arrival in England.

Sir S. My boy arrived! Huzza! sir, I shall be proud of your acquaintance. How soon may I expect to see my son?

Har. Very shortly, sir. I got the start of him, and hastened to make you happy with this intelligence.

Sir S. How far have you been travelling, sir?

Har. Just as far as your son, Sir Simon?

Sir S. Well, sir, and how do you like foreign parts?

Har. Ah! sir, I believe travellers, who have seen more of foreign countries than I have, will give the palm to old England.

AIR.—HARCOURT.

*Thy glory in war let those loudly proclaim,
Who mistake discord's blast for the trumpet of fame,
And give slaughter the meed of renown;*

'Tis Britain, thy praise,

The sword ne'er to raise

In savage and plunder's fell cause;

But to guard sacred honour's pure laws,

And the pride of the base to bring down.

Still o'er the fall'n foe

Let pity's tear flow,

Not sound forth the triumph of blood.

No, Britain, thou art great and good—

Let this thy glory be,

This let admiring nations see,

That with thee

Duells sweet Humanity.

Sir, I must now take my leave.

Sir S. Won't you stay till your friend arrives?

Har. Now, Sir Simon, I am particularly engaged; but I shall hope for the pleasure of being further known to you.

Sir S. You honour me very much, sir, and a thousand thanks for your kind visit. [*Exit Harcourt.*] My son returned, and so soon to see him! This atones for all my disasters. The night of my accomplished boy will almost compensate for the loss of being second in a duel to an Irishman; will almost make me forget the hearty threshing he gave me, and my wife's making love to him. These are misfortunes, to be sure, but Jack is come home, and I will think no more of them. [*Exit.*]

Miss H. I will endeavour to repress every anxious thought, and dwell only on the prospect of future happiness.

AIR.—MISS HARTLEY.

*Come, smiling Hope, dispel each chilling fear.
And with thy glowing beams my bosom cheer;
On future blessings dart thy vivid ray,
Chasing the low'ring clouds of doubt away;
To bright perspective still direct my eye,
And cast in shade the brightest objects nigh.* [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A Street.

Enter BLUFF, the Bailiff, and Followers.

Bluff. Are you sure, Tom, you dogged the right man?

1st Fol. Quite sure, Master Bluff.

Bluff. And why didn't you take him?

1st Fol. Because he got into church before I could get at him.

Bluff. And so I am to be kept waiting here till he chooses to come out of church? Oh! here he comes.

Enter YOUNG TESTY and KITTY.

* *Young T.* Well, the job is done; I'm a married man for the first time in my life. 'Tis devilish comical. I wonder how I shall like it. *Mrs. Testy*, how do you do, my dear?

Kitty. How do you do, Tom?

Young T. Tom! I don't know whether I like to be called Tom now. It don't shew respect enough from a wife to her husband.

Kitty. Respect from a wife to a husband! Oh! Tom, your country education! I see you will be very troublesome to me.

Young T. I don't know whether I shall be troublesome or no. Dang it, one can't begin too soon to shew one is determined to wear the breeches. (*Aside.*) *Mrs. Testy*, I desire you will consider what is due to a husband.

Kitty. And I desire, Mr. Testy, you will consider what is due to a wife.

Bluff. And I desire, Mr. Testy, you will consider what is due to a creditor. (*Taps him on the shoulder.*) I am sorry, good folks, to interrupt your nuptial harmony. Here's a little bit of a writ against you.

Young T. At whose suit?

Bluff. Your bookseller's.

1st Fol. And here's another.

Young T. At whose suit?

1st Fol. Your upholsterer's.

Kitty. Writs against my dearly beloved? How soon the comforts of matrimony begin!

Young T. Well, I don't mind; when I touch my wife's fortune I shall be at liberty directly.

Kitty. Your debts must be very small, if your wife's fortune will pay them. (*Aside.*)

Young T. Where must I go?

Bluff. That depends on how much of the ready you have got.

Young T. D—n it, they are all for the ready.

I say, wife—my dear—

Kitty. What do you want? (*Sulkily.*)

Young T. Have you got any of the ready?

Kitty. No, not I.

Young T. Haven't you, indeed! Search.

Kitty. I have nothing but two pocket pieces and a silver bodkin.

Bluff. Come, come; poor as a rat, I see. You must go to prison directly; I have no room for such paupers as you, so come along.

Young T. My darling, and must I be from my loving wife? (*Sobbing.*)

Kitty. Oh, dear! Oh, dear! 'tis very distressing.

Young T. Bless my soul, who is that coming yonder? sure, 'tis Jack Flourish; it is—stand back a little.

Enter YOUNG FLOURISH and DICKY, both dressed in Monmouth-street finery.

Young F. Here I am once more at large in London streets. What a luxury it is again to be jostled about, and nearly run over by the coaches and carts. Lord, how happy I am to be out of that d—d cage, though only for a day. Dicky, you look vastly well.

Dicky. Yes, my master, good clothes become me.

Young F. As I was obliged to have a jailor to attend me, it is lucky, Dicky, I could get one so much of a gentleman.

Dicky. It would be d—d hard if I could not behave like a gentleman, who have lived all my life in gemmen's company, in the King's Bench, and the Marshalsea, and the debtor's side of Newgate.

Young F. Yes, Dicky, 'tis certainly very genteel to be intimate in those places; but, you know, one should not brag of one's connexions, so mum's the word before my father; I must pass you off for a foreign Count; so mind your hits, Dicky.

Young T. Ecod! I'll speak to him. Don't let him see your face. Do you walk a little that way, (to Kitty,) for as I am going to ask a favour of him, it might not be so prudent to let him know I have married his mistress.

Kitty. Lord! you fool, many a gentleman would be much obliged to you for marrying his mistress.

[Exit.

Young T. I say, Jack—Jack Flourish.

Young F. Eh!

Young T. What, don't you know me? I know you, you see, for all your outlandish clothes.

Young F. What, 'Tom Testy?

Young T. Yes, I be 'Tom Testy.

Young F. I am devilish glad to see you.

Young T. Be you, indeed; that's right, 'Tis lucky to meet friends when one wants them, is it not? One should never be shy of a friend when he is in trouble, should one?

Young F. No, to be sure not. What the devil does he mean? (Aside.)

Young T. If I was to meet a friend with a bailiff at his elbow (Flourish turns and looks at Dicky.) I should be as glad to see him as if I met him walking with a nobleman.

Young F. Bailiff and nobleman! Yes, yes, he twigs me. He knows Dicky here in his real and masquerade character both. (Aside.)

Young T. I say, I should be as happy to shake hands with him at one time as another.

Young F. And so should I, upon my soul. (Shaking hands.) O d—n it, all's up; I am found out. (Aside.) I say, Tom, I see how the thing is. How the devil came you to know it?

Young T. Know it! dang it, I could not help knowing it; for before he said a word, he gave me such a cursed thump on the shoulder, as nobody would have ventured to have done that hadn't the law to back him.

Young F. Eh! (Looking about and seeing Bluff.)

Bluff. Come, come, I ax't to stay here a whole term arresting you. Will the gentleman bail you or not?

Young T. Ay, Jack, will you bail me?

Young F. I bail! I bail you! Here's an affair! What, Tom, you arrested! Ha, ha! well 'said, young Rural.

Young T. Don't laugh, don't laugh, Jack. What will you do for me?

Young F. I can't bail you, I'm not a house-keeper. But where are you going?

Young T. (To Bluff.) Ay, where am I going?

Bluff. Straight to the King's Bench.

Young F. The King's Bench; that's unlucky, (aside) for then we shall know more of one another than I wish. I say, Tom, Newgate is a very pretty prison. You had better go to Newgate.

Young T. Newgate! Don't mention it.

Young F. Well, there is no persuading people to their good against their inclination. If you will go to the King's Bench, I will certainly come and see you there.

Young T. Will you be so kind?

Young F. I will, upon my soul.

Young T. It is vastly good-natured of you.

Young F. Not at all; it won't be putting me out of my way in the least.

Young T. It is your good-nature makes you say so. Good bye, Jack; we shall meet again soon, then.

Young F. Yes, Tom, much sooner than I wish (Aside.) Farewell.

Young T. Good b'ye, you'll not forget to come.

Young F. No, not I; but if I should, here is a gentleman will remind me.

[Exit Young F. and Dicky.

Bluff. Take care of him. [To one of his Followers, who exits with Young T.] Now, how stand our other jobs?

QUARTETTO.—BLUFF and Followers.

*Jemmy Chimer, the rhymier, from his garret I haul'd,
By Sir Thunder O'Blunder I was cursedly maul'd;
For young Stakehall of Rakehall I was sent on the scout,*

So I sought him and caught him at Lady Plunder's rout,

Blessing on those gaming-houses!

Oh, the thought our spirits rouses,

They're the cause of our well-doing,

They draw in ten flats to ruin.

Charming Faro!

Game so rare O!

Fleece away, ye dames of style,

Fill your purses,

Laugh at curses,

Bailiffs bless you all the while.

1 Fol. I've a writ for Colonel Spendall,

2 Fol. I have one for Doctor Endall,

3 Fol. And I one for Simon Lendall.

All. Bravo! Nab 'em, have 'em tight,

Merry then we'll be at night;

These will yield a jovial quaff

To us officers o' th' staff. [Exit.

SCENE III.—Sir Simon Flourish's House.

Enter SIR SIMON FLOURISH and OLD TESTY.

Sir S. I am surprized you have the assurance to enter my doors again. Where the devil are you come to hide yourself now? There's no sofa here for you; but you may get up the chimney if you will.

Old T. Psha! I am come on business; you'll, may be, like worse your darling boy; your accomplished traveller is not far off.

Sir S. I know it.

Old T. You know it, do you? What, you know he is in the King's Bench?

Sir S. What do you say?

Old T. In Banco Regis.

Sir S. What the devil should he do in the King's Bench. He is just arrived from abroad, and I shall see him in a few minutes.

Old T. In a few minutes! So you may, but you must gallop to St. George's Fields, then. Ha, ha, ha! the all-accomplished youth that has been getting the finishing stroke to his fashionable education! Well, you have not been much out, it is

the finishing stroke to many a fashionable education.

Sir S. What is come to the man! That d—d sofa you crept under has cramped your faculties as well as your limbs. Don't tease me with your nonsense.

Young F. (Without.) *Par ici Monsieur le Comte.*

Sir S. There, there, what dy'e say now? My sea is in the King's Bench, is he?

Old T. Why here he is 'faith! and I've been told a d—d lie, then.

Enter YOUNG FLOURISH and DICKY.

Sir S. My dear, dear Jack, come to my arms.

Young F. *Ah! mon Pere, comment vous portez vous? O mon Dieu!* I had forgot, I must speak English now. How do you do, father?

Sir S. What, forgot your English, boy?

Young F. 'Tis so long since I have spoken it, that it is as awkward to me, as the acknowledgement of an old friend to a man who has got sudden promotion. Well, father, how do you do?

Sir S. Happy to see you, my boy.

Young F. *Bien obligé*—D—n it, there I go again.

Sir S. Never mind, Jack, it shews your breeding.

Young F. Ah! Testy! how are you, my old boy?

Old T. La, la! There's French for you, puppy.

Young F. As sulky as ever, eh! (*Slapping him on the shoulder.*) Why don't you travel and polish a bit, my old buck?

Old T. Polish a bit, my old buck! Don't be so d—d familiar, or I shall try whether my cane can't polish a bit, my young buck.

Young F. What a sour old Crab it is, father. *Permettez moi à vous.*—(*Stopping himself.*)—Psha! that is, permit me to introduce to my friend and companion, Count Tipstaffo Kingsbenchani.

Old T. Those d—d foreign names, I never could learn one of them.

Sir S. I am the Count's most obsequious humble servant.

Dicky. Vy, my master, for matter of that—

Young F. Silence, you dog, or you'll ruin me. The Count speaks little English. Hush!

Sir S. Well, my boy, tell me where you have been.

Young F. You'll know all in good time, father; to tell you, at once, where I have been, would surprise you too much.

Sir S. Really!

Young F. It would, upon my honour.

Sir S. What, then, you have been further than you expected to go?

Young F. Not further. I have been where I did not expect to go.

Sir S. Indeed!

Old T. Now the old doting fool will swallow all his lies for gospel.

Sir S. Well, Jack, come tell me all about it. I say, are the women very pretty abroad?

Young F. If I had not found them so pretty at home, I might have been able to tell you. (*Aside.*) The women, sir, are, to be sure, very handsome; but leaving England to seek beauty, is like going abroad to look for liberty. The prime commodities are in our own market.

Sir S. Well, Jack, in what court did you chiefly reside?

Young F. In what court? Why, where I chiefly resided was not exactly a court; but it belonged to one.

Sir S. And so, my son lived in a palace?

Young F. Yes, yes, a kind of a palace, large enough of all conscience; rooms rather shabby, though—not kept neat, and surrounded by a d—d high wall.

Sir S. Ay, for fear people should get in.

Young F. No, for fear people should get out.

Sir S. What, so afraid to part with you?

Young F. Oh! very much? Once I have the honour to get in, 'tis devilish hard to get out again.

Sir S. Now, in my mind, that is carrying civility too far.

Young F. But how is my mother-in-law, Lady Flourish, eh? Why, you look glum, father; has anything happened?

Sir S. Oh, nothing, but what is so common now-a-days, that 'tis quite a folly to think about it. But I am very rude to pay so little attention to your friend the Count. Sir, would you be pleased to take some refreshment?

Dicky. I thanks your honour, nothing at all; I took a drap of gin as I came along.

Young F. Oh, curse you, you stupid dog.

Old T. A drap of gin!

Sir S. 'Tis a strange liqueur for a foreign nobleman. The Count speaks English pretty fluently, though rather queerly.

Young F. Yes, yes, he don't speak much; but the little he does, he speaks like a native.

Old T. Yes, like a native of Broad St. Giles's.

Young F. Don't let him hear you, he'll be offended, and he is a d—d fighting little fellow, when he is provoked.

Enter Servant, and gives a letter to Sir Simon.

Sir S. (Opens it.) It looks like a woman's hand. (*Reads.*) "*This comes to desire you to tell Mr. Testy, that his son is in the King's Bench. This is from one who is much concerned in his welfare.*" Why, Testy, you find there is a little bit of a mistake. 'Tis your son, not mine, that is in the King's Bench. Ha, ha, ha!

Old T. I don't know whether I am awake, or asleep, alive or dead.

Sir S. Ha, ha, ha! he would have it you were in the King's Bench.

Young F. (Confused, and endeavouring to overcome it by assumed quietude.) I in the King's Bench! yes, I look vastly as if I had been in the King's Bench. Ha, ha, ha! (*All laugh.*)

Old T. It can't be; 'tis out of all human possibility.

Sir S. You may soon be convinced; you may see him in a few minutes; but you must gallop to St. George's Fields, then. Ha, ha, ha!

Old T. I'll go directly, and if I find him there, I'll disinherit him; and I'll adopt—d—e, I'll adopt one of the Catabaw Indians.

Sir S. We will go along with you.

Old T. Come, then, call a coach there; I'm mad, stark mad. [*Exit.*]

Sir S. Won't you go, Jack?

Young F. What, to the King's Bench? I wonder what kind of a place it can be. I have a great mind to go out of curiosity. What do you say, Count, will you go by way of a lounge? (*Dicky going to speak, Young F. stops him.*) You need not speak, the Count nods assent.

Sir S. Ay, it will be a new sight to the Count.

Young F. Not very. (*Aside.*) Côme, Dicky, for go we must, you know.

Dicky. Ay, ay, returnable—*volens, volens.*

Young F. Hush! yes, yes, the Count and I will go with you, and see this queer kind of a place. What do you stop for, father?

Sir S. To let the Count go first.

Young F. Ay, by all means; I beg the Count's pardon. [*Exeunt ceremoniously.*]

SCENE IV.—*An Apartment in the King's Bench.*

KITTY, YOUNG TESTY, and the Keeper, *discovered.*

Keeper. Though the prison is so full, you have got as good as a room to yourselves, for there is only one gentleman belongs to it.

Young T. One gentleman belongs to it.

Keeper. Yes. He is gone out on a day rule, but he must be home soon; he'll be pleasant company for you and the lady.

Young T. Yes, very; 'tis devilish pleasant to have a gentleman sleep in the room with one's wife.

Keeper. It may be a little awkward to the lady at first, but she'll soon come into it.

Old T. (*Without.*) Where is this ungracious villain?

Young T. Oh, lord! Oh, lord! here's my father. Hide yourself, hide yourself. (*To Kitty, who conceals herself behind one of the beds.*) Now I shall have it sweetly.

Enter OLD TESTY, SIR SIMON FLOURISH, and YOUNG FLOURISH.

Old T. Let me come to the rascal. Why, you graceless wretch, what have you to say for yourself?

Young T. Lord, father, you have come upon mein such a hurry, I have not settled what I have to say for myself.

Young F. They have lodged him in my room, by Jupiter. (*Aside.*)

Old T. You to turn out profligate and extravagant, when I took such care to the contrary! Didn't I breed you out of the way of all manner of harm?

Sir S. Yes, and therefore not knowing it, when he saw it, how was he able to avoid it?

Young T. Ay, how was I able to avoid it?

Old T. Till you came to London, did you know what it was to have more than sixpence in your pocket?

Sir S. Then how the devil did you expect him to know the value of guineas, when you trusted him with them?

Old T. Hold your tongue, will you?

Sir S. Didn't I always tell you how foolish you were to bring him up in that ridiculous way. I knew my plan was the best, was it not, my boy? (*To Young F.*)

Young F. Oh, certainly, father; no doubt about it.

Keeper. Oh, here's Master Flourish come home. Pray, Master Flourish—(*Young F. makes signs to him to hold his tongue.*)

Sir S. Master Flourish come home! Why, how the devil does he know you?

Young F. (*Crossing over to the Keeper.*) Ah! what, Bobby, is it you? Hold your tongue, you dog. (*Aside.*) Oh, I knew Bobby abroad. Bobby was head gaoler to the Emperor of Morocco. Ah! Bobby, how do you do, Bobby; how long have you been in England, Bobby?

Keeper. How long have I—

Young F. (*Putting his hand to his mouth and drawing him aside.*) I want to talk with you, Bobby, about the Emperor's two daughters, Boblatilda and Gruntawiska. Come this way. Excuse me, (*to Sir Simon*) I have some secrets to talk to Bobby about. (*They retire.*)

Old T. Well, you rascal, what can you say for yourself, you stupid dolt?

Young T. Why, father, if I have been a stupid dolt one way, I have been pretty cunning another. I was cheated out of my money, to be sure, but I have cheated other people out of a wife.

Old T. A wife! What does the blockhead mean?

Young T. Not such a blockhead as you think. Suppose now, I should have married Miss Hartley, all out of my own head, without any of your help?

Old T. Sir S. Married Miss Hartley!

Young T. Ay, married Miss Hartley; and suppose she should like me well enough to follow me to prison.

Enter MISS HARTLEY, HARCOURT, and CAPTAIN O'NEILL.

Old T. Prodigious!

Sir S. Nothing but my own eyes could have convinced me.

Old T. Come to my arms. All is forgiven. You are a clever boy. I did not think it had been in you. Eh! Simon, what do you think of my boy, now?

Sir S. I am petrified!

Old T. Huzza, huzza! Yorkshire for ever! Huzza!

Capt. I am glad to find you so merry; we heard you were come here, and thinking a friend of our's might be in a little hobble, we came to intercede.

Old T. There needs no intercession; 'tis all right, 'tis all as it should be, my dear girl. (*To Miss Hartley.*) We have heard of your marriage. Take him, take him, take your husband.

Miss H. Sir!

Old T. Nay, don't be shame-faced; it is all known, 'tis all forgiven.

Har. All known! all forgiven! Generous conduct! our mutual affection made us overlook every other consideration, and marriage has now ratified the union of our hearts.

Sir S. What is all this?

Old T. Why, Tom, what the devil, has your wife married another husband so soon?

Har. What do you mean?

Old T. Why, what the devil right have you to marry Tom's wife?

Young T. My wife! that is a good one. I believe they are all mad. I never saw that fine lady in my life.

Old T. You didn't? And all you have been telling me about your marriage is a d—d lie, then. Let me come at him. (*They hold him.*)

Young T. Will you be quiet, father, and hear a little reason? I tell you I married Miss Hartley, and you shall have her own word for it. *Mrs. Testy!* *Mrs. Testy!* (*Kitty comes forward.*) There, what do you say now! There's my wife!

Old T. The devil it is! (*All laugh.*)

Young T. Why, what the devil do you all laugh at?

Sir S. Only at a little error in your politics. My rural Machiavel, instead of the mistress, you have married the maid.

Young T. What!

Kitty. It is very true, husband.

Young T. The devil it is!

Old T. Well, Mr. Wiseacre, you have married all out of your own head, without my help, and now you may keep your precious bargain without my help. You may starve, you may rot in a prison, for you shall never have sixpence from me.

Kitty. Lord, sir, how can you be so unkind! You didn't look so cross at me the last time I saw you.

Old T. Eh! what?

Kitty. Don't you remember, how good-humoured you looked just before you got under the sofa.

Sir S. Oh! now the murder is out. I say, Testy, you had better give hush-money, for if we old fellows let the girls tell all they know about us, it may not be for our credit; besides, the world may be spiteful enough to say you are angry with your son, because you wanted to marry the girl yourself.

Kitty. I don't know, sir, as to marrying, but I have a little bit of paper here, which—

Old T. Hold your tongue, say no more. I believe you are quite good enough for the blockhead you have got, and so he may pack into Yorkshire again, and carry you with him as a sample of a London fine lady.

Sir S. But this gentleman's taking the liberty of marrying our ward without our consent is a thing which—

Capt. Oh! 'tis a very great insult; and a word in your ear, my little game-cook: If you mean to call him to account for it, I'll be your second.

Sir S. I don't want to have anything to do with seconds.

Capt. When I was going to fight him, you were to have been my second, and I only offer to return the obligation.

Sir S. What, is this the gentleman you redeemed out of prison, to have the pleasure of fighting?

Har. Is it to you, then, I owe my liberty? Generous man!

Capt. Oh, it was very generous, to be sure, to release you out of prison, that I might have the satisfaction of sending you out of the world. But *Sir Simon*, this gentleman, in fortune, is equal to the lady he has wedded.

Har. Captain O'Neill, I am not conscious of what you are asserting.

Capt. But I am, or I would not assert it. Understanding that your uncle had taken it into his head to be angry with you for nothing at all, I called on the old gentleman to talk with him a little about it. "If your nephew had been guilty of a dishonourable action," said I, "devil a word would O'Neill offer in his behalf; but as he has been a dupe to the villany of others, restore him to your favour, and launch him into the world again, with experience for his pilot." So the old gentleman shook hands with me, and swore he was ready to do the same with you as soon as you pleased.

Har. Thanks are too poor for such nobleness of soul!

Capt. Nobleness of soul! for walking a few steps out of my common road, for the pleasure of reconciling a discarded nephew to a rich old uncle. Oh, if people would but just lengthen their morning's walk to do a few good-natured actions, they can scarcely conceive what health and spirits such exercise would give them, and how much sweeter they would rest for it at night.

Young F. Harcourt, I give you joy.

Sir S. Give him joy! why, you part with your mistress very easily.

Young F. 'Tis the fashion, father.

Sir S. Well, I think we may all adjourn, we have staid in this dismal place long enough.

Young F. I have for one, I'm sure.

Sir S. Then let us be gone directly.

Young F. That is sooner said than done.

Enter DICKY.

Dicky. Master Flourish, here is the man from Monmouth-street. He knows you are come home, and he must, and will have his cloaths. He has got mine.

Sir S. Must have his cloaths! Knows you are come home! Why, that is the Count. I smell powder.

Capt. And that is a scent I knew you're not fond of.

Sir S. Hush! Knows you are come home! What, this is your home, then?

Young F. Why, father, the—the—the—

Sir S. The—the—I thought there was something d—d odd about that Emperor of Morocco's gaoler, and I suppose you will tell me now, the Count is the Emperor himself.

Young F. Come, father, the truth must out: The two different systems of education have at last been completed in the same college; and though I don't think keeping terms here absolutely necessary for the finish of every young gentleman's education; yet, as a school of adversity, it has taught me this lesson:—Never, by folly and extravagance, to run the chance of returning, when once you do me the honour to take my name out of the books.

Capt. Come, you must forgive him. You know the brave are always compassionate.

Sir S. Very true; besides, it is useless to repine at what is past, especially as you acknowledge you have learned some good, which I am not quite sure you would have done by travelling; and if your friends here will be but indulgent, you may possess all the credit of going ABROAD with the advantage of having remained at HOME.

FINALE.

Capt. Now put an end to silly strife,
Malice is but folly;
Let's wisely pass a merry life,
Waste no jot in care.

Sir S. Why that's well said, come let's away.
With heart's good-humour'd, faces gay,
And sing fal, lul, &c.

Har. Possessing all I prize on earth,
Farewell, melancholy,
Each hour will give new pleasure birth,
Blest with thee, my fair.

Miss H. Then tune to joy the dulcet note,
On harmony let pleasure float,
And sing fal, lul, &c.

Young T. To harmony I don't object,
While I've luck to meet it;
In home duetts I can't expect
Much of harmony.

Kitty. Come, let's be wise, and from this day,
With hearts good-humour'd, faces gay,
We'll sing fal, lul, &c.

Young F. Our mirth and joy may all partake,
Humbly I intreat it,
And let your cheering plaudits make
Our poet full of glee.

Old T. Then tune to joy the dulcet note,
On harmony let pleasure float,
And sing fal, lul, &c.

[Exeunt.]

THE DOUBLE DEALER;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY WILLIAM CONGREVE.



Act IV—Scene 1

CHARACTERS

LORD TOUCHWOOD
LORD FROTH
SIR LAURENCE PLIANT
MASKWILL
MELFONTE

CARELESS
BRISK
SAYGRACE
THOMAS
TIMOTHY

LADY TOUCHWOOD
LADY FROTH
LADY PLIANT
CYNTHIA
SERVANTS

ACT I

SCENE I — 4 Gallery in Lord Touchwood's house, with chambers adjoining.

Enter CARELESS, crossing the stage, as just risen from table, MELFONTE following him.

Mel. Ned, Ned, whither so fast? What, turned fincher? Why, you wo' not leave us?

Care. Where are the women? I'm weary of drinking, and begin to think them the better company.

Mel. Then thy reason staggers, and thou'rt almost tipsy.

Care. No, 'faith! but your fools grow noisy, and if a man must endure the noise of words without sense, I think the women have more musical voices, and become nonsense better.

Mel. Why, they are at the end of the gallery, retired to their tea and scandal. But I made a pretence to follow you, because I had something to say to you in private, and I am not likely to have many opportunities this evening.

Brisk. (*Without*) Careless, Careless!

Care. And here's this coxcomb, most critically come to interrupt you

Enter BRISK.

Brisk. Boys, boys, lads, where are you? What,

do you give ground? Mortgage for a bottle, eh? Careless, this is your trick, you're always spoiling company by leaving it.

Care. And thou art always spoiling company by coming into it

Brisk. Pooh! Ha, ha, ha! I know you envy me. Spite, proud spite, by the gods, and burning envy. I'll be judged by Mellefont here, who gives and takes railery better, you or I. Psha! man, when I say you spoil company by leaving it, I mean you leave nobody for the company to laugh at. I think there I was with you eh? Mellefont?

Mel. O my word, Brisk, that was a home thrust: you have silenced him.

Brisk. Oh! my dear Mellefont, let me perish, if thou art not the soul of conversation, the very essence of wit, and spirit of wine. The deuce take me, if there were three good things said, or one understood, since the amputation of the body of our society. He, he! I think that's pretty and metaphorical enough egad! I could not have said it out of thy company. Careless, eh?

Care. Hum! ay, what is it?

Brisk. Oh, *mon cœur*! What is it? Nay, 'gad! I'll punish you for want of apprehension the deuce take me if I tell you.

Mel. No, no, hang him, he has no taste. But, dear Brisk, excuse me, I have a little business.

Care. Pr'ythee, get thee gone; thou seest we are serious.

Mel. We'll come immediately, if you'll but go in, and keep up good humour and sense in the company: pr'ythee, do; they'll fall asleep else.

Brisk. Egad! so they will. Well, I will, I will: 'gad! you shall command me from the zenith to the nadir. But, the deuce take me, if I say a good thing till you come. But, pr'ythee, dear rogue, make haste; pr'ythee, make haste, I shall burst else. And yonder your uncle, my Lord Touchwood, swears he'll disinherit you; and Sir Paul Pliant threatens to disclaim you for a son-in-law; and my Lord Froth won't dance at your wedding to-morrow; nor, the deuce take me, I won't write your epithalamium; and see what a condition you're like to be brought to.

Mel. Well, I'll speak but three words, and follow you.

Brisk. Enough, enough. Careless, bring your apprehension with you. [Exit.]

Care. Pert coxcomb!

Mel. 'Faith! 'tis a good-natured coxcomb, and has very entertaining follies: you must be more humane to him; at this juncture it will do me service. I'll tell you, I would have mirth continued this day at any rate; though patience purchase folly, and attention be paid with noise: 'tis rare times when sense may be unseasonable, as well as truth. Pr'ythee, do thou wear none to-day; but allow Brisk to have wit, that thou may'st seem a fool.

Care. Why, how now? Why this extravagant proposition?

Mel. Oh! I would have no room for serious design, for I am jealous of a plot. I would have noise and impertinence keep my Lady Touchwood's head from working.

Care. I thought your fear of her had been over. Is not to-morrow appointed for your marriage with Cynthia? and her father, Sir Paul Pliant, come to settle the writings this day, on purpose?

Mel. True; but you shall judge whether I have not reason to be alarmed. None, besides you and Maskwell, are acquainted with the secret of my aunt Touchwood's violent passion for me. Since my first refusal of her addresses, she has endeavoured to do me all ill offices with my uncle; yet has managed them with that subtilty, that to him they have borne the face of kindness; while her malice, like a dark lantern, only shone upon me, where it was directed: but whether urged by her despair, and the short prospect of time she saw to accomplish her designs; whether the hopes of revenge, or of her love, terminated in the view of this my marriage with Cynthia, I know not; but this morning she surprised me in my own chamber.

Care. Was there ever such a fury! Well, bless us! proceed. What followed?

Mel. It was long before either of us spoke; passion had tied her tongue, and amazement mine. In short, the consequence was thus: she omitted nothing that the most violent love could urge, or tender words express; which when she saw had no effect, but still I pleaded honour and nearness of blood to my uncle, then came the storm I feared at first; for, starting from my bed-side, like a fury, she flew to my sword, and with much ado, I prevented her doing me or herself a mischief. Having disarmed her, in a gust of passion she left me, and in a resolution, confirmed by a thousand curses, not to close her eyes till they had seen my ruin.

Care. Exquisite woman! But, what the devil, does she think thou hast no more sense than to disinherit thyself? For, as I take it, this settlement upon you is with a proviso that your uncle have no children.

Mel. It is so. Well, the service you are to do

me will be a pleasure to yourself. I must get you to engage my Lady Pliant all this evening, that my pious aunt may not work her to her interest; and if you chance to secure her to yourself, you may incline her to mine. She's handsome, and knows it; is very silly, and thinks she has sense; and has an old fond husband.

Care. I confess, a very fair foundation for a lover to build upon.

Mel. For my Lord Froth, he and his wife will be sufficiently taken up with admiring one another, and Brisk's gallantry, as they call it. I'll observe my uncle myself; and Jack Maskwell has promised me to watch my aunt narrowly, and give me notice upon any suspicious. As for Sir Paul, my wise father-in-law that is to be, my dear Cynthia has such a share in his fatherly fondness, he would scarce make her a moment uneasy to have her happy hereafter.

Care. So, you have manned your works; but I wish you may not have the weakest guard where the enemy is strongest.

Mel. Maskwell, you mean? Pr'ythee, why should you suspect him?

Care. 'Faith! I cannot help it: you know, I never liked him; I am a little superstitious in physiognomy.

Mel. He has obligations of gratitude to bind him to me; his dependence upon my uncle is through my means.

Care. Upon your aunt, you mean.

Mel. My aunt?

Care. I'm mistaken if there be not a familiarity between them you do not suspect, for all her passion for you.

Mel. Pooh, pooh! nothing in the world but his design to do me service; and he endeavours to be well in her esteem, that he may be able to effect it.

Care. Well, I shall be glad to be mistaken; but your aunt's aversion, in her revenge, cannot be any way so effectually shewn as in promoting a means to disinherit you. She is handsome and cunning, and naturally amorous; Maskwell is flesh and blood, at best, and opportunities between them are frequent. His affection to you, you have confessed, is grounded upon his interest; that you have transplanted; and should it take root in my lady, I don't see what you can expect from the fruit.

Mel. I confess the consequence is visible were your suspicions just. But see, the company is broken up: let's meet them.

Enter LORD TOUCHWOOD, SIR PAUL PLIANT, LORD FROTH, and BRISK.

Lord T. Out upon it, nephew! leave your father-in-law and me to maintain our ground against young people.

Mel. I beg your lordship's pardon; we were just returning—

Sir P. Were you, son? Gadsbud! much better as it is. Good, strange! I swear I'm almost tipsy; t'other bottle would have been too powerful for me, as sure as can be, it would. We wanted your company; but Mr. Brisk, where is he? I swear and vow he's a most facetious person, and the best company; and, my Lord Froth, your lordship is so merry a man! He, he he!

Lord F. Oh, fie! Sir Paul, what do you mean? Merry! Oh, barbarous! I'd as lieve you called me fool.

Sir P. Nay, I protest and vow, now, 'tis true; when Mr. Brisk jokes, your lordship's laugh does so become you! He, he, he!

Lord F. Ridiculous! Sir Paul, you're strangely mistaken. I find champagne is powerful. I assure you, Sir Paul, I laugh at nobody's jest but my

own, or a lady's; I assure you, Sir Paul. (*Lord T., Mellefont, and Careless talk apart.*)

Brisk. How! how, my lord? What, affront my wit? Let me perish, do I never say anything worthy to be laughed at?

Lord F. Oh, fie! don't misapprehend me: I don't say so; for I often smile at your conceptions. But there is nothing more unbecoming a man of quality than to laugh; 'tis such a vulgar expression of the passion! everybody can laugh. Then, especially, to laugh at the jest of an inferior person, or when anybody else of the same quality does not laugh with him: ridiculous! to be pleased with what pleases the crowd! Now, when I laugh, I always laugh alone.

Brisk. I suppose that's because you laugh at your own jests, egad! Ha, ha, ha!

Lord F. He, he! I swear, though, your railleury provokes me to a smile.

Brisk. Ay, my lord, it's a sign I hit you in the teeth, if you shew them.

Lord F. He, he, he! I swear, that's so very pretty, I can't forbear.

Lord T. Sir Paul, if you please, we'll retire to the ladies, and drink a dish of tea to settle our heads.

Sir P. With all my heart. Mr. Brisk, you'll come to us: or call me when you're going to joke; I'll be ready to laugh incontinently.

[*Exit with Lord T.*]

Mel. But does your lordship never see comedies?

Lord F. Oh! yes, sometimes; but I never laugh.

Mel. No!

Lord F. Oh! no. Never laugh, indeed, sir.

Care. No! why, what d'ye go there for?

Lord F. To distinguish myself from the commonality, and mortify the poets; the fellows grow so conceited when any of their foolish wit prevails upon the side-boxes! I swear—he, he, he!—I have often constrained my inclinations to laugh—he, he, he!—to avoid giving them encouragement.

Mel. You are cruel to yourself, my lord, as well as malicious to them.

Lord F. I confess I did myself some violence at first; but now I think I have conquered it.

Brisk. Let me perish, my lord, but there is something very particular and novel in the humour; 'tis true, it makes against wit, and I'm sorry for some friends of mine that write; but, egad! I love to be malicious. Nay, deuce take me, there's wit in't, too; and wit must be foiled by wit: cut a diamond with a diamond; no other way, egad!

Lord F. Oh! I thought you would not be long before you found out the wit.

Care. Wit in what? Where the devil's the wit, in not laughing when a man has a mind to't?

Brisk. Oh Lord! why, can't you find it out? Why, there 'tis, in the not laughing. Don't you apprehend me! My lord, Careless is a very honest fellow; but, harkye!—you understand me—somewhat heavy; a little shallow, or so. Why, I'll tell you now: suppose now you come up to me—nay, pr'ythee, Careless, be instructed—suppose, as I was saying, you come up to me, holding your sides, and laughing as if you would—Well, I look grave, and ask the cause of this immoderate mirth: you laugh on still, and are not able to tell me: still I look grave; not so much as smile—

Care. Smile! so; what the devil should you smile at, when you suppose I can't tell you?

Brisk. Psha, psha! pr'ythee, don't interrupt me: but I tell you, you shall tell me at last; but it shall be a great while first.

Care. Well, but, pr'ythee, don't let it be a great while, because I long to have it over.

Brisk. Well, then, you tell me some good jest,

or very witty thing, laughing all the while as if you were ready to die, and I hear it, and look thus; would not you be disappointed?

Care. No; for if it were a witty thing, I should not expect you to understand it.

Lord F. Oh, fie! Mr. Careless; all the world allow Mr. Brisk to have wit: my wife says he has a great deal; I hope you think her a judge.

Brisk. Pooh! my lord, his voice goes for nothing. I can't tell how to make him apprehend. Take it t'other way: suppose I say a witty thing to you. (*To Careless.*)

Care. Then I shall be disappointed, indeed.

Mel. Let him alone, Brisk; he is obstinately bent not to be instructed.

Brisk. I'm sorry for him, the deuce take me!

Mel. Shall we go to the ladies, my lord?

Lord F. With all my heart; methinks, we are a solitude without them.

Mel. Or, what say you to another bottle of champagne?

Lord F. Oh! for the universe, not a drop more, I beseech you. Oh, intemperate! I have a flushing in my face already. (*Takes out a pocket-glass, and looks in it.*)

Brisk. Let me see, let me see, my lord. I broke my glass that was in the lid of my snuff-box. Ham! Deuce take me, I have encouraged a pimple here, too. (*Takes the glass, and looks in it.*)

Lord F. Then you must fortify him with a patch; my wife shall supply you. Come, gentlemen, adieu! [*Exeunt.*]

Enter MASKWELL and LADY TOUCHWOOD.

Lady T. I'll hear no more. You're false and ungrateful; come, I know you false.

Mask. I have been frail, I confess, madam, for your ladyship's service.

Lady T. That I should trust a man whom I had known betray his friend?

Mask. What friend have I betrayed? or to whom?

Lady T. Your fond friend, Mellefont, and to me; can you deny it?

Mask. I do not.

Lady T. Have you not wronged my lord, who has been a father to you in your wants, and given you being? Have you not wronged him in the highest manner?

Mask. With your ladyship's help, and for your service, as I told you before; I can't deny that neither. Anything more, madam?

Lady T. More, audacious villain! Oh! what's more is most my shame. Have you not dishonoured me?

Mask. No, that I deny; for I never told in all my life; so that accusation's answered: on to the next.

Lady T. Death! do you dally with my passion? Insolent devil! But have a care; provoke me not; you shall not escape my vengeance. Calm villain! how unconcerned he stands, confessing treachery and ingratitude! Is there a vice more black? Oh! I have excuses, thousands, for my faults: fire in my temper; passions in my soul, apt to every provocation; oppressed at once with love and with despair. But a sedate, a thinking villain, whose black blood runs temperately bad, what excuse can clear?

Mask. Will you be in temper, madam? I would not talk to be heard. I have been a very great rogue for your sake, and you reproach me with it; I am ready to be a rogue still to do you service; and you are flinging conscience and honour in my face, to rebate my inclinations. How am I to behave myself? You know I am your creature; my life and fortune in your power; to disoblige you brings me certain ruin. Allow it, I would betray

you, I would not be a traitor to myself: I don't pretend to honesty, because you know I am a rascal: but I would convince you, from the necessity of my being firm to you.

Lady T. Necessity, impudence! Can no gratitude incline you? no obligations touch you? Were you not in the nature of a servant? and have not I, in effect, made you lord of all, of me, and of my lord? Where is that humble love, the languishing, that adoration which was once paid me, and everlastingly engaged?

Mask. Fixed, rooted in my heart, whence nothing can remove them; yet you—

Lady T. Yet! what yet?

Mask. Nay, misconceive me not, madam, when I say I have had a generous and a faithful passion, which you had never favoured but through revenge and policy.

Lady T. Ha!

Mask. Look you, madam, we are alone, pray contain yourself, and hear me. You know you loved your nephew when I first sighed for you; I quickly found it: an argument that I loved; for, with that art you veiled your passion, 'twas imperceptible to all but jealous eyes. This discovery made me bold, I confess it; for by it I thought you in my power: your nephew's scorn of you added to my hopes; I watched the occasion, and took you, just repulsed by him, warm at once with love and indignation; your disposition, my arguments, and happy opportunity, accomplished my design. How I have loved you since, words have not shewn; then how should words express?

Lady T. Well, mollifying devil! and have I not met your love with forward fire?

Mask. Your zeal, I grant, was ardent, but misplaced; there was revenge in view; that woman's idol had defiled the temple of the god, and love was made a mock-worship. A son and heir would have edged young Mellefont upon the brink of ruin, and left him nought but you to catch at for prevention.

Lady T. Again provoke me! Do you wind me like a lark, only to rouse my own stilled soul for your diversion? Confusion!

Mask. Nay, madam, I'm gone, if you relapse. What needs this? I say nothing but what yourself, in open hours of love have told me. Why should you deny it? nay, how can you? Is not all this present heat owing to the same fire? Do not you love him still? How have I this day offended you, but in not breaking off his match with Cynthia? which, ere to-morrow, shall be done, had you but patience.

Lady T. How! what said you, Maskwell? Another caprice to unwind my temper?

Mask. No, by my love, I am your slave, the slave of all your pleasures; and—'ll not rest till I have given you peace, would you suffer me.

Lady T. Oh! Maskwell, in vain do I disguise me from thee; thou knowest me; knowest the very inmost windings and recesses of my soul. Oh! Mellefont!—Married to-morrow!—Despair strikes me. Yet my soul knows I hate him, too: let him but once be mine, and next immediate ruin seize him.

Mask. Compose yourself; you shall have your wish. Will that please you?

Lady T. How, how? thou dear, thou precious villain, how?

Mask. You have already been tampering with my Lady Pliant?

Lady T. I have: she is ready for any impression I think fit.

Mask. She must be thoroughly persuaded that Mellefont loves her.

Lady T. She is so credulous that way naturally, and likes him so well, that she will believe it faster

than I can persuade her. But I don't see what you can propose from such a trifling design; for her first conversing with Mellefont will convince her of the contrary.

Mask. I know it. I don't depend upon it; but it will prepare something else, and gain us leisure to lay a stronger plot: if I gain a little time, I shall not want contrivance.

*One minute gives invention to destroy
What, to rebuild, will a whole age employ.*

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter LADY FROTH and CYNTHIA.

Cyn. Indeed, madam! is it possible your ladyship could have been so much in love?

Lady F. I could not sleep; I did not sleep one wink for three weeks together.

Cyn. Prodigious! I wonder want of sleep, and so much love, and so much wit as your ladyship has, did not turn your brain.

Lady F. Oh! my dear Cynthia, you must not rally your friend. But, really, as you say, I wonder, too. But then, I had a way; for, between you and I, I had whimsies and vapours; but I gave them vent.

Cyn. How, pray, madam?

Lady F. Oh! I writ; writ abundantly. Do you never write?

Cyn. Write! what?

Lady F. Songs, elegies, satires, encomiums, panegyrics, lampoons, plays, or heroic poems.

Cyn. Oh Lord! not I, madam; I'm content to be a courteous reader.

Lady F. Oh, inconsistent! In love, and not write! If my lord and I had been both of your temper, we should never have come together. Oh! bless me! what a sad thing would that have been, if my lord and I should never have met!

Cyn. Then neither my lord nor you would ever have met with your match, on my conscience.

Lady F. On my conscience, no more we should; thou say'st right; for sure, my Lord Froth is as fine a gentleman, and as much a man of quality!—Ah! nothing at all of the common air. I think I may say he wants nothing but a blue ribbon and a star to make him shine the very phosphorous of our hemisphere. Do you understand those two hard words? If you don't, I'll explain them to you.

Cyn. Yes, yes, madam, I'm not so ignorant. At least, I won't own it, to be troubled with your instructions. (*Aside.*)

Lady F. Nay, I beg your pardon; but being derived from the Greek, I thought you might have escaped the etymology. But I'm the more amazed, to find you a woman of letters, and not write. Bless me, how can Mellefont believe you love him?

Cyn. Why, 'faith! madam, he that won't take my word shall never have it under my hand.

Lady F. I vow, Mellefont's a pretty gentleman; but methinks he wants a manner.

Cyn. A manner! what's that, madam?

Lady F. Some distinguishing quality; as, for example, the *bel air*, or brilliant, of Mr. Brisk; the solemnity, yet complaisance, of my lord; or something of his own, that he should look a little *je ne sais quoi*-ish; he is too much a mediocrity, in my mind.

Cyn. He does not, indeed, affect either pertness or formality; for which I like him: here he comes.

Lady F. And my lord with him: pray, observe the difference.

Enter LORD FROTH, MELLEFONT, and BRISK.

Cyn. Impertinent creature! I could almost be angry with her now. (*Aside.*)

Lady F. My lord, I have been telling Cynthia how much I have been in love with you; I swear I have; I'm not ashamed to own it now; ah! it makes my heart leap; I vow I sigh when I think on't. My dear lord—ha, ha, ha!—do you remember, my lord? (*Squeezes him by the hand, looks kindly on him, sighs, and then laughs out.*)

Lord F. Pleasant creature! Perfectly well. Ah! that look; ay, there it is; who could resist? 'Twas so my heart was made a captive first, and ever since it has been in love with happy slavery.

Lady F. Oh! that tongue, that dear deceitful tongue! that charming softness in your mien and your expression! and then your bow! Good, my lord, bow as you did when I gave you my picture. Here, suppose this my picture. (*Gives him a pocket-glass.*) Pray, mind my lord; ah! he bows charmingly. (*Lord Froth bows profoundly low, then kisses the glass.*) Nay, my lord, you sha'n't kiss it so much; I shall grow jealous, I vow now.

Lord F. I saw myself there, and kissed it for your sake.

Lady F. Ah! gallantry to the last degree. Mr. Brisk, you're a judge, was ever anything so well bred as my lord?

Brisk. Never anything—but your ladyship, let me perish.

Lady F. Oh! prettily turned again! let me die but you have a great deal of wit. Mr. Mellefont, don't you think Mr. Brisk has a world of wit?

Mel. Oh! yes, madam.

Brisk. Oh dear! madam.

Lady F. An infinite deal.

Brisk. Oh heavens! madam.

Lady F. More wit than anybody.

Brisk. I'm everlastingly your humble servant, deuce take me, madam.

Lord F. Don't you think us a happy couple? (*To Cynthia.*)

Cyn. I vow, my lord, I think you are the happiest couple in the world; for you're not only happy in one another, and when you are together, but happy in yourselves, and by yourselves.

Lord F. I hope Mellefont will make a good husband, too.

Cyn. 'Tis my interest to believe he will, my lord.

Lord F. D'ye think he'll love you as well as I do my wife? I'm afraid not.

Cyn. I believe he'll love me better.

Lord F. Heavens! that can never be: but why do you think so?

Cyn. Because he has not so much reason to be fond of himself.

Lord F. Oh! your humble servant for that, dear madam. Well, Mellefont, you'll be a happy creature.

Mel. Ay, my lord, I shall have the same reason for my happiness that your lordship has, I shall think myself happy.

Lord F. Ah! that's all.

Brisk. Your ladyship is in the right: (*to Lady F.*) but, egad! I'm wholly turned into satire. I confess I write but seldom; but when I do—keen iambics, egad! But my lord was telling me, your ladyship has made an essay upon an heroic poem.

Lady F. Did my lord tell you? Yes, I vow, and the subject is my lord's love to me. And what do you think I call it? I dare swear you won't guess—*The Syllabub.* Ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Because my lord's title's Froth, egad! Ha, ha, ha! Deuce take me! very apropos and surprising. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. Eh! ay, is not it? And then, I call my lord, Spumoso; and myself—what d'ye think I call myself?

Brisk. Lactilla, may be: 'gad! I cannot tell.

Lady F. Biddy, that's all; just my own name.

Brisk. Biddy! Egad! very pretty: deuce take me, if your ladyship has not the art of surprising the most naturally in the world. I hope you'll make me happy in communicating the poem.

Lady F. Oh! you must be my confidant. I must ask your advice.

Brisk. I'm your humble servant, let me perish. I presume your ladyship has read Bossu?

Lady F. Oh! yes; and Rapin, and Dacier upon Aristotle and Horace. My lord, you must not be jealous, I'm communicating all to Mr. Brisk.

Lord F. No, no; I'll allow Mr. Brisk. Have you nothing about you to shew him, my dear?

Lady F. Yes, I believe I have. Mr. Brisk, come, will you go into the next room? and there I'll shew you what I have. [*Exit with Brisk.*]

Lord F. I'll walk a turn in the garden, and come to you. [*Exit.*]

Mel. You're thoughtful, Cynthia.

Cyn. I'm thinking that though marriage makes man and wife one flesh, it leaves them still two fools; and they become more conspicuous by setting off one another.

Mel. That's only when two fools meet, and their follies are opposed.

Cyn. Nay, I have known two wits meet, and by the opposition of their wit, render themselves as ridiculous as fools. Matrimony is a hazardous game to engage in. What think you of drawing stakes, and giving over in time?

Mel. No, hang it, that's not endeavouring to win, because it's possible we may lose; since we have shuffled and cut, let's e'en turn up trump now.

Cyn. Then I find it's like cards; if either of us have a good hand, it is an accident of fortune.

Mel. No, marriage is rather like a game at bowls; fortune, indeed, makes the match, and the two nearest, and sometimes the two furthest are together; but the game depends entirely upon judgment.

Cyn. Still it is a game, and, consequently, one of us must be a loser.

Mel. Not at all; only a friendly trial of skill, and the winnings to be laid out in an entertainment.

Enter SIR PAUL and LADY PLIANT.

Sir P. Gadsbud! I am provoked into a fermentation, as my Lady Froth says. Was ever the like read of in story?

Lady P. Sir Paul, have patience, let me alone to rattle him up.

Sir P. Pray, your ladyship, give me leave to be angry; I'll rattle him up, I warrant you; I'll teach him, with a certiorari, to make love to my wife.

Lady P. You teach him! I'll teach him myself; so, pray, Sir Paul, hold you contented.

Sir P. Hold yourself contented, my Lady Pliant; I find passion coming upon me even to desperation, and I cannot submit as formerly, therefore give way.

Lady P. How now? will you be pleased to retire, and—

Sir P. No, marry, will I not be pleased; I am pleased to be angry, that's my pleasure at this time.

Mel. What can this mean?

Lady P. Gads my life! the man's distracted. Why, how now! who are you? What am I? Slid-ikins! can't I govern you? What did I marry you for? Am I not to be absolute and uncontrollable? Is it fit a woman of my spirit and conduct should be contradicted in a matter of this concern?

Sir P. It concerns me, and only me; besides, I'm not to be governed at all times. When I am in tranquillity, my Lady Pliant shall command Sir Paul; but when I'm provoked to fury, I cannot incorporate with patience and reason; as soon may

tigers match with tigers, lambs with lambs, and every creature couple with its foe, as the poet says.

Lady P. He's hot-headed still! 'Tis in vain to talk to you; but remember I have a curtain-lecture for you, you disobedient, headstrong brute.

Sir P. No, 'tis because I won't be headstrong; because I won't be a brute, and have my head fortified, that I am thus exasperated. But I will protect my honour: and yonder is the violater of my fame.

Lady P. 'Tis my honour that is concerned, and the violation was intended to me. Your honour! you have none, but what is in my keeping, and I can dispose of it when I please; therefore, don't provoke me.

Sir P. Hum! gadsbud! she says true. (*Aside.*) Well, my lady, march on; I will fight under you, then: I am convinced, as far as passion will permit. (*Sir P. and Lady P. come up to Mellefont.*)

Lady P. Inhuman and treacherous—

Sir P. Thou serpent and first tempter of woman-kind—

Cyn. Bless me! sir—madam—what mean you?

Sir P. Thy, Thy, come away, Thy; touch him not; come hither, girl: go not near him, there's nothing but deceit about him; snakes are in his looks, and the crocodile of Nilus in his wicked appetite; he would devour thy fortune, and starve thee alive.

Lady P. Dishonourable, impudent creature!

Mel. For heaven's sake, madam, to whom do you direct this language?

Lady P. Have I behaved myself with all the decorum and nicety befitting the person of Sir Paul's wife; have I preserved my honour as it were in a snow-house; have I, I say, preserved myself like a fair sheet of paper, for you to make a blot upon?

Sir P. And she shall make a simile with any woman in England.

Mel. I am so amazed, I know not what to say.

Sir P. Do you think my daughter—this pretty creature—Gadsbud! she's a wife for a cherubim—Do you think her fit for nothing but to be a stalking-horse, to stand before you while you take aim at my wife! Gadsbud! I was never angry before in my life, and I'll never be appeased again.

Mel. Confusion! this is my aunt; such malice can be engendered no where else. (*Aside.*)

Lady P. Sir Paul, take Cynthia from his sight; leave me to strike him with the remorse of his intended crime.

Cyn. Pray, sir, stay; hear him; I dare affirm he's innocent.

Sir P. Innocent! why, harkye! come hither, Thy; harkye! I had it from his aunt, my sister Touchwood. Gadabud! he does not care a farthing for anything of thee, but thy portion; why, he's in love with my wife; he would have tantalized thee, and dishonoured thy poor father, and that would certainly have broken my heart. I'm sure, if ever I should have horns, they would kill me; they would never come kindly; I should die of 'em, like any child that was outting his teeth; I should, indeed, Thy; therefore, come away; but Providence has prevented all, therefore, come away when I bid you.

Cyn. I must obey.

Lady P. Oh! such a thing! the impiety of it startles me; to wrong so good, so fair a creature, and one that loves you tenderly: 'tis a barbarity of barbarities, and nothing could be guilty of it—

Mel. But the greatest villain imagination can form, I grant it; and next to the villainy of such a fact, is the villainy of aspersing me with the guilt. How? which way was I to wrong her? for yet I understand you not.

Lady P. Why, gads my life! cousin Mellefont, you cannot be so peremptory as to deny it, when I

tax you with it to your face; for, now Sir Paul's gone, you are *coram nobis*.

Mel. By heaven, I love her more than life, or—

Lady P. Fiddle, fiddle! don't tell me of this and that, and everything in the world; but give me mathemacular demonstration, answer me directly. But I have not patience. Oh! the impiety of it, as I was saying, and the unparalleled wickedness! Oh, merciful father! how could you think to reverse nature so, to make the daughter the means of procuring the mother!

Mel. The daughter procure the mother!

Lady P. Ay; for though I am not Cynthia's own mother, I am her father's wife; and that's near enough to make it incest.

Mel. Oh! my precious aunt, and the devil in conjunction! (*Aside.*)

Lady P. Oh! reflect upon the horror of that, and then the guilt of deceiving everybody; marrying the daughter, only to dishonour the father; and then seducing me—

Mel. Where am I? is it day? and am I awake? Madam—

Lady P. And nobody knows how circumstances may happen together. To my thinking now, I could resist the strongest temptation; but yet, I know 'tis impossible for me to know whether I could or no; there's no certainty in the things of this life.

Mel. Madam, pray give me leave to ask you one question.

Lady P. Oh Lord! ask me the question! I'll swear, I'll refuse it; I swear I'll deny it, therefore, don't ask me; nay, you sha'n't ask me; I swear I'll deny it. Oh gemini! you have brought all the blood into my face: I warrant, I am as red as a turkey-cork. Oh fie! cousin Mellefont.

Mel. Nay, madam, hear me—

Lady P. Hear you? No, no; I'll deny you first, and hear you afterwards; for one does not know how one's mind may change upon hearing. Hearing is one of the senses, and all the senses are fallible; I won't trust my honour, I assure you; my honour is infallible and un-come-at-able.

Mel. For heaven's sake, madam—

Lady P. Oh! name it no more. Bless me, how can you talk of heaven, and have so much wickedness in your heart? May be, you don't think it a sin; they say, some of you gentlemen don't think it a sin. Indeed, if I did not think it a sin—But still, my honour, if it were no sin—But then, to marry my daughter, for the conveniency of frequent opportunities: I'll never consent to that; as sure as can be, I'll break the match.

Mel. Death and amazement! Madam, upon my knees—

Lady P. Nay, nay, rise up: come, you shall see my good-nature. I know love is powerful, and nobody can help his passion: 'tis not your fault, nor I swear it is not mine. How can I help it, if I have charms? And how can you help it, if you are made a captive? Oh Lord! here's somebody coming; I dare not stay. Well, you must consider of your crime, and strive as much as can be against it: strive, be sure; but don't be melancholy, don't despair; but never think that I'll grant you anything—Oh Lord! no: but be sure you lay aside all thoughts of the marriage; for though I know you don't love Cynthia, only as a blind for your passion to me, yet it will make me jealous—Oh Lord! what did I say? Jealous! no, no, I can't be jealous; for I must not love you; therefore, don't hope—but don't despair neither. Oh! they're coming, I must fly. [*Exit.*]

Mel. So, then, in spite of my care and foresight, I am caught—caught in my security: yet this was but a shallow artifice, unworthy of my Machiavilian

aunt; there must be more behind: destruction follows hard, if not presently prevented.

Enter MASKWELL.

Maskwell, welcome! Thy presence is a view of land appearing to my shipwrecked hopes: the witch has raised the storm, and her ministers have done their work; you see the vessels are parted.

Mask. I know it: I met Sir Paul towing away Cynthia. Come, trouble not your head, I'll join you together ere to-morrow morning, or drown between you in the attempt.

Mel. There's comfort in a hand stretched out to one that's sinking, though never so far off.

Mask. No sinking, nor no danger. Come, cheer up; why, you don't know that, while I plead for you, your aunt has given me a retaining fee; nay, I am your greatest enemy, and she does but journey-work under me.

Mel. Ha! how's this?

Mask. What d'ye think of my being employed in the execution of all her plots? Ha, ha, ha! Nay, it's true: I have undertaken to break the match; I have undertaken to make your uncle disinherit you; to get you turned out of doors, and to—Ha, ha, ha! I can't tell you for laughing. Oh! she has opened her heart to me—I'm to turn you a grazing, and to—ha, ha, ha!—marry Cynthia myself: there's a plot for you.

Mel. Ha! Oh! see; I see my rising son! Light breaks through clouds upon me, and I shall live in day. Oh! my Maskwell, how shall I thank or praise thee! thou hast outwitted woman. But tell me, how couldst thou thus get into her confidence, eh! how? But was it her contrivance to persuade my Lady Plant to this extravagant belief?

Mask. It was; and, to tell you the truth, I encouraged it for your diversion: though it made you a little uneasy for the present, yet the reflection of it must needs be entertaining. I warrant, she was very violent at first.

Mel. Ha, ha, ha! Ay, a very fury.

Mask. Ha, ha, ha! I know her temper. Well, you must know, then, that all my contrivances were but bubbles; till at last I pretended to have been long secretly in love with Cynthia; that did my business; that convinced your aunt I might be trusted; since it was as much my interest as hers to break the match: then she thought my jealousy might qualify me to assist her in her revenge; and, in short, in that belief, told me the secrets of her heart. At length, we made this agreement: if I accomplish her designs, (as I told you before,) she has engaged to put Cynthia, with all her fortune, into my power.

Mel. She is most gracious in her favour. Well, and, dear Jack, how hast thou contrived?

Mask. I would not have you stay to hear it now; for I don't know but she may come this way. I am to meet her anon; after that, I'll tell you the whole matter. Be here in this gallery an hour hence: by that time, I imagine, our consultation may be over.

Mel. I will. Till then, success attend thee. [*Exit.*]

Mask. Till then, success will attend me; for when I meet you, I meet the only obstacle to my fortune. Cynthia, let thy beauty gild my crimes; and whatsoever I commit of treachery or deceit shall be imputed to me as a merit. Treachery! what treachery! Love cancels all the bonds of friendship, and sets men right upon their first foundations. Duty to kings, piety to parents, gratitude to benefactors, and fidelity to friends, are different and particular ties; but the name of rival cuts 'em all asunder, and is a general acquittance. Rival is equal; and love, like death, an universal leveller of mankind. Ha! but is there not such a thing as

honesty? Yes, and whosoever has it about him bears an enemy in his breast; for your honest man, as I take it, is that nice, scrupulous, conscientious person, who will cheat nobody but himself: such another coxcomb as your wise man, who is too hard for all the world, and will be made a fool of by nobody but himself. Ha, ha, ha! Well, for wisdom and honesty, give me cunning and hypocrisy. Oh! 'tis such a pleasure to angle for fair-faced fools! Then that hungry gudgeon, credulity, will bite at anything. Why, let me see: I have the same face, the same words and accents, when I speak what I do think, and when I speak what I do not think; the very same: and dear dissimulation is the only art not to be known from nature.

*Why will mankind be fools, and be deceiv'd?
And why are friends and lovers' oaths believ'd?
When each, who searches strictly his own mind,
May so much fraud and power of baseness find.*

[*Exit.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The same.

Enter LORD and LADY TOUCHWOOD.

Lady T. My lord, can you blame my brother Plant, if he refuse his daughter upon this provocation? The contract's void by this unheard-of impiet?

Lord T. I don't believe it true; he has better principles: pho! 'tis nonsense. Come, come, I know my Lady Plant; 'tis not the first time she has mistaken respect for love, and made Sir Paul jealous of the civility of an undesigning person, the better to bespeak his authority in her unfeigned pleasures.

Lady T. You censure hardly, my lord: my sister's honour is very well known.

Lord T. Yes, I believe I know some that have been familiarly acquainted with it. This is a little trick wrought by some pitiful contriver, envious of my nephew's merit.

Lady T. Nay, my lord, it may be so, and I hope it will be found so; but that will require some time; for, in such a case as this, demonstration is necessary.

Lord T. There should have been demonstration of the contrary, too, before it had been believed.

Lady T. So, I suppose, there was.

Lord T. How! where? when?

Lady T. That I can't tell; nay, I don't say there was; I am willing to believe as favourably of my nephew as I can.

Lord T. I don't know that.

Lady T. How? Don't you believe that, say you, my lord?

Lord T. No, I don't say so. I confess I am troubled to find you so cold in his defence.

Lady T. His defence! Bless me! would you have me defend an ill thing?

Lord T. You believe it, then?

Lady T. I don't know; I am very unwilling to speak my thoughts in anything that may be to my cousin's disadvantage; besides, I find, my lord, you are prepared to receive an ill impression from any opinion of mine, which is not consenting with your own; but since I am like to be suspected in the end, and 'tis a pain any longer to dissemble, I own it to you: in short, I do believe it; nay, and can believe anything worse, if it were laid to his charge. Don't ask me my reasons, my lord; for they are not fit to be told you.

Lord T. I'm amazed! Here must be something more than ordinary in this. (*Aside.*) Not fit to be told me, madam? You can have no interests

wherein I am not concerned; and, consequently, the same reasons ought to be convincing to me, which create your satisfaction or disquiet.

Lady T. But those which cause my disquiet, I am willing to have remote from your hearing. Good, my lord, don't press me.

Lord T. Don't oblige me to press you.

Lady T. Whatever it was, 'tis past; and that is better to be unknown, which cannot be prevented; therefore, let me beg of you to rest satisfied.

Lord T. When you have told me I will.

Lady T. You won't.

Lord T. By my life, my dear, I will.

Lady T. What if you can't?

Lord T. How? Then I must know; nay, I will: no more trifling; I charge you tell me—by all our mutual peace to come, upon your duty—

Lady T. Nay, my lord, you need say no more, to make me lay my heart before you; but don't be thus transported; compose yourself; it is not of concern, to make you lose one minute's temper: 'tis not, indeed, my dear. Oh Lord! I wish I had not told you anything. Indeed, my lord, you have frightened me. Nay, look pleased, I'll tell you.

Lord T. Well, well.

Lady T. Nay, but will you be calm? Indeed, it's nothing but—

Lord T. But what?

Lady T. But will you promise not to be angry? nay, you must not be angry with Mellefont. I dare swear he's sorry; and, were it to do again, would not—

Lord T. Sorry for what? Death! you rack me with delay.

Lady T. Nay, no great matter, only—well, I have your promise—pho! why, nothing, only your nephew had a mind to amuse himself sometimes with a little gallantry towards me. Nay, I can't think he meant anything seriously; but methought it looked oddly.

Lord T. Confusion! what do I hear?

Lady T. Or, may be, he thought he was not enough akin to me upon your account, and had a mind to create a nearer relation on his own; a lover, you know, my lord—Ha, ha, ha! Well, but that's all. Now you have it. Well, remember your promise, my lord; and don't take any notice of it to him.

Lord T. No, no, no.

Lady T. Nay, I swear you must not; a little harmless mirth—only misplaced, that's all. But if it were more, 'tis over now, and all's well. For my part, I have forgotten it; and so has he, I hope; for I have not heard anything from him these two days.

Lord T. These two days! Is it so fresh? Unnatural villain! I'll have him stripped, and turned naked out of my doors this moment, and let him rot and perish.

Lady T. Oh! my lord, you'll ruin me, if you take such public notice of it; it will be a town-talk: consider your own and my honour. Stay; I told you you would not be satisfied when you knew it.

Lord T. Before I've done, I will be satisfied. Ungrateful monster! How long—

Lady T. Lord! I don't know: I wish my lips had grown together when I told you. Almost a twelvemonth—nay, I won't tell you any more, till you are yourself. Pray, my lord, don't let the company see you in this disorder: yet, I confess, I can't blame you; for I think I was never so surprised in my life. Who would have thought my nephew could have so misconstrued my kindness? But will you go into your closet, and recover your temper! I'll make an excuse of sudden business to the company, and come to you. Pray, good, dear my lord, let me beg you do now: I'll come

immediately, and tell you all. Will you, my lord?

Lord T. I will. I am mute with wonder.

Lady T. Well, but go now; here's somebody coming.

Lord T. Well, I go. You won't stay; for I would hear more of this.

Lady T. I'll follow instantly. [Exit *Lord T.*]

Enter MASKWELL.

So!

Mask. This was a master-piece, and did not need my help; though I stood ready for a cue to come in, and confirm all, had there been occasion.

Lady T. Have you seen Mellefont?

Mask. I have; and am to meet him here about this time.

Lady T. How does he bear his disappointment?

Mask. Secure in my assistance, he seemed not much afflicted, but rather laughed at the shallow artifice, which so little time must of necessity discover: yet he is apprehensive of some further design of your's, and has engaged me to watch you. I believe he will hardly be able to prevent your plot; yet I would have you use caution and expedition.

Lady T. Expedition, indeed; for all we do must be performed in the remaining part of this evening, and before the company break up, lest my lord should cool, and have an opportunity to talk with him privately: my lord must not see him again.

Mask. By no means; therefore, you must aggravate my lord's displeasure to a degree that will admit of no conference with him. What think you of mentioning me?

Lady T. How?

Mask. To my lord, as having been privy to Mellefont's design upon you, but still using my utmost endeavours to dissuade him: though my friendship and love to him has made me conceal it, yet, you may say, I threatened the next time he attempted anything of that kind, to discover it to my lord.

Lady T. To what end is this?

Mask. It will confirm my lord's opinion of my honour and honesty, and create in him a new confidence in me, which (should this design miscarry) will be necessary to the forming of another plot that I have in my head—to cheat you, as well as the rest. (*Aside.*)

Lady T. I'll do it.

Mask. You had best go to my lord, keep him as long as you can in his closet, and I doubt not but you will mould him to what you please: your guests are so engaged in their own follies and intrigues, they'll miss neither of you.

Lady T. When shall we meet? At eight this evening, in my chamber; there rejoice at our success, and toy away an hour in mirth.

Mask. I will not fail. [Exit *Lady T.*] I know what she means well enough. I have lost all appetite to her; yet she's a fine woman, and I loved her once; but I don't know, the case is altered; what was my pleasure is become my duty; and I am as indifferent to her now, as if I were her husband. Should she smoke my design upon Cynthia, I were in a fine pickle. She has a penetrating head, and knows how to interpret a coldness the right way; therefore, I must dissemble ardour and coquetry, that's resolved. How easily and pleasantly is that dissembled before fruition! Plague on't! that a man can't drink without quenching his thirst. Ha! yonder comes Mellefont, thoughtful. Let me think: meet her at eight—hum—ha! I have it. If I can speak to my lord before, I will deceive them all, and yet secure myself. 'Twas a lucky thought!

Well, this double-dealing is a jewel. Here he comes: now for me.

Enter MELLEFONT; musing. Maskwell, pretending not to see him, walks by him, and speaks, as it were, to himself.

Mercy on us! what will the wickedness of this world come to!

Mel. How now, Jack? What, so full of contemplation that you run over?

Mask. I'm glad you're come, for I could not contain myself any longer; and was just going to give vent to a secret, which nobody but you ought to drink down. Your aunt's just gone from thence.

Mel. And having trusted thee with the secrets of her soul, thou art villanously bent to discover 'em all to me? eh!

Mask. I'm afraid my frailty leans that way; but I don't know whether I can in honour discover all.

Mel. All, all, man. What, you may in honour betray her as far as she betrays herself. No tragical design upon my person, I hope?

Mask. No, but it's a comical design upon mine.

Mel. What dost thou mean?

Mask. Listen, and be dumb: we have been bargaining about the rate of your ruin—

Mel. Like any two guardians to an orphan heir-ess. Well.

Mask. And whereas pleasure is generally paid with mischief, what mischief I shall do is to be paid with pleasure.

Mel. So, when you've swallowed the potion, you sweeten your mouth with a plum?

Mask. You are merry, sir; but I shall probe your constitution: in short, the price of your banishment is to be paid with the person of—

Mel. Of Cynthia, and her fortune. Why, you forget, you told me this before.

Mask. No, no; so far you are right; and I am, as an earnest of that bargain, to have full and free possession of the person of your aunt.

Mel. Ha! Pho! you trifle.

Mask. By this light, I'm serious, all rillery apart. I knew 'twould stun you. This evening, at eight, she will receive me in her bed-chamber.

Mel. Hell and the devil! is she abandoned of all grace? Why, the woman is possessed.

Mask. Well, will you go in my stead?

Mel. Into a hot furnace sooner.

Mask. No you would not; it would not be so convenient, as I can order matters.

Mel. What d'ye mean?

Mask. Mean! not to disappoint the lady, I assure you. Ha, ha, ha! How gravely he looks. Come, come, I won't perplex you. 'Tis the only thing that Providence could have contrived to make me capable of serving you, either to my inclination or your own necessity.

Mel. How, how, for heaven's sake, dear Maskwell?

Mask. Why, thus: I'll go according to my appointment; you shall have notice, at the critical minute, to come and surprise your aunt and me together. Counterfeit a rage against me, and I'll make my escape through the private passage from her chamber, which I'll take care to leave open. 'Twill be hard if then you can't bring her to any conditions; for this discovery will disarm her of all defence, and leave her entirely at your mercy: nay, she must ever after be in awe of you.

Mel. Let me adore thee, my better genius! I think it is not in the power of fate now to disappoint my hopes—my hopes! my certainty!

Mask. Well, I'll meet you here, within a quarter of eight, and give you notice.

Mel. Good fortune ever go with thee!

[*Exit Maskwell.*]

Enter CARELESS.

Care. Mellefont, get out o'the way. My Lady Pliant's coming, and I shall never succeed while thou art in sight, though she begins to tuck about; but I made love a great while to no purpose.

Mel. Why, what's the matter? She's convinced that I don't care for her.

Care. I can't get an answer from her, that does not begin with her honour, or her virtue, or some such cant. Then she has told me the whole history of Sir Paul's nine years' courtship; how he has lain for whole nights together upon the stairs, before her chamber-door; and the first favour he received from her was a piece of an old scarlet petticoat for a stomacher; which, since the day of his marriage, he has, out of a piece of gallantry, converted into a night-cap; and wears it still, with much solemnity, on his anniversary wedding-night.

Mel. You are very great with him. I wonder he never told you his grievances: he will, I warrant you.

Care. Excessively foolish! But that which gives me most hopes of her is her telling me of the many temptations she has resisted.

Mel. Nay, then, you have her; for a woman's bragging to a man that she has overcome temptation, is an argument that they were weakly offered, and a challenge to him to engage her more irresistibly. Here she comes with Sir Paul. I'll leave you. Ply her close; and, by-and-by, clap a billet-doux into her hand; for a woman never thinks a man truly in love with her, till he has been fool enough to think of her out of her sight, and to lose so much time as to write to her. [*Exit.*]

Enter SIR PAUL and LADY PLIANT.

Sir P. Sha'n't we disturb your meditations, Mr. Careless? you would be private!

Care. You bring that along with you, Sir Paul, that shall be always welcome to my privacy.

Sir P. Oh! sweet sir, you load your humble servants, both me and my wife, with continual favours.

Lady P. Sir Paul, what a phrase was there! You will be making answers, and taking that upon you which ought to lie upon me: that you should have so little breeding, to think Mr. Careless did not apply himself to me. Pray, what have you to entertain anybody's privacy? I swear and declare, in the face of the whole world, I'm ready to blush for your ignorance.

Sir P. I acquiesce, my lady; but don't snub so loud. [*Apart.*]

Lady P. Mr. Careless, if a person that is wholly illiterate might be supposed to be capable of being qualified to make a suitable return to those obligations, which you are pleased to confer upon one that is wholly incapable of being qualified in all those circumstances, I'm sure I should rather attempt it than anything in the world; (*courtesies*) for, I'm sure, there's nothing in the world that I would rather. (*Courtesies.*) But I know Mr. Careless is so great a critic, and so fine a gentleman, that it is impossible for me—

Care. Oh, heavens! madam, you confound me.

Sir P. Gadsbud! she's a fine person.

Lady P. Oh, Lord! sir, pardon me, we women have not those advantages: I know my own imperfections; but, at the same time, you must give me leave to declare in the face of the world, that nobody is more sensible of favours and things; for with the reserve of my honour, I assure you, Mr. Careless, I don't know anything in the world I would refuse to a person so meritorious. You'll pardon my want of expression.

Care. Oh! your ladyship is abounding in all excellence, particularly that of phrase.

Lady P. You are so obliging, sir.

Care. Your ladyship is so charming.

Sir P. So, now, now; now, my lady.

Lady P. So well bred.

Care. So surprising.

Lady P. So well-dressed, so *bonne mienne*, so eloquent, so unaffected, so easy, so free, so particular, so agreeable—

Sir P. Ay, so, so, there.

Care. Oh Lord! I beseech you, madam, don't—

Lady P. So gay, so graceful, so good teeth, so fine shape, so fine limbs, so fine linen; and I don't doubt but you have a very good skin, sir.

Care. For heaven's sake, madam—I'm quite out of countenance.

Sir P. And my lady's quite out of breath, or else you should hear. Gadshud! you may talk of my Lady Froth—

Care. Oh! fie, fie! not to be named of a day. My Lady Froth is very well in her accomplishments, but it is when my Lady Pliant is not thought of; if that can ever be.

Lady P. Oh! you overcome me—that is so excessive.

Sir P. Nay, I swear and vow, that was pretty.

Care. Oh! Sir Paul, you are the happiest man alive. Such a lady! that is the envy of her sex, and the admiration of ours.

Sir P. Your humble servant. I am, I thank heaven, in a fine way of living, as I may say, peacefully and happily; and, I think, need not envy any of my neighbours, blessed be Providence! Ay, truly, Mr. Careless, my lady is a great blessing; a fine, discreet, well-spoken woman, as you shall see, if it become me to say so; and we live very comfortably together: she is a little hasty sometimes, and so am I; but mine is soon over; and then I'm so sorry. Oh! Mr. Careless, if it were not for one thing—

Enter TIMOTHY, with a letter, and offers it to Sir Paul Pliant.

Gadso! gadshud! Tim, carry it to my lady; you should have carried it to my lady first.

Tim. 'Tis directed to your worship.

Sir P. Well, well, my lady reads all letters first.

Lady P. How often have you been told of that, you jackanapes?

Sir P. Child, do so no more; d'ye hear, Tim?

Tim. No, and please you. *[Exit.]*

Sir P. A humour of my wife's—you know, women have little fancies. But, as I was telling you, Mr. Careless, if it were not for one thing, I should think myself the happiest man in the world; indeed, that touches me near, very near.

Care. What can that be, Sir Paul?

Sir P. Why, I have, I thank heaven, a very plentiful fortune, a good estate in the country, some houses in town, and some money, a pretty tolerable personal estate; and it is a great grief to me, indeed it is, Mr. Careless, that I have not a son to inherit this. 'Tis true, I have a daughter; and a fine dutiful child she is, though I say it; blessed be Providence, I may say; for, indeed, Mr. Careless, I am mightily beholden to Providence—a poor, unworthy sinner! But if I had a son—ah! that's my affliction, and my only affliction; indeed, I cannot refrain from tears when it comes in my mind. *[Cries.]*

Care. Why, methinks, that might be easily remedied; my lady's a fine likely woman.

Sir P. Oh! a fine likely woman as you shall see in a summer's day; indeed she is, Mr. Careless, in all respects.

Care. And I should not have taken you to have been so old—

Sir P. Alas! that's not it, Mr. Careless; ah! that's not it; no, no, you shoot wide of the mark a

mile, indeed you do; that's not it, Mr. Careless; no, no, that's not it.

Care. No! what can be the matter, then?

Sir P. You'll scarcely believe me, when I shall tell you. Why, my lady is so nice. I am her husband, as I may say, though far unworthy of that honour; yet, I am her husband; but, alas-a-day! I have no more familiarity with her person, as to that matter, than with my own mother; no, indeed.

Care. Alas-a-day! this is a lamentable story; 'tis an injury to the world; my lady must be told on't; she must, i'faith! Sir Paul.

Sir P. Ah! would to heaven you would, Mr. Careless; you are mightily in her favour.

Care. I warrant you; what! we must have a son some way or other.

Sir P. Indeed I should be mightily bound to you if you could bring it about, Mr. Careless.

Lady P. Sir Paul, it's from your steward; here's a return of six hundred pounds; you may take fifty of it for your next half-year. *[Gives him the letter.]*

Enter LORD FROTH and CYNTHIA.

Sir P. How does my girl? Come hither to thy father; poor lamb, thou'rt melancholy.

Lord F. Heavens! Sir Paul, you amaze me of all things in the world. You are never pleased but when we are all upon the broad grin; all laugh, and no company: ah! then, 'tis such a sight to see some teeth. Sure, you're a great admirer of my Lady Whifler, Mr. Sneer, and Sir Lawrence Loud, and that gang.

Sir P. I vow and swear she's a very merry woman; but I think she laughs a little too much.

Lord F. Merry! Oh Lord! what a character that is of a woman of quality! You have been at my Lady Whifler's upon her day, madam? *(To Cyn.)*

Cyn. Yes, my lord. I must humour this fool. *(Aside.)*

Lord F. Well, and how, eh? What is your sense of the conversation there?

Cyn. Oh! most ridiculous! a perpetual concert of laughing without any harmony; for sure, my lord, to laugh out of time is as disagreeable as to sing out of time, or out of tune.

Lord F. He, he, he! right; and then, my Lady Whifler is so ready, she always comes in three bars too soon; and then, what do they laugh at? For, you know, laughing without a jest, is as impertinent—he! as, as—

Cyn. As dancing without a fiddle.

Lord F. Just, i'faith! that was at my tongue's end.

Cyn. But that cannot be properly said of them; for, I think, they are all in good nature with the world, and only laugh at one another; and, you must allow, they have all jests in their persons, though they have none in their conversation.

Lord F. True, as I'm a person of honour: for heaven's sake, let us sacrifice 'em to mirth a little.

Re-enter TIMOTHY, and whispers Sir Paul Pliant.

Sir P. Gadso! Wife, wife; my Lady Pliant, I have a word—

Lady P. I'm busy, Sir Paul; I wonder at your impertinence.

Care. Sir Paul, harkye! I'm reasoning the matter, you know. Madam, if your ladyship pleases, we'll discourse of this in the next room. *[Exit with Lady P.]*

Sir P. Oh, ho! I wish you good success; I wish you good success. Boy, tell my lady, when she has done, I would speak with her below. *[Exit with Tim.]*

Enter LADY FROTH and BRISK.

Lady F. Then you think that episode between

Susan the dairy-maid and our coachman, is not amiss? you know, I may suppose the dairy in town, as well as in the country.

Brisk. Incomparable, let me perish! But, then, being an heroic poem, had not you better call him a charioteer? Charioteer sounds great; besides, your ladyship's coachman having a red face, and you comparing him to the sun—and, you know, the sun is called heaven's charioteer.

Lady F. Oh! infinitely better; I'm extremely beholding to you for the hint. Stay, we'll read over those half-a-score lines again. (*Pulls out a paper.*) Let me see here: you know what goes before; the comparison, you know. (*Reads.*)

*"For as the sun shines ev'ry day,
So of our coachman I may say!"*

Brisk. I'm afraid that simile won't do in wet weather, because you say the sun shines every day.

Lady F. No, for the sun it won't; but it will do for the coachman; for, you know, there's most occasion for a coach in wet weather.

Brisk. Right, right, that saves all.

Lady F. Then, I don't say the sun shines all the day; but, that he peeps now and then: yet he does shine all the day, too, you know, though we don't see him.

Brisk. Right; but the vulgar will never comprehend that.

Lady F. Well, you shall hear. Let me see. (*Reads.*)

*"For as the sun shines every day,
So of our coachman I may say,
He shews his drunken fiery face,
Just as the sun does, more or less."*

Brisk. That's right; all's well, all's well: more or less.

Lady F. (*Reads.*)

*"And when, at night, his labour's done,
Then, too, like heaven's charioteer, the sun!"*

Ay, charioteer does better.

*"Into the dairy he descends,
And there his whipping and his driving ends;
There he's secure from danger of a gill,
His fare is paid him, and he sets in milk."*

For Susan, you know, is Thetis, and so—

Brisk. Incomparably well and proper, egad! but I have one exception to make: don't you think bilk—I know it's good rhyme—but don't you think bilk and fare too like a hackney-coachman?

Lady F. I swear and vow I'm afraid so; and yet our Jehu was a hackney-coachman when my lord took him.

Brisk. Was he? I'm answered, if Jehu was a hackney-coachman. You may put that into the marginal notes, though, to prevent criticism: only mark it with a small asterism, and say, Jehu was formerly a hackney-coachman.

Lady F. I will. You'd oblige me extremely to write notes to the whole poem.

Brisk. With all my heart and soul; and proud of the vast honour, let me perish.

Lord F. He, he he! My dear, have you done? Won't you join with us? we were laughing at my Lady Whifler and Mr. Sneer.

Lady F. Ay, my dear, were you? Oh! filthy Mr. Sneer! he's a nauseous figure, a most fulsamic pop, pho! He spent two days together in going about Covent-garden to suit the lining of his coach with his complexion.

Lord F. Oh, silly! yet his aunt is as fond of him, as if she had brought the ape into the world herself.

Brisk. Who, my Lady Toothless? Oh! she's a

meritifying spectacle; she's always chewing the cud, like an old ewe.

Cyn. Fie! Mr. Brisk, 'tis eringoes for her cough.

Lady F. Then she's always ready to laugh when Sneer offers to speak; and sits in expectation of his no jest, with her mouth open.

Brisk. Like an oyster at low ebb, egad! Ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. Then that t'other great strapping lady; I can't hit of her name; the old fat-fool that paints so exorbitantly.

Brisk. I know whom you mean; but deuce take me, I can't hit of her name neither. Paints, d'y say? why, she lays it on with a trowel; then she has a great beard that bristles through it, and makes her look as if she were plastered with lime and hair, let me perish.

Lady F. Oh! you made a song upon her, Mr. Brisk.

Brisk. Eh! egad! so I did. My lord can sing it. 'Tis not a song, neither: it's a sort of an epigram, or rather, an epigrammatic-sonnet; I don't know what to call it, but it's satire. Sing it, my lord.

SONG.—LORD FROTH.

*Ancient Phillis has young graces,
'Tis a strange thing, but a true one;
Shall I tell you how?
She herself makes her own faces,
And each morning wears a new one;
Where's the wonder now?*

Brisk. Short, but there's salt in it; my way of writing, egad!

Enter THOMAS.

Lady F. How now?

Tho. Your ladyship's chair is comr.

Lady F. Is nurse and the child in it?

Tho. Yes, madam. [*Exit.*]

Lady F. Oh! the dear creature! let's go see it.

Lord F. I swear, my dear, you spoil that child with sending it to and again so often; this is the seventh time the chair has gone for her to-day.

Lady F. Oh la! I swear it's but the sixth, and I haven't seen her these two hours. The poor dear creature! I swear, my lord, you don't love poor dear little Sapho. Come, my dear Cynthia; Mr. Brisk, we'll go see Sapho, though my lord won't.

Cyn. I'll wait upon your ladyship.

Brisk. Pray, madam, how old is Lady Sapho?

Lady F. Three quarters; but I swear she has a world of wit, and can sing a tune already. My lord, won't you go! won't you? what, not to see Sapho? Pray, my lord, come see little Saph. I knew you could not stay. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The same.

Enter MELLEFONT and CYNTHIA.

Cyn. I heard him loud as I came by the closet-door, and my lady with him: but she seemed to moderate his passion.

Mel. Ay, as gentle breezes moderate a fire; but I shall counterwork her spells.

Cyn. It's impossible; she'll cast beyond you still. I'll lay my life it will never be a match.

Mel. What?

Cyn. Between you and I.

Mel. Why so? I don't know why we should not steal out of the house this moment, and marry one another without consideration or the fear of repentance. Hang fortune, portion, settlements, and jointures.

Cyn. Ay, ay, what have we to do with them? You know we marry for love.

Mel. Love, love, downright, very villainous love.

Cyn. Here, then, I give you my promise, in spite of my duty, any temptation of wealth, your inconstancy, or my own inclination to change—

Mel. To run most wilfully and unreasonably away with me this moment, and be married.

Cyn. Hold—never to marry anybody else.

Mel. That's but a kind of negative consent. Why, you won't balk the frolic?

Cyn. If you had not been so assured of your own conduct, I would not. But 'tis but reasonable that, since I consent to like a man without the vile consideration of money, he should give me a very evident demonstration of his wit; therefore let me see you undermine my Lady Touchwood, as you boasted, and force her to give her consent, and then—

Mel. I'll do't.

Cyn. And I'll do't.

Mel. This very next ensuing hour of eight o'clock is the last minute of her reign, unless the devil assist her in *propria persona*.

Cyn. Well, if the devil should assist her, and your plot miscarry—

Mel. Ay, what am I to trust to, then?

Cyn. Why, if you give me a very clear demonstration that it was the devil, I'll allow for irresistible odds. Here's my mother-in-law, and your friend Careless; I would not have 'em see us together, yet.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter CARELESS and LADY PLIANT.

Lady P. I swear, Mr. Careless, you are very alluring, and say so many fine things, and nothing is so moving to me as a fine thing. Well, I must do you this justice, and declare in the face of the world, never anybody gained so far upon me as yourself; with blushes I must own it, you have shaken, as I may say, the very foundation of my honour. Well, sure if I escape your importunities, I shall value myself as long as I live, I swear.

Care. And despise me. (*Sighing.*)

Lady P. The last of any man in the world, by my purity; now you make me swear. Oh! gratitude, forbid that I should ever be wanting in a respectful acknowledgment of an entire resignation of all my best wishes, for the person and parts of so accomplished a person, whose merit challenges much more, I'm sure, than my illiterate praises can description.

Care. Ah! heavens, madam, you ruin me with kindness. Your charming tongue pursues the victory of your eyes, while at your feet your poor adorer dies. (*In a whining tone.*)

Lady P. Ah! very fine.

Care. Ah! why are you so fair, so bewitchingly fair? Oh, let me grow to the ground here, and feast upon that hand! Oh, let me press it to my heart, my trembling heart! the nimble movement shall instruct your pulse, and teach it to alarm desire. (*Still whining.*) I'm almost at the end of my cant, if she does not yield quickly. (*Aside.*)

Lady P. Oh! that's so passionate and fine, I cannot hear it. I am not safe if I stay, and must leave you.

Care. And must you leave me? Rather let me languish out a wretched life, and breathe my soul beneath your feet. I must say the same thing over again, and can't help it. (*Aside.*)

Lady P. I swear, I'm ready to languish, too. Oh, my honour! whither is it going? I protest you have given me the palpitation of the heart.

Care. Can you be so cruel?

Lady P. Oh! rise, I beseech you; say no more till you rise. Why did you kneel so long? I swear I was so transported, I did not see it. Well, to show you how far you have gained upon me, I as-

sure you, if Sir Paul should die, of all mankind there's none I'd sooner make my second choice.

Care. Oh, heaven! I can't outlive this night without your favour. I feel my spirits faint, a general dampness overspreads my face, a cold deadly dew already vents through all my pores, and will, to-morrow, wash me for ever from your sight, and drown me in my tomb.

Lady P. Oh! you have conquered; sweet, melting, moving sir, you have conquered. What heart of marble can refrain to weep, and yield to such sad sayings? (*Cries.*)

Care. I thank heaven they are the saddest that I ever said. (*Aside.*) Oh!

Lady P. Oh! I yield myself all up to your uncontrollable embraces. Say, thou dear dying man, when, where, and how? Ah! there's Sir Paul.

Care. 'Slife! yonder's Sir Paul; but if he were not come, I'm so transported I cannot speak. This note will inform you.

[*Gives her a note, and exit.*]

Re-enter CYNTHIA, with SIR PAUL PLIANT.

Sir P. Thou art my tender lambkin, and shalt do what thou wilt; but endeavour to forget this Mellefont.

Cyn. I would obey you to my power, sir; but, if I have not him, I have sworn never to marry.

Sir P. Never to marry! Heavens forbid! must I neither have sons nor grandsons? must the family of the Pliants be utterly extinct for want of issue male? Oh, impiety! but did you swear? did that sweet creature swear, eh? How durst you swear without my consent, eh? Gadabud! who am I?

Cyn. Pray, don't be angry, sir; when I swore I had your consent; and, therefore, I swore.

Sir P. Why, then, the revoking my consent does annul or make of non effect your oath; so you may unswear it again; the law will allow it.

Cyn. Ay, but my conscience never will.

Sir P. Gadabud! no matter for that; conscience and law never go together; you must not expect that.

Lady P. Ay, but Sir Paul, I conceive, if she has sworn—d'ye mark me? if she has once sworn, it is most alchristian, inhuman, and obscene, that she should break it. I'll make up the match again, because Mr. Careless said it would oblige him. (*Aside.*)

Sir P. Does your ladyship conceive so? Why, I was of that opinion once, too. Nay, if your ladyship conceives so, I'm of that opinion again; but I can neither find my lord nor my lady, to know what they intend.

Lady P. I am satisfied that my cousin Mellefont has been much wronged.

Cyn. I'm amazed to find her of our side, for I'm sure she loved him. (*Aside.*)

Lady P. I know my Lady Touchwood has no kindness for him; and, besides, I have been informed by Mr. Careless, that Mellefont had never anything more than a profound respect. That he has owned himself to be my admirer, 'tis true, but he was never so presumptuous to entertain any dishonourable notions of things; so that if this be made plain, I don't see how my daughter can, in conscience or honour, or anything in the world—

Sir P. Indeed, if this be made plain, as my lady your mother says, child—

Lady P. Plain! I was informed of it by Mr. Careless, and I assure you Mr. Careless is a person—that has a most extraordinary respect and honour for you, Sir Paul.

Cyn. And for your ladyship too, I believe, or else you had not changed sides so soon. (*Aside.*) Now I begin to find it.

Sir P. I am much obliged to Mr. Careless, really; he is a person that I have a great value for, not only for that, but because he has a great veneration for your ladyship.

Lady P. Oh, law! no, indeed, Sir Paul; 'tis upon your account.

Sir P. No, I protest and vow I have no title to his esteem, but in having the honour to appertain, in some measure, to your ladyship, that's all.

Lady P. Oh, law! now, I swear and declare, it shan't be so; you're too modest, Sir Paul.

Sir P. It becomes me, when there is any comparison made between—

Lady P. Oh, fie, fie! Sir Paul, you'll put me out of countenance. Your very obedient and affectionate wife, that's all, and highly honoured in that title.

Sir P. Gadsbud! I am transported. Give me leave to kiss your ladyship's little finger.

Lady P. My lip, indeed, Sir Paul; I swear you shall. (*He kisses her, and bows very low.*)

Sir P. I humbly thank your ladyship; I don't know whether I fly on ground, or walk in air. Gadsbud! she was never thus before. Well, I must own myself the most beholden to Mr. Careless; as sure as can be this is all his doing, something that he has said; well, 'tis a rare thing to have an ingenious friend. Well, your ladyship is of opinion that the match may go forward?

Lady P. By all means. Mr. Careless has satisfied me of the matter.

Sir P. Well, why then, lamb, you may keep your oath; but have a care of making rash vows. Come hither to me, and kiss papa.

Lady P. I swear and declare, I am in such a twitter to read Mr. Careless's letter, that I can't forbear any longer; but though I may read all letters first by prerogative, yet I'll be sure to be unsuspected this time. (*Aside.*) Sir Paul.

Sir P. Did your ladyship call?

Lady P. Nay, not to interrupt you, my dear. Only lend me your letter which you had from your steward to-day; I would look upon the account again, and may be, increase your allowance.

Sir P. There it is, madam. Do you want a pen and ink? (*Bows, and gives the letter.*)

Lady P. No, no, nothing else, I thank you Sir Paul. So, now I can read my own letter under the cover of his. (*Aside.*)

Sir P. Eh! and shall I have a grandson, a brave chopping boy, to perpetuate the line of the Pliants? I'll settle a thousand pounds a year upon the rogue as soon as ever he looks me in the face, I will. Gadsbud! I hope the young cherub will be like me; I would fain have some resemblance of myself in my posterity. Ha, Thy, shouldn't you wish he was like his grand-papa?

Cyn. I'm glad to see you so merry, sir.

Sir P. Merry! Gadsbud! I'm serious. I'll give thee five hundred pounds for every feature of him that resembles me. Ah! this eye, this left eye; a thousand pounds for this left eye; this has done execution in its time, girl. Why, thou hast my leer, hussy; just thy father's leer; let it be transmitted to the young rogue by the help of imagination. Why, 'tis the mark of our family, Thy. Out house is distinguished by a languishing eye, as the house of Austria is by a thick lip.

Lady P. Oh, dear, Mr. Careless! I swear he writes charmingly, and he looks charmingly, and he has charmed me as much as I have charmed him; and so I'll tell him in the wardrobe, when 'tis dark. Oh, crimine! I hope Sir Paul has not seen both letters. (*Aside. Puts up the wrong letter, and gives him her own.*) Sir Paul, here's your letter; to-morrow morning I'll settle accounts to your advantage.

Sir P. I humbly thank your ladyship.

Lady P. So, now I'll retire, and study a complimentary rebuke to Mr. Careless, for the pathetic tender of his regards; but it shall not be too severe neither. (*Aside.*) [*Exit.*]

Enter BRISK.

Brisk. Sir Paul, gadsbud! you're an uncoivil person, let me tell you; and all that; and I did not think it had been in you.

Sir P. Oh, law! what's the matter now? I hope you are not angry, Mr. Brisk?

Brisk. Deuce take me, I believe you intend to marry your daughter yourself; you're always brooding over her like an old hen, as if she were not well hatched, egad, eh!

Sir P. Good, strange! Mr. Brisk is such a merry facetious person. Ha, ha, ha! No, no, I have done with her, I have done with her now.

Brisk. The fiddles have stayed this hour in the hall, and my Lord Froth wants a partner; we can never begin without her.

Sir P. Go, go, child; go, get you gone, and dance and be merry; I'll come and look at you by-and-by. [*Exit Cynthia.*] Where's my son Mellefont?

Brisk. I'll send him to them; I know where he is; and, Sir Paul, will you send Careless into the hall, if you meet him?

Sir P. I will, I will; I'll go and look for him on purpose. [*Exit.*]

Brisk. So, now they are all gone, and I have an opportunity to practise. Ah! my dear Lady Froth! she's a most engaging creature, if she were not so fond of that d-d coxcomby lord of hers; and yet I am forced to allow him wit, too, to keep in with him. No matter, she's a woman of parts, and, egad, parts will carry her. She said she would follow me into the gallery. Now, to make my approaches:—Hem, hem! Ah! ma—(*Bows.*)—dam! Plague on't, why should I disparage my parts by thinking what to say? None but dull rogues think; witty men, like rich fellows, are always ready for all expenses; while your blockheads, like poor needy scoundrels, are forced to examine their stock, and forecast the charges of the day. Here she comes; I'll seem not to see her, and try to win her with a new airy invention of my own. Hem! (*Sings, walking about.*)

Enter LADY FROTH.

I'm sick with love, ha, ha, ha! pr'ythee, come and cure me—I'm sick with—Oh, ye powers! Oh! my Lady Froth, my Lady Froth, my Lady Froth! Heigho, break heart! Gods, I thank you. (*Stands musing with his arms across.*)

Lady F. Oh, heavens! Mr. Brisk, what's the matter?

Brisk. My Lady Froth! your ladyship's most humble servant. The matter, madam?—nothing, madam; nothing at all, egad! I was fallen into the most agreeable amusement in the whole province of contemplation, that's all. I'll seem to conceal my passion, and that will look like respect. (*Aside.*)

Lady F. Bless me, why did you call out upon me so loud?

Brisk. Oh, lord! I, madam? I beseech your ladyship, when?

Lady F. Just now, as I came in. Bless me, why, don't you know it?

Brisk. Not I, let me perish; but did I? Strange! I confess your ladyship was in my thoughts; and I was in a sort of dream, that did, in a manner, represent a very pleasing object to my imagination; but—but did I, indeed? To see how love and murder will out! But did I really name my Lady Froth?

Lady F. Three times aloud, as I love letters. But did you talk of love? Oh, Parnassus! who would have thought Mr. Brisk could have been in love? Ha, ha, ha! Oh, heavens! I thought you could have no mistress but the nine muses.

Brisk. No more I have, egad! for I adore 'em all in your ladyship. Let me perish, I don't know whether to be apenetic or airy upon't; the deuce take me, if I can tell whether I am glad or sorry, that your ladyship has made the discovery.

Lady F. Oh! be merry, by all means. Prince Volscius in love! Ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Oh, barbarons, to turn me into ridicule! yet, ha, ha, ha! the deuce take me, I can't help laughing myself, ha, ha, ha! yet, by heavens! I have a violent passion for your ladyship, seriously.

Lady F. Seriously! ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Seriously, ha, ha, ha! 'Gad! I have, for all I laugh.

Lady F. Ha, ha, ha! What d'ye think I laugh at? Ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Me, egad! Ha, ha!

Brisk. No; the deuce take me if I don't laugh at myself; for, hang me, if I have not a violent passion for Mr. Brisk. Ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Seriously?

Lady F. Seriously. Ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. That's well enough, let me perish. Ha, ha, ha! Oh! miraculous! what a happy discovery! Ah! my dear charming Lady Froth.

Lady F. Oh, my adored Mr. Brisk. *(They embrace.)*

Enter LORD FROTH.

Lord F. The company are all ready. How now? *Brisk.* Zoons, madam, there's my lord. *(Apart to Lady F.)*

Lady F. Take no notice, but observe me. *(Aside.)* Now cast off, and meet me at the lower end of the room, and then join hands again. I could teach my lord this dance purely; but I vow, Mr. Brisk, I can't tell how to come so near any other man. Oh! here's my lord; now you shall see me do it with him. *(They pretend to practise part of a country dance.)*

Lord F. Oh! I see there's no harm yet; but I don't like this familiarity. *(Aside.)*

Lady F. Shall you and I do our close dance, to shew Mr. Brisk? *(To Lord F.)*

Lord F. No, my dear, do it with him.

Lady F. I'll do it with him, my lord, when you are out of the way.

Brisk. That's good, egad! that's good; deuce take me, I can hardly hold laughing in his face. *(Aside.)*

Lord F. Any other time, my dear, or we'll dance it below.

Lady F. With all my heart.

Brisk. Come, my lord, I'll wait on you. My charming witty angel. *(Apart to Lady F.)*

Lady F. We shall have whispering time enough, you know, since we are partners. *(Apart to Brisk.)* *[Exeunt.]*

Re-enter LADY PLIANT and CARELESS.

Lady P. Oh! Mr. Careless, Mr. Careless! I'm ruined, I'm undone!

Care. What's the matter, madam?

Lady P. Oh, the unluckiest accident! I'm afraid I shan't live to tell it you.

Care. Heaven forbid! What is it?

Lady P. I'm in such a fright; the strangest quandary and premunire! I'm all over in an universal agitation. Oh, your letter, your letter! By an unfortunate mistake, I have given Sir Paul your letter instead of his own.

Care. That was unlucky.

Lady P. Oh! yonder he comes reading of it; step in here, and advise me quickly, before he sees.

[Exeunt.]

Re-enter SIR PAUL PLIANT, with the letter.

Sir P. Oh, Providence! what a conspiracy have I discovered; but let me see to make an end on't. Hum! *(Reads.)* "After supper, in the wardrobe by the gallery. If Sir Paul should surprise us, I have a commission from him, to treat with you about the very matter of fact." Matter of fact! very pretty. It seems, then, I'm conducing to my own dishonour; why, this is the very traitorous position of taking up arms by my authority against my person! Well, let me see. *(Reads.)* "Till then I languish in expectation of my adored charmer.—Dying NED CARELESS." Gadshud! would that were matter of fact, too! Die and be d—d, for a Judas Macabean, and Iscariot both. Oh, friendship! what art thou but a name! Henceforward let no man take a friend into the bosom of his family; for if he does, oh! we know not what will follow, from the example of Sir Paul Pliant, and his bosom friend, Ned Careless. Have I, for this, been pinioned, night after night, for three years past? Have I approached the marriage bed with reverence, as to a sacred shrine, and must I now find it polluted by foreign iniquity? Oh! my Lady Pliant, you were chaste as ice, but you are melted now, and false as water. But Providence has been constant to me in discovering this conspiracy; still I am beholden to Providence; if it were not for Providence, sure, poor Sir Paul, thy heart would break.

Re-enter LADY PLIANT.

Lady P. So, sir, I see you have read the letter. Well, now, Sir Paul, what do you think of your friend Careless? Has he been treacherous? or did you give his insolence a license to make trial of your wife's suspected virtue? D'ye see here? *(Snatches the letter as in anger.)* Look, read it! 'Gad's my life! if I thought it were so, I would, this moment, renounce all communication with you. Ungrateful monster! Eh! is it so? Ay, I see it; a plot upon my honour; your guilty cheeks confess it. Oh! where shall wronged virtue fly for reparation? I'll be divorced this instant.

Sir P. Gadshud! what shall I say? this is the strangest surprise. *(Aside.)* Why, I don't know anything at all; nor I don't know whether there be anything at all in the world or no.

Lady P. I thought I should try you, false man. I, that never dissembled in my life; yet, to make trial of you, pretended to like that monster of iniquity, Careless; and found out that contrivance to let you see this letter, which now I find was of your own inditing. I do, heathen, I do! See my face no more; I'll be divorced presently.

Sir P. Oh, strange! what will become of me? I'm so amazed, and so overjoyed, so afraid, and so sorry. But did you give me this letter on purpose, eh? Did you?

Lady P. Did I? Do you doubt me, Turk, Saracen? I have a cousin that's a proclor in the Commons; I'll go to him, instantly. *(Going.)*

Sir P. Hold, stay! I beseech your ladyship! I'm so overjoyed—stay, I'll confess all.

Lady P. What will you confess, Jew?

Sir P. Why now, as I hope to be saved, I had no hand in this letter. Nay, hear me, I beseech your ladyship, the devil take me now, if he did not go beyond my commission. If I desired him to do any more than speak a good word only just for me, gadshud! only for poor Sir Paul, I'm an Anabaptist, or a Jew, or what you please to call me.

Lady P. Why, is not here matter of fact?

Sir P. Ay, but by your own virtue and continency, that matter of fact is all his own doing. I confess I had a great desire to have some honours conferred upon me, which lay all in your ladyship's breast; and he being a well-spoken man, I desired him to intercede for me.

Lady P. Did you so, presumption? Oh! he comes, he comes; I cannot bear his sight. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter CARELESS.

Care. Sir Paul, I'm glad I've met with you. 'Gad! I have said all I could, but can't prevail. Then my friendship to you has carried me a little further in this matter—

Sir P. Indeed! Well, sir. I'll dissemble with him a little. (*Aside.*)

Care. Why, 'faith! I have, in my time, known honest gentlemen abused by a pretended coyness in their wives, and I had a mind to try my lady's virtue; and when I could not prevail for you, 'gad! I pretended to be in love myself; but all in vain, she would not hear a word upon that subject; then I writ a letter to her; I don't know what effect that will have, but I'll be sure to tell you when I do; though, 'by this light, I believe her virtue is impregnable.

Sir P. Oh, Providence, Providence! what discoveries are here made! Why, this is better, and more miraculous than the rest.

Care. What do you mean?

Sir P. I can't tell you, I'm so overjoyed; come along with me to my lady; I can't contain myself; come, my dear friend.

Care. So, so, so! this difficulty's over. (*Aside.*) [*Exeunt.*]

Re-enter MELLEFONT, with MASKWELL.

Mel. Maskwell, I have been looking for you; 'tis within a quarter of eight.

Mask. My lady is just gone into my lord's closet; you had best steal into her chamber before she comes, and lie concealed there; otherwise, she may lock the door when we are together, and you not easily get in to surprise us.

Mel. Eh! you say true.

Mask. You had best make haste; for, after she has made some apology to the company for her own and my lord's absence all this while, she'll retire to her chamber instantly.

Mel. I go this moment. Now, fortune, I defy thee. [*Exit.*]

Mask. I confess you may be allowed to be secure in your own opinion; the appearance is very fair; but I have an after-game to play that shall turn the tables; and here comes the man that I must manage.

Enter LORD TOUCHWOOD.

Lord T. Maskwell, you are the man I wished to meet.

Mask. I am happy to be in the way of your lordship's commands.

Lord T. I have always found you prudent and careful in anything that has concerned me, or my family:

Mask. I were a villain else. I am bound by duty and gratitude, and my own inclination, to be ever your lordship's servant.

Lord T. Enough; you are my friend; I know it; yet there has been a thing in your knowledge, which has concerned me nearly, that you have concealed from me.

Mask. My lord!—

Lord T. Nay, I excuse your friendship to my unnatural nephew thus far; but I know you have been privy to his impious designs upon my wife. This evening she has told me all; her good nature

concealed it as long as it was possible; but he per-severes so in villany, that she has told me, even you were weary of dissuading him.

Mask. I am sorry, my lord, I can't make you an answer; this is an occasion in which I would not willingly be silent.

Lord T. I know you would excuse him; and I know as well that you can't.

Mask. Indeed I was in hopes it had been a youthful heat, that might have soon boiled over, but—

Lord T. Say on.

Mask. I have nothing more to say, my lord, but to express my concern; for I think his frenzy increases daily.

Lord T. How? Give me but proof of it, ocular proof, that I may justify my dealing with him to the world, and share my fortunes.

Mask. Oh! my lord, consider that is hard; besides, time may work upon him. Then for me to do it! I have professed an everlasting friendship to him.

Lord T. He is your friend—and what am I?

Mask. I am answered.

Lord T. Fear not his displeasure; I will put you out of his, and fortune's power; and, for that thou art scrupulously honest, I will secure thy fidelity to him, and give my honour never to own any discovery that you shall make me. Can you give me a demonstrative proof? speak.

Mask. I wish I could not. To be plain, my lord, I intended this evening to have tried all arguments to dissuade him from a design, which I suspect; and if I had not succeeded, to have informed your lordship of what I knew.

Lord T. I thank you. What is the villain's purpose?

Mask. He has owned nothing to me of late; and what I mean now is only a bare suspicion of my own. If your lordship will meet me a quarter of an hour hence—there—in that lobby by my lady's bed-chamber, I shall be able to tell you more.

Lord T. I will.

Mask. My duty to your lordship makes me do a severe piece of justice.

Lord T. I will be secret, and reward your honesty beyond your hopes. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Lady Touchwood's Bed-chamber.*

Enter MELLEFONT.

Mel. Pray heaven, my aunt keep touch with her assignation. Oh! that her lord were but sweating behind this hanging, with the expectation of what I shall see!—Hist! she comes. Little does she think what a mine is just ready to spring under her feet.—But to my post. (*Retires.*)

Enter LADY TOUCHWOOD.

Lady T. 'Tis eight o'clock; methinks I should have found him here. Who does not prevent the hour of love, outstays the time; for, to be duly punctual, is too slow.

Enter MASKWELL.

I was accusing you of neglect.

Mask. I confess you do reproach me when I see you here before me; but 'tis fit I should be still behind-hand, still to be more and more indebted to your goodness.

Lady T. You can excuse a fault too well not to have been to blame; a ready answer shews you were prepared.

Mask. Guilt is ever at a loss, and confusion waits upon it; when innocence and bold truth are always ready for expression.

Lady T. Not in love; words are the weak sup-

port of cold indifference; love has no language to be heard.

Mask. Excess of joy has made me stupid. Thus—

Lady T. Hold! let me lock the door first. (*Goes to the door.*)

Mask. That I did suppose. 'Twas well I left the private passage open. (*Aside.*)

Lady T. So, that's safe.

Mask. And so may all your pleasures be, and secret as this kiss.

Mel. (*Leaps out.*) And may all treachery be thus discovered.

Lady T. Ah! (*Shrieks.*)

Mel. Villain! (*Offers to draw.*)

Mask. Nay, then there's but one way. (*Runs out.*)

Mel. Say you so? Were you provided for an escape? Hold! madam, you have no more holes to your burrow. I'll stand between you and this sally-port.

Lady T. Shame, grief, and ruin haunt thee for this deceit! Oh! I could rack myself, play the vulture to my own heart, and gnaw it piecemeal, for not boding to me this misfortune.

Mel. Be patient.

Lady T. Patient!

Mel. Consider, I have you on the hook; you will but flounder yourself a-weary, and be, nevertheless, my prisoner.

Lady T. I'll hold my breath and die, but I'll be free.

Mel. Oh, madam! have a care of dying unprepared. I doubt you have some unrepented sins that may hang heavy and retard your flight.

Lady T. What shall I do? whither shall I turn? Hold in, my passion, and fall, fall a little, thou swelling heart! Let me have some intermission of this rage, and one minute's coolness to dissemble. (*Aside. Weeps.*)

Mel. You have been to blame. I like those tears, and hope they are of the purest kind—penitential tears.

Lady T. Oh! the scene was shifted quick before me; I had not time to think; I was surprised to see a monster in the glass, and now I find 'tis myself. Can you have mercy to forgive the faults I have imagined, but never put in practice? Oh! consider, consider how fatal you have been to me, you have already killed the quiet of this life. The love of you was the first wandering fire that e'er misled my steps; and while I had only that in view, I was betrayed into unthought-of ways of ruin.

Mel. May I believe this true?

Lady T. Oh! be not cruelly incredulous. How can you doubt these streaming eyes? Keep the severest eye o'er all my future conduct; and if I once relapse, let me not hope forgiveness; 'twill ever be in your power to ruin me. My lord shall sign to your desires; I will myself create your happiness, and Cynthia shall this night be your bride; do but conceal my failings, and forgive. (*Kneels.*)

Mel. Upon such terms, I will be ever yours in every honest way.

Lady T. Eternal blessings thank you!

Re-enter MASKWELL, with LORD TOUCHWOOD.

Mask. I have kept my word. He's here; but I must not be seen. (*Apart to Lady T.*) (*Exit.*)

Lady T. Ha! my lord listening; then all's my own. (*Aside.*)

Mel. Nay, I beseech you, rise.

Lady T. Never, never! I'll grow to the ground, be buried quick beneath it, e'er I'll be consenting to such a sin as incest! unnatural incest! (*Aloud.*)

Mel. Ha!

Lady T. Oh, cruel man! will you not let me go? I'll forgive all that's past. Oh, heaven! you will not force me!

Lord T. Monster! dog! your life shall answer this. (*Draws, and runs at Melifont; is held by Lady T.*)

Lady T. Oh, my lord! hold, hold! for mercy's sake!

Mel. Confusion! my uncle! Oh, the cursed sorcerers!

Lady T. Moderate your rage, good my lord; he's mad, alas! he's mad; indeed he is, my lord, and knows not what he does. See how wild he looks!

Mel. By heaven, 'twere senseless not to be mad, and see such witchcraft.

Lady T. My lord, you hear him; he talks idly.

Lord T. Hence from my sight, thou living infamy to my name! When next I see that face, I'll write villain in't with my sword's point.

Mel. Now, by my soul, I will not go till I have made known my wrongs; nay, till I have made known yours, which, if possible, are greater; though she has all the host of hell her servants.

Lady T. Alas! he raves, talks very poetry! For heaven's sake, away, my lord; he'll either tempt you to extravagance, or commit some himself.

Mel. Death and furies! will you not hear me? Why, she laughs, grins, points at you, makes you her mark of insult and derision. (*As Lady T. is going, she turns back and smiles at him.*)

Lord T. I fear he's mad, indeed. Let's send Maskwell to him.

Mel. Send him to her.

Lady T. Come, come, good my lord; my heart aches so, I shall faint if I stay.

[*Exeunt Lord and Lady T.*]

Mel. Oh! I could curse my stars, fate, and chance; all causes and accidents of fortune in this life! But to what purpose? They talk of sending Maskwell to me; I never had more need of him. But what can he do? Imagination cannot form a fairer or more plausible design than this of his, which has miscarried. Oh, my precious aunt! I shall never thrive, without I deal with the devil or another woman.

*Women, like flames, have a destroying power,
Ne'er to be quenched, till they themselves devour.* (*Exit.*)

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Gallery in Lord Touchwood's house.*

Enter LADY TOUCHWOOD and MASKWELL.

Lady T. Was't not lucky?

Mask. Lucky! fortune is your own, and 'tis her interest so to be; I believe you can control her power, and she fears it; though chance brought my lord, 'twas your own art that turned it to advantage.

Lady T. 'Tis true, it might have been my ruin; but yonder's my lord; I believe he's coming to find you; I'll not be seen. (*Exit.*)

Mask. So! I durst not own my introducing my lord, though it succeeded well for her; for she would have suspected a design, which I should have been puzzled to excuse. My lord is thoughtful; I'll be so too; yet he shall know my thoughts, or think he does.

Enter LORD TOUCHWOOD.

What have I done?

Lord T. Talking to himself! (*Aside.*)

Mask. 'Twas honest; and shall I be rewarded for it? No, 'twas honest, therefore I sha'n't.

Nay, rather, therefore I ought not; for it rewards itself.

Lord T. Unequalled virtue! (*Aside.*)

Mask. But should it be known, then I have lost a friend. He was an ill man, and I have gained; for half myself I lent him, and that I have recalled; so I have served myself; and what is better, I have served a worthy lord, to whom I owe myself.

Lord T. Excellent man! (*Aside.*)

Mask. Yet I am wretched. Oh! there is a secret burns within this breast, which, should it once blaze forth, would ruin all, consume my honest character, and brand me with the name of villain.

Lord T. Ha! (*Aside.*)

Mask. Oh! should it once be known I love fair Cynthia, all this that I have done would look like a rival's malice, false friendship to my lord, and base self-interest. Let me perish first, and from this hour avoid all sight and speech; and, if I can, all thought of that pernicious beauty. (*Seems to start at seeing Lord T.*)

Lord T. Start not; let guilty and dishonest souls start at the revelation of their thoughts; but be thou fixed, as is thy virtue. Honest Maskwell, thy and my good genius led me hither; mine, in that I have discovered so much manly virtue; thine in that thou shalt have due reward of all thy worth. Give me thy hand; my nephew is the alone remaining branch of all our ancient family; him I thus blow away, and constitute thee in his room, to be my heir.

Mask. Now fate forbid—

Lord T. No more; I have resolved. The writings are ready drawn, and wanted nothing but to be signed, and have his name inserted; yours will fill the blank as well—I will have no reply. Let me command this time, for 'tis the last in which I will assume authority; hereafter, you shall rule where I have power.

Mask. I humbly would petition—

Lord T. Is't for yourself? (*Maskwell pauses.*) I'll bear of nought for anybody else.

Mask. Then witness, heaven, for me, this wealth and honour was not of my seeking; nor would I build my fortune on another's ruin; I had but one desire.

Lord T. Thou shalt enjoy it. If all I'm worth in wealth or interest can purchase Cynthia, she is thine. I'm sure Sir Paul's consent will follow fortune; I'll quickly shew him which way that is going.

Mask. You oppress me with bounty.

Lord T. I will confirm it, and rejoice with thee.

[*Exit.*]

Mask. This is prosperous, indeed! Why, let him find me out a villain; settled in possession of a fair estate, and full fruition of my love, I'll bear the railings of a losing gamester. But should he find me out before! 'tis dangerous to delay. Let me think—Should my lord proceed to treat openly of my marriage with Cynthia, all will be discovered, and Mellefont can be no longer blinded. It must not be. Nay, should my lady know it—ay, then were fine work, indeed! her fury would spare nothing, though she involved herself in ruin. No, it must be by stratagem; I must deceive Mellefont once more, and get my lord to consent to my private management. He comes opportunely. Now will I, in my old way, discover the whole and real truth of the matter to him, that he may not suspect one word on't.

*No mask, like open truth, to cover lies;
As to go naked is the best disguise.*

Enter MELLEFONT.

Mel. Oh! Maskwell, what hopes? I am con-

founded in a maze of thoughts, each leading into one another, and all ending in perplexity. My uncle will not see nor hear me.

Mask. No matter, sir; don't trouble your head; all's in my power.

Mel. How, for heaven's sake?

Mask. Little do you think that your aunt has kept her word. How she wrought my lord into the dotage I know not; but he's gone to Sir Paul about my marriage with Cynthia, and has appointed me his heir.

Mel. The devil he has! What's to be done?

Mask. I have it: it must be by stratagem; for it's in vain to make application to him. I think I have that in my head that cannot fail. Where's Cynthia?

Mel. In the garden.

Mask. Let us go and consult her. My life for yours I cheat my lord. [*Exeunt.*]

Re-enter LORD and LADY TOUCHWOOD.

Lady T. Maskwell your heir, and marry Cynthia!

Lord T. I cannot do too much for so much merit.

Lady T. But this is a thing of too great moment to be suddenly resolved. Why Cynthia? Why must he be married? Is there not reward enough in raising his low fortune, but he must mix his blood with mine, and wed my niece? How know you that my brother will consent, or she? Nay, he himself, perhaps, may have affections elsewhere.

Lord T. No; I am convinced he loves her.

Lady T. Maskwell love Cynthia? Impossible.

Lord T. I tell you he confessed it to me.

Lady T. Confusion! How's this? (*Aside.*)

Lord T. His humility long stifled his passion, and his love of Mellefont would have made him still conceal it; but, by encouragement, I wrang the secret from him; and know, he's no way to be rewarded but in her. I'll defer my further proceedings in it till you have considered it; but remember how we are both indebted to him. [*Exit.*]

Lady T. Both indebted to him! Yes, we are both indebted to him, if you knew all. Villain! Oh, I am wild with this surprise of treachery! it is impossible, it cannot be. He love Cynthia! What, have I been dupe to his designs; his property only! Now I see what made him false to Mellefont. What shall I do? How shall I think? I cannot think. All my designs are lost, my love unsated, my revenge unfinished, and fresh cause of fury from unthought-of plagues.

Enter SIR PAUL PLIANT.

Sir P. Madam—sister, my lady, sister! did you see my lady, my wife?

Lady T. Oh, torture!

Sir P. Gadsbud! I can't find her high nor low. Where can she be, think you?

Lady T. Where she's serving you as all your sex ought to be served, making you a beast. Don't you know that you're a fool, brother?

Sir P. A fool! ha, ha, ha! you're merry. No, no, not I; I know no such matter.

Lady T. Why, then, you don't know half your happiness.

Sir P. That's a jest, with all my heart, faith, and troth. But harkye! my lord told me something of things; I don't know what to make on't; gadsbud! I must consult my wife. He talks of disinheriting his nephew, and I don't know what. Look you, sister; I must know what my girl has to trust to, or not a syllable of a wedding, gadsbud! so shew you that I am not a fool.

Lady T. Hear me;—consent to the breaking off this marriage, and the promoting any other, with

not consulting me, and I'll renounce all blood, all relation, and concern with you for ever; nay, I'll be your enemy, and pursue you to destruction; I'll tear your eyes out, and tread you under my feet.

Sir P. Why, what's the matter now? Good Lord, what's all this for? Pho! here's a joke, indeed. Why, where's my wife?

Lady T. With Careless, fool! most likely.

Sir P. Oh, if she be with Mr. Careless, 'tis well enough.

Lady T. Fool, sot, insensible ox! But remember what I said to you, or you had better see my face no more; by this light, you had. *[Exit.]*

Sir P. You're a passionate woman, gadabud! but, to say truth, all our family are choleric; I am the only peaceable person amongst 'em. *[Exit.]*

Re-enter MELLEFONT and MASKWELL, with CYNTHIA.

Mel. I know no other way but this he has proposed, if you have love enough to run the venture.

Cyn. I don't know whether I have love enough, but I find I have obstinacy enough to pursue whatever I have once resolved, and a true female courage to oppose anything that resists my will, though 'twere reason itself.

Mask. That's right. Well, I'll secure the writings, and run the hazard along with you.

Cyn. But how can the coach be got ready without suspicion?

Mask. Leave it to my care; that shall be so far from being suspected, that it shall be got ready by my lord's own order.

Mel. How?

Mask. Why, I intend to tell my lord the whole matter of our contrivance, that's my way.

Mel. I don't understand you.

Mask. Why, I'll tell my lord I laid this plot with you on purpose to betray you; and that which put me upon it, was the finding it impossible to gain the lady any other way but in the hopes of her marrying you.

Mel. So—

Mask. So! why so: while you're busied in making yourself ready, I'll wheedle her into the coach, and instead of you, borrow my lord's chaplain, and so run away with her myself.

Mel. Oh! I conceive you; you'll tell him so.

Mask. Tell him so! ay. Why, you don't think I mean to do so?

Mel. No, no. Ha, ha! I dare swear thou wilt not.

Mask. Therefore, for our further security, I would have you disguised like a parson, that, if my lord should have curiosity to peep, he may not discover you in the coach, but think the cheat is carried on as he would have it.

Mel. Excellent Maskwell!

Mask. Well, get yourselves ready, and meet me in half an hour, yonder in my lady's dressing-room; I'll send the chaplain to you with his robes; I have made him my own, and ordered him to meet us to-morrow morning at St. Alban's; there we will sum up this account to all our satisfactions.

Mel. Should I begin to thank or praise thee, I should waste the little time we have. *[Exit.]*

Mask. Madam, you will be ready?

Cyn. I will be punctual to the minute. *(Going.)*

Mask. Stay, I have a doubt. Upon second thoughts, we had better meet in the chaplain's chamber here; there is a back way into it, so that you need not come through this door, and a pair of private stairs leading down to the stables. It will be more convenient.

Cyn. I am guided by you; but Mellefont will mistake.

Mask. No, no; I'll after him immediately, and tell him. *[Exit Cynthia.]* Why, *qui vult decipi decipiat.* 'Tis no fault of mine; I have told 'em in plain terms how easy 'tis for me to cheat 'em; and if they will not bear the serpent's hiss, they must be stung into experience and future caution. Now to prepare my lord to consent to this. But first, I must instruct my little Levite; he promised me to be within at this hour. Mr. Saygrace, Mr. Saygrace! *(Goes to the chamber-door, and knocks.)*

Say. *(Within.)* Sweet sir, I will but pen the the last line of an acrostic, and be with you in the twinkling of an ejaculation, or before you can—

Mask. Nay, good Mr. Saygrace, do not prolong the time, by describing to me the shortness of your stay; rather, if you please, defer the finishing of your wit, and let us talk about our business; it shall be tithes in your way.

Enter SAYGRACE.

Say. You shall prevail; I would break off in the middle of a sermon to do you a pleasure.

Mask. You could not do me a greater, except the business in hand. Have you provided a habit for Mellefont?

Say. I have; it is ready in my chamber, together with clean starched band and cuffs.

Mask. Good. Let them be carried to him. Have you stitched the gown sleeve, that he may be puzzled, and waste time in putting it on?

Say. I have; the gown will not be ended without perplexity.

Mask. Meet me in half an hour, here in your own chamber. When Cynthia comes, let there be no light, and do not speak, that she may not distinguish you from Mellefont. I'll urge haste, to excuse your silence.

Say. You have no more commands?

Mask. None; your text is short.

Say. But pithy; and I will handle it with discretion. *[Exit.]*

Mask. It will be the first you have so served.

Re-enter LORD TOUCHWOOD.

Lord T. Sure, I was born to be controlled by those I should command! my very slaves will shortly give me rules how I shall govern them!

Mask. I am concerned to see your lordship discomposed.

Lord T. Have you seen my wife lately, or dis-obliged her?

Mask. No, my lord. What can this mean? *(Aside.)*

Lord T. Then Mellefont has urged somebody to incense her. Something she has heard of you, which carries her beyond the bounds of patience.

Mask. This I feared. *(Aside.)* Did not your lordship tell her of the honours you designed me?

Lord T. Yes.

Mask. 'Tis that; you know my lady has a spirit; she thinks I am unworthy.

Lord T. Unworthy! 'tis an ignorant pride in her to think so. Honesty to me is true nobility. However, 'tis my will it shall be so, and that should be convincing to her as much as reason. I'll not be wife-ridden. Were it possible, it should be done this night.

Mask. Ha! he meets my wishes. *(Aside.)* Few things are impossible to willing minds.

Lord T. Instruct me how this may be done, and you shall see I want no inclination.

Mask. I had laid a small design for to-morrow, (as love will be inventing,) which I thought to communicate to your lordship; but it may be as well done to-night.

Lord T. Here's company; come this way, and tell me. *[Exeunt.]*

Re-enter CYNTHIA, with CARELESS.

Care. Is not that he, now gone out with my lord?

Cyn. I am convinced there's treachery. The confusion that I saw your father in, my Lady Touchwood's passion, with what imperfectly I overheard between my lord and her, confirm me in my fears. Where's Mellefont?

Care. Here he comes.

Re-enter MELLEFONT.

Cyn. Did Maskwell tell you anything of the chaplain's chamber?

Mel. No, my dear. Will you get ready? The things are all in my chamber; I want nothing but the habit.

Care. You are betrayed, and Maskwell is the villain I always thought him.

Cyn. When you were gone, he said his mind was changed, and bid me meet him in the chaplain's room, pretending immediately to follow you, and give you notice.

Care. There's Saygrace tripping by with a bundle under his arm. He cannot be ignorant that Maskwell means to use his chamber; let's in, and examine him.

Mel. 'Tis loss of time, I cannot think him false.
[*Exeunt Careless and Mellefont.*]

Re-enter LORD TOUCHWOOD.

Cyn. My lord musing! (*Aside.*)

Lord T. He has a quick invention, if this were suddenly designed. Yet, he says, he had prepared my chaplain already.

Cyn. How's this? Now I fear, indeed. (*Aside.*)

Lord T. Cynthia here! Alone, fair cousin, and melancholy.

Cyn. Your lordship was thoughtful.

Lord T. My thoughts were on serious business, not worth your hearing.

Cyn. Mine were on treachery concerning you, and may be worth your hearing.

Lord T. Treachery concerning me! Pray be plain. What noise?

Mask. (*Within.*) Will you not hear me?

Lady T. (*Within.*) No, monster! traitor! No.

Cyn. My lady and Maskwell! This may be lucky. My lord, let me entreat you to stand behind this screen, and listen; perhaps this chance will give you proof of what you never could have believed from my suspicions. (*They retire behind the screen.*)

Re-enter MASKWELL, and LADY TOUCHWOOD with a dagger.

Lady T. You want but leisure to invent fresh falsehood, and sooth me to a fond belief of all your fictions; but I will stab the lie that's forming in your heart, and save a sin in pity to your soul.

Mask. Strike, then, since you will have it so.

Lady T. Ha! a steady villain to the last.

Mask. Come, why do you dally with me thus?

Lady T. Thy stubborn temper shocks me, and you knew it would. This is cunning all; I know thee well; but thou shalt miss thy aim.

Mask. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady T. Ha! do you mock my rage? Then this shall punish your fond rash contempt. Again smile? And such a smile as speaks in ambiguity! Ten thousand meanings lurk in each corner of that various face; oh! that they were written in thy heart, that I with this might lay thee open to my sight. But then 'twill be too late to know—Thou hast, thou hast found the only way to turn my rage; too well thou knowest my jealous soul could never bear uncertainty. Speak, then, and tell me! Yet are you silent? Oh! I am bewildered in all passions! But thus my anger melts. (*Weeps.*)

Here, take this poniard; for my very spirits faint, and I want strength to hold it; thou hast disarmed my soul. (*Gives him the dagger.*)

Mask. So, 'tis well; let your wild fury have a vent; and when you have temper tell me.

Lady T. Now, now, now I am calm, and can hear you.

Mask. Thanks, my invention; and now I have it for you. (*Aside.*) First, tell me what urged you to this violence? for your passion broke in such imperfect terms, that yet I am to learn the cause.

Lady T. My lord himself surprised me with the news, you were to marry Cynthia; that you had owned your love to him; and his indulgence would assist you to attain your ends.

Mask. I grant you, in appearance, all is true; I seemed consenting to my lord, nay, transported with the blessing; but could you think that I, who had been happy in your loved embraces, could e'er be fond of an inferior slavery?—No. Yet, though I dote on each last favour more than all the rest, though I would give a limb for every look you cheaply throw away on any other object of your love; yet, so far I prize your pleasures o'er my own, that all this seeming plot that I have laid, has been to gratify your taste, and cheat the world, to prove a faithful rogue to you.

Lady T. If this were true; but how can it be?

Mask. I have so contrived, that Mellefont will presently, in the chaplain's habit, wait for Cynthia in your dressing-room; but I have put the change upon her, that she may be otherwise employed. Do you muffle yourself, and meet him in her stead. You may go privately by the back stairs, and unperceived; there you may propose to reinstate him in his uncle's favour, if he'll comply with your desires. His case is desperate, and I believe he'll yield to any conditions; if not, here, take this; you may employ it better than in the heart of one, who is nothing when not yours. (*Gives her the dagger.*)

Lady T. Thou canst deceive everybody; nay, thou hast deceived me. But 'tis as I would wish. Trusty villain! I could worship thee.

Mask. No more. It wants but a few minutes of the time; and Mellefont's love will carry him there before his hour.

Lady T. I go, I fly, incomparable Maskwell!

[*Exit.*]

Mask. So! This was a pinch, indeed! My invention was upon the rack, and made discovery of her last plot. I hope Cynthia and my chaplain will be ready. I'll prepare for the expedition.

[*Exit. Cynthia and Lord T. come forward.*]

Cyn. Now, my lord!

Lord T. Astonishment binds up my rage! Villany upon villany! Heavens! what a long track of dark deceit has this discovered. I am confounded when I look back, and want a clue to guide me through the various mazes of unheard-of treachery. My wife! oh, torture! my shame, my ruin!

Cyn. My lord, have patience; and be sensible how great our happiness is, that this discovery was not made too late.

Lord T. I thank you. Yet it may be still too late, if we don't presently prevent the execution of their plots. She'll think to meet him in that dressing-room; wasn't not so? And Maskwell will expect you in the chaplain's chamber. For once, I'll add my plot, too. Let us haste to find out, and inform my nephew; and do you, quickly as you can, bring all the company into this gallery. I'll expose the traitress and the villain. [*Exeunt.*]

Re-enter SIR PAUL PLIANT, with LORD FROTH.

Lord F. By heavens! I have slept an age. Sir

Paul, what o'clock is it? Past eight, on my conscience! My lady's is the most inviting couch, and a slumber there is the prettiest amusement!—But where's all the company?

Sir P. The company? Gadsbud! I don't know, my lord; but here's the strangest revolution! all turned topsy-turvy, as I hope for Providence!

Lord F. Oh, heavens! what's the matter?—Where's my wife?

Sir P. Ah turned topsy-turvy, as sure as a gun!

Lord F. How do you mean? My wife?

Sir P. The strangest posture of affairs!

Lord F. What, my wife?

Sir P. No, no; I mean the family.—Your lady! I saw her go into the garden with Mr. Brisk.

Lord F. How, where, when, what to do?

Sir P. I suppose they have been laying their heads together.

Lord F. How?

Sir P. Nay, only about poetry, I suppose, my lord; making couplets.

Lord F. Couplets!

Sir P. Oh! here they come.

Enter LADY FROTH and BRISK.

Brisk. My lord, your humble servant; Sir Paul, yours.—The finest night!

Lady F. My dear, Mr. Brisk and I have been star-gazing I don't know how long.

Sir P. Does it not tire your ladyship? Are you not weary with looking up?

Lady F. Oh! no; I love it violently. My dear, you're melancholy.

Lord F. No, my dear, I'm but just awake.

Lady F. Snuff some of my spirit of hartshorn.

Lord F. I've some of my own, thank you, my dear.

Lady F. Well, I swear, Mr. Brisk, you understand astronomy like an old Egyptian.

Brisk. Not comparable to your ladyship: you are the very Cynthia of the skies, and queen of stars.

Lady F. That's because I have no light, but what's by reflection from you, who are the sun.

Brisk. Madam, you have eclipsed me quite, let me perish! I can't answer that.

Lady F. No matter.—Harkye! shall you and I make an almanac together?

Brisk. With all my soul. Your ladyship has made me the man in't already, I'm so full of the wounds which you have given.

Lady F. Oh! finely taken! I swear now you are even with me. Oh, Parnassus! you have an infinite deal of wit.

Sir P. So he has, gadsbud! and so has your ladyship.

Re-enter CARELESS and CYNTHIA, with LADY PLIANT.

Lady P. You tell me most surprising things.—

Bless me! who would ever trust a man? Oh! my heart aches for fear they should be all deceitful alike.

Care. You need not fear, madam; you have charms to fix inconstancy itself.

Lady P. Oh, dear! you make me blush.

Lord F. Come, my dear, shall we take leave of my lord and lady?

Cyn. They'll wait upon your lordship presently.

Lady F. Mr. Brisk, my coach shall set you down. (*Lady Touchwood shrieks from within.*)

All. What's the matter?

LADY TOUCHWOOD, muffled up, runs in affrighted; followed by LORD TOUCHWOOD, dressed like a parson, with a dagger in his hand.

Lady T. Oh! I'm betrayed.—Save me! help me!

Lord T. Now what evasion, wicked woman?

Lady F. Mr. Brisk, my coach shall set you down. (*Exit.*)

Lord T. Go, and thy own infamy pursue thee! You stare, as you were all amazed. I don't wonder at it; but too soon you will know mine, and that woman's shame. (*Throws off his gown.*)

Re-enter MELLEFONT, disguised in a parson's habit, with two Servants, bringing in MASKWELL.

Mel. Nay, by heaven! you shall be seen. (*To Maskwell.*) Careless, your hand. Do you hold down your head? (*To Maskwell.*) Yes, I am your chaplain. Look in the face of your injured friend, thou wonder of all falsehood! (*Throws off his disguise.*)

Lord T. Are you silent, monster?

Mel. Good heavens! how I believed and loved this man! Take him hence, for he's a disease to my sight.

Lord T. Secure the manifold villain. (*Servants take Maskwell off.*)

Care. Miracle of ingratitude!

Sir P. Oh! Providence, Providence, what discoveries are here!

Brisk. This is all very surprising, let me perish! *Lady F.* You know I told you Saturn looked a little more angry than usual.

Lord T. We'll think of punishment at leisure. But let me hasten to do justice, in rewarding virtue and wronged innocence. Nephew, I hope I have your pardon, and Cynthia's.

Mel. We are your lordship's creatures.

Lord T. And be each other's comfort. Let me join your hands. Uninterrupted bliss attend you both! May circling joys tread round each happy year of your long lives!

*Let secret villany from hence be warn'd,
Howe'er in private mischiefs are conceiv'd,
Torture and shame attend their open birth.
Like vipers in the breast, base treach'ry lies,
Still gnawing that whence first it did arise;
No sooner born, but the vile parent dies.*

[*Exeunt.*]

MAHOMET,

THE IMPOSTOR;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY THE REV. MR. MILLER.



Act IV.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

MAHOMET
ALCANOR
ZAPHNA

MIRVAN
HERCULES
ALI

AMMON
PHARON
PALMIRA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in the Temple of Mecca.

Enter ALCANOR and PHARON.

Alc. Pharon, no more! Shall I
Fall prostrate to an arrogant impostor;
Homage, in Mecca, one I banish'd thence,
And incense the delusions of a rebel?
No! blast Alcanor, righteous heaven, if e'er
This hand, yet free and uncontaminatèd,
Shall league with fraud, or adulate a tyrant!

Pha. August and sacred chief of Ishmael's se-
nate,

This zeal of thine, paternal as it is,
Is fatal now; our impotent resistance
Controls not Mahomet's unbounded progress,
But, without weak'ning, irritates the tyrant.
When once a citizen, you well condemn'd him
As an obscure seditious innovator;
But now he is a conqueror, prince, and pontiff,
Whilst nations, numberless, embrace his laws,
And pay him adoration; even in Mecca,
He boasts his proselytes.

Alc. Such proselytes
Are worthy of him; low, untutor'd reptiles,
Most credulous still
Of what is most incredible.

Pha. Be such
Disdain'd, my lord! But mayn't the pest spread up-
wards,
And seize the head? Say, is the senate sound?
I fear some members of that rev'rend class
Are mark'd with the contagion; who, from views

Of higher power and rank,
Worship this rising sun, and give a sanction
To his invasions.

Alc. If, ye powers divine!
Ye mark the movements of this nether world,
And bring them to account, crush, crush those
vipers,

Who, singled out by a community
To guard their rights, shall, for a grasp of ore
Or paltry office, sell them to the foe!

Pha. Each honest citizen, I grant, is thine,
And, grateful for thy boundless blessings on them,
Would serve thee with their lives; but the ap-
proach

Of this usurper to their very walls,
Strikes them with such a dread, that even these
Implore thee to accept his proffer'd peace.

Alc. Oh! people lost to wisdom, as to glory!
Go, bring in pomp, and serve upon your knees
This idol, that will crush you with its weight.
Mark! I abjure him; by his savage hand
My wife and children perish'd, whilst in vengeance
I carried carnage to his very tent;
Transfix'd to earth his only son, and wore
His trappings, as a trophy of my conquest.
This torch of enmity, thus lighted 'twixt us,
The hand of time itself can ne'er extinguish.

Pha. Extinguish not, but smother for awhile
Its fatal flame, and greatly sacrifice
Thy private sufferings to the public welfare.

Alc. My wife and children lost, my country's
now
My family.

Pha. Then let not that be lost.

Alc. Pharon, desist.

Pha. My noble lord, I cannot,
Must not desist, will not, since you're possess'd
Of means to bring this insolent invader
To any terms you'll claim.

Alc. What means?

Pha. Palmira,
That blooming fair, the flow'r of all his camp,
By thee borne off in our last skirmish with him,
Seems the divine ambassadress of peace,
Sent to procure our safety. Mahomet
Has, by his heralds, thrice propos'd her ransom,
And bade us fix the price.

Alc. I know it, Pharon:

And wouldst thou then restore this noble treasure
To that barbarian,
And render beauty the reward of rapine?
Nay, smile not, friend.

Pha. My lord—

Alc. This heart, by age and grief congeal'd,
Is no more sensible to love's endearments,
Than are our barren rooks to morn's sweet dew,
That, balmy, trickles down their rugged cheeks.

Pha. My noble chief, each master-piece of nature

Commands involuntary homage from us.

Alc. I own, a tenderness unfelt before,
A sympathetic grief, with ardent wishes
To make her happy, fill'd my widow'd bosom:
I dread her being in that monster's power,
And burn to have her hate him, like myself,
'Twas on this hour, I, at her modest suit,
Promis'd her audience in my own pavilion.
Pharon, go thou, meanwhile, and see the senate
Assembled straight; I'll sound them as I ought.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room of state.*

PALMIRA discovered.

Pal. What means this boding terror, that usurps,
In spite of me, dominion o'er my heart?
Oh! holy prophet,
Shall I ne'er more attend thy sacred lessons?
Oh, Zaphna! much-lov'd youth; I feel for thee
As for myself—But hold! my final audit
Is now at hand: Tremble for th' event!
Here comes my judge. Now liberty, or bondage!

[*Enter* ALCANOR.

Alc. Palmira, whence those tears? trust me,
fair maid,
Thou art not fall'n into barbarians' hands;
What Mecca can afford of pomp or pleasure,
To call attention from misfortune's lap,
Demand, and share it.

Pal. No, my generous victor!
My suit's for nothing Mecca can afford;
Pris'ner these two long months beneath your roof,
I've tasted such benignity and candour,
That oft I've call'd my tears ingratitude.

Alc. If aught remains, that's in my pow'r to smooth

The rigour of your fate, and crown your wishes,
Why, 'twould fill
The furrows in my cheeks, and make old age
Put on its summer's garb.

Pal. Thus, now I bless thee. (*Kneels.*)
It is on you, on you alone, Alcanor,
My whole of future happiness depends;
Have pity, then,

Pity, Alcanor, one who's torn from all
That's dear or venerable to her soul;
Restore me, then, restore me to my country;
Restore me to my father, prince, and prophet.

Alc. Is slavery dear, then? is fraud venerable?
What country? a tumultuous wad'ring camp!

Pal. My country, sir, is not a single spot
Of such a mould, or fix'd to such a clime;
No, 'tis the social circle of my friends,

The lov'd community in which I'm link'd,
And in whose welfare all my wishes centre.

Alc. Excellent maid! Then Mecca be thy country.

Robb'd of my children, would Palmira deign
To let me call her child, the toil I took,
To make her destiny propitious to her,
Would lighten the rough burden of my own:
But no; you scorn my country and my laws.

Pal. Can I be yours, when not my own? Your bounties

Claim and share my gratitude; but Mahomet
Claims right o'er me of parent, prince, and prophet.

Alc. Of parent, prince, and prophet! Heavens!
that robber

Who, a scap'd felon, emulates a throne,
And, scoff at all faiths, proclaims a new one!

Pal. Oh, cease, my lord! this blasphemous abuse

On one, whom millions, with myself, adore,
Does violence to my ear! such black profaneness
'Gainst heaven's interpreter, blots out remembrance

Of favours past, and nought succeeds but horror!

Alc. Oh! superstition, thy pernicious rigours,
Inflexible to reason, truth, and nature,

Banish humanity the gentlest breast!

Palmira, I lament to see thee plung'd

So deep in error.

Pal. Do you then reject

My just petition? can Alcanor's goodness

Be deaf to suffering virtue?

Name but the ransom,

And Mahomet will treble what you ask.

Alc. There is no ransom Mahomet can offer,
Proportion'd to the prize.

[*Enter* PHARON.

What wouldst thou, Pharon?

Pha. From yon western gate,
Which opens on Moradia's fertile plains,
Mahomet's general, Mirvan, hastes to greet thee.

Alc. Mirvan, that vile apostate!

Pha. In one hand

He holds a scymitar, the other bears
An olive branch, which to our chiefs he waves,
An emblem of his suit—a martial youth,
Zaphna by name, attends him for our hostage.

Pal. Zaphna! mysterious heaven! (*Aside.*)

Pha. Mirvan advances

This way, my lord, to render you his charge.

Alc. Palmira, thou retire—Pharon, be present.

[*Exit Palmira.*]

[*Enter* MIRVAN.

After six years of infamous rebellion
Against thy native country, dost thou, Mirvan,
Again profane, with thy detested presence,
These sacred walls, which once thy hands defended,

But thy bad heart has vilely since betray'd?

Thou poor deserter of thy country's gods!

Thou base invader of thy country's rights!

What wouldst thou have with me?

Mir. I'd pardon thee.

Out of compassion to thy age and sufferings,

And high regard for thy experienc'd valour,

Heaven's great apostle offers thee, in friendship,
A hand could crush thee; and I come commission'd

To name the terms of peace he deigns to tender.

Alc. He deigns to tender! insolent impostor!

Dost thou not, Mirvan, blush

To serve this wretch, this base of soul, as birth?

Mir. Mahomet's grandeur's in himself; he shines
not

With borrow'd lustre.

Plung'd in the night of prejudice, and bound

In fetters of hereditary faith,

My judgment slept; but when I found him born

To mould anew the prostrate universe,
I started from my dream, join'd his career,—
And shar'd his arduous and immortal labours.
Come, embrace our faith, reign with Mahomet,
And cloth'd in terrors, make the vulgar tremble.

Alc. 'Tis Mahomet, and tyrants like to Mahomet,

'Tis Mirvan, and apostates like to Mirvan,
I only would make tremble! Is it, say'st thou,
Religion that's the parent of this rapine,
This virulence, and rage? No; true religion
Is always mild, propitious, and humane;
Plays not the tyrant, plants no faith in blood;
But stoops to polish, succour, and redress,
And builds her grandeur on the public good.

Mir. If clemency delights thee, learn it here.
Though banish'd by thy voice his native city,
Though by thy hand robb'd of his only son,
Mahomet pardons thee; nay, further, begs
The hatred burning 'twixt you be extinguish'd,
With reconciliation's gen'rous tear.

Alc. I know thy master's arts; his gen'rous tears,
Like the refreshing breeze that previous fall
To the wild outrage of o'erwhelming earthquakes,
Only forerun destruction.

Pha. Leagues he will make too—

Alc. Like other grasping tyrants, till he eyes
A lucky juncture to enlarge his bounds;
Then he'll deride them, leap o'er ev'ry tie
Of sacred guarantee, or sworn protection;
And when th' oppress'd all implores assistance,
Beneath that mask, invade the wish'd-for realms,
And, from pure friendship, take them to himself.

Mir. Mahomet fights heav'n's battles, bends the bow

To spread heaven's laws, and to subject to faith
The iron neck of error.

Alc. Lust and ambition, Mirvan, are the springs
Of all his actions; whilst, without one virtue,
Dissimulation, like a flattering painter,
Bedecks him with the colouring of them all:
This is thy master's portrait— But no more,
My soul's inexorable, and my hate
Immortal as the cause from whence it sprang.

Mir. What cause?

Alc. The difference between good and evil.
Mir. Thou talk'st to me, Alcanor, with an air
Of a stern judge, that from his dread tribunal
Intimidates the criminal beneath him:
Resume thy temper, act the minister,
And treat with me as with th' ambassador
Of heaven's apostle, and Arabia's king.

Alc. Arabia's king! what king? who crown'd him?

Mir. Conquest.

Whilst to the style of conqueror and of monarch,
Patron of peace he'd add. Name, then, the price
Of peace, and of Palmira. Boundless treasures,
The spoils of vanquish'd monarchs, and the stores
Of rich provinces, are thrown before thee.
Our troops with matchless ardour hasten hither,
To lay in ruin this rebellious city;
Stem, then, the rushing torrent; Mahomet,
In person, comes to claim a conference with thee
For this good purpose.

Alc. Who? Mahomet?

Mir. Yes, he conjures thou'lt grant it.

Alc. Traitor! were I sole ruler here, in Mecca,
I'd answer thee with chastisement!

Mir. Hot man!

I pity thy false virtue—But, farewell!
And since the senate share thy pow'r in Mecca,
To their serene wisdom I'll appeal. *[Exit.]*

Alc. I'll meet thee there. Ye sacred pow'rs,
My country's gods, that for three thousand years
Have reign'd protectors of the tribe of Ishmael!
Oh! support my spirit

In that firm purpose it has always held,—

To combat violence, fraud, and usurpation;
To pluck the spoil from the oppressor's jaws,
And keep my country as I found it—free! *[Exeunt.]*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Palmira's Apartment.

Enter PALMIRA.

Pal. Cease, cease, ye streaming instruments of woe,
From your ignoble toil! Take warmth, my heart!
Collect thy scatter'd pow'rs, and brave misfortune.
In vain the storm-tost mariner repines;
Impatience only throws
Discredit on mischance, and adds a shame
To our affliction.

Enter ZAPHNA.

Ha! all-gracious heaven!
Thou, Zaphna! is it thou? what pitying angel
Guided thy steps to these abodes of bondage?

Zaph. Thou sov'reign of my soul, and all its pow'rs,

Object of every fear, and ev'ry wish,
Friend, sister, love, companion, all that's dear!
Do I once more behold thee, my Palmira?
Oh! I will set it down the whitest hour
That Zaphna e'er was bless'd with!

Pal. Say, my hero,
Are my ills ended, then? They are, they are!
Now Zaphna's here, I am no more a captive,
Except to him—Oh! bless'd captivity!

Zaph. Those smiles are dearer to my raptur'd breast,

Sweeter those accents to my list'ning heart,
Than all Arabia's spices to my sense!

Pal. No wonder that my soul was so elate,
No wonder that the cloud of grief gave way,
When thou, my sun of comfort, wert so nigh.

Zaph. Since that dire hour, when on Sabaria's strand

The barb'rous foe depriv'd me of Palmira,
In what a gulf of horror and despair

Have thy imagin'd perils plung'd my soul!

Stretch'd on expiring coarces, for awhile,
To the deaf stream I pour'd out my complaint,
And begg'd I might be number'd with the dead
That strew'd its banks; then, starting from despair,

With rage I flew to Mahomet for vengeance.
He, for some high mysterious purpose, known
To heaven and him alone, at length despatch'd
The valiant Mirvan to demand a truce:

Instant, on wings of lightning, I pursu'd him,
And enter'd as his hostage; fix'd, Palmira,
Or to redeem, or die a captive with thee.

Pal. Heroic youth!

Zaph. But how have these barbarians
Treated my faith?

Pal. With high humanity.

I in my victor found a friend: Alcanor
Has made me feel captivity in nothing
But absence from my Zaphna and my friends.

Zaph. I grieve, a soul so gen'rous is our foe:
But now, presented as a hostage to him,
His noble bearing and humanity

Made captive of my heart: I felt, methought,
A new affection lighted in my breast,
And wonder'd whence the infant ardour sprang.

Pal. Yet gen'rous as he is, not all my pray'rs,
Not all the tears I lavish at his feet,
Can move him to restore me.

Zaph. But he shall;

Let the barbarian know he shall, Palmira.
The god of Mahomet, our divine protector,
Whose still triumphant standard I have borne
O'er piles of vanquish'd infidels; that pow'r
Which brought unnumber'd battlements to earth,
Will humble Mecca, too.

Enter MIRVAN.

Well, noble Mirvan,

Do my *Palmyra's* chains sit loose upon her?
Say, is it freedom? This presumptuous senate—

Mir. Has granted all we ask'd, all we could wish.

The truce obtain'd, the gates to Mahomet
Fléw open.

Zaph. Mahomet in Mecca, say'st thou?
Once more in Mecca?

Pal. Transport! bid him welcome.

Zaph. Thy sufferings then are o'er, the ebb is past,

And a full tide of hope flows in upon us.

Pal. But where's the prophet?

Mir. Reclin'd in yonder grot, that joins the temple,

Attended by his chiefs.

Zaph. There let us haste,

With duteous step, and bow ourselves before him.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A spacious Grotto.*

MAHOMET discovered with the *Alcoran* before him.

Mah. Glorious hypocrisy! what fools are they,
Who, fraught with insatiable or ambitious views,
Wear not thy specious mask: thou, *alcoran*!
Hast won more battles, ta'en more cities for me,
Than thrice my feeble numbers had achiev'd;
Without the succour of thy sacred impulse.

Enter HERCIDES, AMMON, and ALI.

Invisible supporters of our grandeur!

My faithful chiefs, *Hercides*, *Ammon*, *Ali*!

Go, and instruct this people in my name;

That faith may dawn, and, like a morning star,

Be herald to my rising.—Lo! *Palmyra*,

[*Exeunt* *Hercides*, *Ammon*, and *Ali*.]

Her angel-face, with unfeign'd blushes spread,

Proclaims the purity that dwells within.

Enter MIRVAN, ZAPHNA, and PALMIRA.

The hand of war was ne'er before so barbarous,

Never bore from me half so rich a spoil,

As thee, my fair. (To *Palmyra*.)

Pal. Joy to my heavenly guardian!

Joy to the world, that Mahomet's in Mecca!

Mah. My child, let me embrace thee. How's this? *Zaphna*!

Thou here?

Zaph. (Kneels.) My father, chief, and holy pontiff!

The god, that thou'rt inspir'd by, march'd before me.

Ready, for thee, to wade through seas of danger,

Or cope with death itself, I hither hasten'd

To yield myself an hostage, and with zeal

Prevent thy order.

Mah. 'Twas not well, rash boy!

He that does more than I command him, errs

As much as he who falters in his duty.

I obey

My god—implicitly obey thou me.

Pal. Pardon, my gracious lord, his well-meant ardour.

Brought up from tender infancy, beneath

The shelter of thy sacred patronage,

Zaphna and I've been animated still

By the same sentiments.

Mah. *Palmyra*, 'tis enough; I read thy heart—

Be not alarm'd; though burden'd with the cares

Of thrones and altars, still my guardian eye

Will watch o'er thee, as o'er the universe.

Follow my generals, *Zaphna*. Fair *Palmyra*,

Retire, and pay your pow'ful vows to heav'n,

And dread no wrongs, but from *Alcanor*.

[*Exeunt* *Zaphna* and *Palmyra*.]

Mirvan,

Attend thou here. 'Tis time, my trusty soldier,

My long-tried friend, to lay unfolded to thee

The close resolves and councils of my heart.

Prepossession, friend,

Reigns monarch of the million: Mecca's crowd

Gaze at my rapid victories, and think
Some awful pow'r directs my arm to conquest;
But whilst our friends once more renew their efforts

To win the wav'ring people to our interest,
What think'st thou, say, of *Zaphna* and *Palmyra*?

Mir. As of thy most resign'd and faithful vassals.

Mah. Oh! *Mirvan*, they're the deadliest of my foes!

Mir. How?

Mah. Yes, they love each other.

Mir. Well, what crime?

Mah. What crime, dost say? learn all my frailty, then—

My life's a combat: keen austerity

Subjects my nature to abstemious bearings:

Or on the burning sands, or desert rocks,

With thee I bear the inclemency of climates,

Freeze at the pole, or scorch beneath the line.

For all these toils love only can retaliate,

Thy only consolation or reward,

Fruit of my labours, idol of my incense,

And sole divinity that I adore;

Know, then, that I prefer this young *Palmyra*,

To all the ripen'd beauties that attend me,

Dwell on her accents, dote upon her smiles,

And am not mine but hers. Now judge, my friend,

How vast the jealous transports of thy master,

When, at his feet, he daily hears this charmer

Avow a foreign love, and, insolent,

Give Mahomet a rival!

Mir. How! and Mahomet

Not instantly revenge—

Mah. Ah! should he not?

But, better to detest him, know him better:

Learn, then, that both my rival and my love,

Sprang from the loins of this audacious tyrant.

Mir. *Alcanor*!

Mah. Is their father; old *Hercides*,

To whose sage institution I commit

My captive infants, late reveal'd it to me.

Perdition! I myself lit up their flame,

And fed it till I set myself on fire.

Well, means must be employ'd: but see, the father;

He comes this way, and launches from his eye

Malignant sparks of enmity and rage.

Mirvan, see all ta'en care of; let *Hercides*,

With his escort, beset yon gate; bid *Ali*

Make proper disposition round the temple;

This done, return and render me account

Of what success we meet with 'mongst the people:

Then, *Mirvan*, we'll determine or to loose

Or bride in our vengeance as it suits.
[*Exit* *Mirvan*.]

Enter *ALCANOR*.

Why dost thou start, *Alcanor*? whence that horror?

Approach, old man, without a blush, since heav'n,

For some high end, decrees our future union.

Alc. I blush not for myself, but thee, thou tyrant!

For thee, bad man! who com'st, with serpent guile,

To sow dissension in the realms of peace.

Thy very name sets families at variance,

'Twixt son and father bursts the bonds of nature,

And sears endearment from the nuptial pillow!

And is it, insolent dissembler! thus

Thou com'st to give the sons of Mecca peace,

And me an unknown god?

Mah. Were I to answer any but *Alcanor*,

That unknown god should speak in thunder for me;

But here with thee I'd parley as a man.

Alc. What canst thou say? what urge in thy defence?

What right hast thou receiv'd to plant new faiths,

Or lay a claim to royalty and priesthood?

Mah. The right that a resolv'd and tow'ring spirit
Has o'er the grovelling instinct of the vulgar—

Alc. Patience, good beas'ns! Have I not known thee, Mahomet,
When void of wealth, inheritance, or fame,
Rank'd with the lowest of the low at Mecca?

Mah. Dost thou not know, thou haughty, feeble man,
That the low insect, lurking in the grass,
And the imperial eagle, which aloft
Ploughs the ethereal plain, are both alike
In the eternal eye?

Alc. What sacred truth! from what polluted lips!
(*Aside.*)

Mah. Hear me: thy Mecca trembles at my name;
If, therefore, thou wouldst save thyself or city,
Embrace my proffer'd friendship. What to-day
I thus solicit, I'll command to-morrow.

Alc. Contract with thee a friendship! frontless man!

Know'st thou a god can work that miracle? •

Mah. I do—necessity—thy interest.

Alc. Interest is thy god, equity is mine.
Propose the tie of this unnatural union;
Say, is't the loss of thy ill-fated son,
Who in the field fell victim to my rage:
Or the dear blood of my poor captive children,
Shed by thy butchering hands?

Mah. Ay, 'tis thy children.
Mark me, then, well, and learn the important secret,
Which I'm sole master of:—thy children live.

Alc. Live!

Mah. Yes; both live.

Alc. What say'st thou? Both?

Mah. Ay, both.

Alc. And dost thou not beguile me?

Mah. No, old man.

Alc. Propitious heav'ns! Say, Mahomet, for now,
Methinks, I could hold endless converse with thee,
Say what's their portion, liberty or bondage?

Mah. Bred in my camp, and tutor'd in my law,
I hold the balance of their destinies,
And now 'tis on the turn—their lives or deaths—
'Tis thine to say which shall preponderate.

Alc. Mine! can I save them? name the mighty ransom:
If I must bear their chains, double the weight,
And I will kiss the hand that puts them on;
Or, if streaming blood must be the purchase,
Drain every sluice and channel of my body;
My swelling veins will burst to give it passage!

Mah. I'll tell thee, then:—renounce thy pagan faith,
Abolish thy vain gods, and—
Alc. Ha!

Mah. Nay, more:
Surrender Mecca to me, quit this temple,
Assist me to impose upon the world,
Thunder my koran to the gazing crowd,
Proclaim me for their prophet and their king,
And be a glorious pattern of credulity
To Korah's stubborn tribe. These terms perform'd,
Thy son shall be restor'd, and Mahomet's self
Will deign to wed thy daughter.

Alc. Hear me, Mahomet:
I am a father, and this bosom boasts
A heart as tender as e'er parent bore.
After fifteen years of anguish for them,
Once more to view my children, clasp them to me,
And die in their embraces—Melting thought!
But were I doom'd or to enslave my country,
And help to spread black error o'er the earth,

Or to behold these blood-embued hands
Deprive me of them both, know me, then, Mahomet,

I'd not admit a doubt to cloud my choice.

(*Looks earnestly at Mahomet for some time before he speaks.*)

Farewell! [*Exit.*]
Mah. Why, fare thee well, then, churlish do-tard!

Inexorable fool! Now, by my arms,
I will have great revenge: I'll meet thy scorn
With treble retribution!

Re-enter MIRVAN.

Well, my Mirvan,
What say'st thou to it now?

Mir. Why, that Alcanor,
Or we, must fall.

Mah. Fall, then, the obdurate rebel!

Mir. The truce expires to-morrow; when Alcanor

Again is Mecca's master, and has vow'd
Destruction on thy head: the senate, too,
Have pass'd thy doom.

Mah. Those heart-chill'd, paltry babblers,
Plac'd on the bench of sloth, with ease can nod,
And vote a man to death. Why don't the cowards
Stand me in yonder plain? With half their num-bers,

I drove them headlong to their walls for shelter.
Perish Alcanor!

He mumbled up, the pliant populace,
Those dupes of novelty, will bend before us,
Like osiers to a hurricane.

Mir. No time

Is to be lost.

Mah. But for a proper arm—

Mir. What think'st thou, then, of Zaphna?

Mah. Of Zaphna, say'st thou?

Mir. Yes, Alcanor's hostage.

He can in private do thee vengeance on him:
He's a slave

To thy despotic faith; and, urg'd by thee,
However mild his nature may appear,
Howe'er humane and noble is his spirit,
Or strong his reason, where allow'd to reason,
He would, for heaven's sake, martyr half man-kind.

Mah. The brother of Palmira?

Mir. Yes, that brother,
The only son of thy outrageous foe,
And the incestuous rival of thy love.

Mah. I hate the stripling, loathe his very name;
The manes of my son, too, cry for vengeance
On the curs'd sire; but, then, thou know'st my love;

Know'st from whose blood she sprang: this stag-gers, Mirvan;

And yet I'm here surrounded with a gulf
Ready to swallow me: come, too, in quest
Of altars and a throne! What must be done?
My warring passions, like contending clouds,
When fraught with thunder's fatal fuel, burst
Upon themselves, and rend me with the shock.

Mirvan, sound this youth.
Touch not at once, upon the startling purpose,
But make due preparation.

Mir. I'll attack him
With all the forces of enthusiasm.
There lies our strength.

Mah. First, then, a solemn vow
To act whatever heaven by me enjoins him;
Next, omens, dreams, and visions, may be pleaded;
Hints, too, of black designs by this Alcanor
Upon Palmira's virtue and his life,
But to the proof. Be now propitious, fortune;
Then love, ambition, vengeance, jointly triumph.
[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A grand Apartment.*

Enter ZAPHNA and PALMIRA.

Zaph. Alcanor claims a private conference with us.

What has he to unfold?

Pal. I tremble, Zaphna.

Zaph. Time press'd too, did he say?

Pal. He did; then, rest.

A look so piercing on me, it o'erwhelm'd
My face with deep confusion: this he mark'd;
Then, starting, left me.

Zaph. Ha! this gives me fear
That Mirvan's jealousies are too well grounded;
But I must not distract her tender bosom
With visionary terrors. (*Aside.*) Both in private?

Pal. In private both.

Zaph. Her virtue, and my life!
It cannot be; so reverend a form
Could ne'er be pander to such black devices.

(*Aside.*)

Pal. But let us shun it, Zaphna; much I fear
Alcanor has deceiv'd us: dread the treachery
Of this blood-thirsty senate. Trust me, Zaphna,
They have sworn the extirpation of our faith,
Nor care by what vile means—

Zaph. My soul's best treasure,
For whose security my every thought
Is up in arms, regardless of my own,
Shun thou Alcanor's presence. This hour, Palmira,
Mirvan, by order of our royal pontiff,
Prepares to solemnize some act of worship,
Of a more hallow'd and mysterious kind
Than will admit of vulgar eye; myself
Alone am honour'd to assist.

Pal. Alone!

Zaph. Yes, to devote myself by solemn vow,
For some great act, of which my fair's the prize.

Pal. What act?

Zaph. No matter, since my lov'd Palmira
Shall be the glorious recompense.

Pal. Oh! Zaphna,
Methinks I do not like this secret vow.
Why must not I be present? Were I with thee,
I should not be so anxious;
For trust me, Zaphna, my affection for thee
Is of that pure, disinterested nature,
So free from passion's taint, I have no one wish
To have thee more than thus, have thee my friend,
Share thy lov'd converse, wait upon thy welfare,
And view thee with a sister's spotless eye.

Zaph. Angelic excellence!

Pal. And let me tell thee,
This Mirvan, this fierce Mirvan, gives me terrors.
So far from tend'ring consolation to me,
His theme is blood and slaughter. As I met him,
His eyes flam'd fury, whilst in dubious phrase
He thus bespoke me: "The destroying angel
Must be let loose. Palmira, heav'n ordains
Some glorious deed for thee yet hid in darkness;
Learn an implicit rev'ence for its will;
And above all, I warn thee, fear for Zaphna."

Zaph. What could he mean? Can I believe,
Alcanor,

Thy fair deportment but a treach'rous mask?
Yet, spite of all the rage that ought to fire me
Against this rebel to our faith and prophet,
I have held me happy in his friendship,
And bondage wore the livery of choice.

Pal. How has heaven fraught our love-link'd
hearts, my Zaphna.

With the same thoughts, aversions, and desires.
But for thy safety and our dread religion,
That thunders hatred to all infidels,
With great remorse I should accuse Alcanor.

Zaph. Let us shake off this vain remorse, Pal-
mira,

Resign ourselves to heaven, and act its pleasure.

The hour is come that I must pledge my vow:
Doubt not but the Supreme, who claims this ser-
vice,

Will prove propitious to our chaste endearments.
Farewell, my love; I fly to gain the summit
Of earth's felicity—to gain Palmira. [*Exit.*]

Pal. Where'er I turn, 'tis all suspicion.
Like one benighted midst a place of tombs,
I gaze around me, start at every motion,
And seem hemm'd in by visionary spectres.
All-righteous power, whom trembling I adore,
And blindly follow, oh! deliver me
From these heart-rending terrors! Ha! who's here?

Enter MAHOMET.

'Tis he! 'tis Mahomet himself! kind heaven
Has sent him to my aid. My gracious lord!
Protect the dear, dear idol of my soul;
Save Zaphna; guard him from—

Mah. From what? why Zaphna?
Whence this vain terror? Is he not with us?

Pal. Oh! sir, you double now my apprehensions:
Those broken accents, and that eager look,
Shew you have anguish smother'd at the heart,
And prove for once that Mahomet's a mortal.

Mah. Ha! shall I turn a traitor to myself?
(*Aside.*)

Oh! woman, woman! Hear me: ought I not
To be enrag'd at thy profane attachment?
How could thy breast, without the keenest sting,
Harbour one thought not dictated by me?
Is that young mind, I took such toil to form,
Turn'd an ingrate and infidel at once?
Away, rebellious maid!

Pal. What dost thou say,
My royal lord? Thus, prostrate at your feet,
Let me implore forgiveness, if in aught
I have offended: talk not to me thus;
A frown from thee, my father and my king,
Is death to poor Palmira. Say, then, Mahomet,
Didst thou not, in this very place, permit him
To render me his vows?

Mah. How the soft traitress racks me! (*Aside.*)
Rise, Palmira—

Down, rebel love! I must be calm. (*Aside.*) Come
hither:

Beware, rash maid, of such imprudent steps:
They lead to guilt. What wild, pernicious errors
Mayn't the heart lead to, if not greatly watch'd!

Pal. In loving Zaphna, sure it cannot err.

Mah. Zaphna again! Furies! I shall relapse,
And make her witness of my weakness! (*Aside.*)

Pal. Sir!
What sudden start of passion arms that eye?

Mah. Oh! nothing: pray, retire awhile: take
courage:

I'm not at all displeas'd: 'twas but to sound
The depth of thy young heart. I praise thy choice:
Trust, then, thy dearest int'rest to my bosom;
But know, your fate depends on your obedience.
If I have been a guardian to your youth,
If all my lavish bounties past weigh aught,
Deserve the future blessings which await you.
Howe'er the voice of heaven dispose of Zaphna,
Confirm him in the path where duty leads,
That he may keep his vow, and merit thee.

Pal. Distrust him not, my sovereign; noble
Zaphna

Disdains to lag in love or glory's course.

Mah. Enough of words—

Pal. As boldly I've avow'd
The love I bear that hero at your feet,
I'll now to him, and fire his gen'rous breast,
To prove the duty he has sworn to thee. [*Exit.*]

Mah. What could I say? Such sweet simplicity
Lur'd down my rage, and innocently wing'd
The arrow through my heart. And shall I bear
this?

Be made the sport of ours'd Alcanor's house?
Check'd in my rapid progress by the sire,

Supplanted in my love by this rash boy,
And made a gentle pander to the daughter?
Perdition on the whole detested race!

Enter MIRVAN.

Mir. Now, Mahomet, is the time to seize on Mecca;

Crush this Alcanor, and enjoy Palmira.
This night the old enthusiast offers incense
To his vain gods, in sacred Caaba:
Zaphna, who flames with zeal for heaven and thee,
May be won o'er to seize that lucky moment.

Mah. He shall; it must be so; he's born to act
The glorious crime; and let him be at once
The instrument and victim of the murder.
My law, my love, my vengeance, my own safety,
Have doom'd it so. But, *Mirvan*, dost thou think
His youthful courage, nurs'd in superstition,
Can e'er be work'd—

Mir. I tell thee, Mahomet,
He's tutor'd to accomplish thy design.
Palmira, too, who thinks thy will is heaven's,
Will nerve his arm to execute thy pleasure.

Mah. Didst thou engage him by a solemn vow?

Mir. I did, with all thy enthusiastic pomp
Thy law enjoins; then gave him, as from thee,
A consecrated sword, to act thy will.
Oh! he is burning with religious fury!

Mah. But, hold! he comes. [*Exit Mirvan.*]

Enter ZAPHNA.

Child of that awful and tremendous power,
Whose laws I publish, whose behests proclaim,
Listen whilst I unfold his sacred will:

'Tis thine to vindicate his way to man,
'Tis thine his injur'd worship to avenge.

Zaph. Thou lord of nations, delegate of heaven,
Sent to shed day o'er the benighted world,
Oh! say in what can Zaphna prove his duty.
Instruct me how a frail earth-prison'd mortal
Can or avenge or vindicate a god.

Mah. By thy weak arm he deigns to prove his
cause,
And launch his vengeance on blaspheming rebels.

Zaph. What glorious action, what illustrious
danger

Does that Supreme, whose image thou, demand?
Place me, oh! place me in the front of battle,
'Gainst odds innumerable! try me there;
Or, if a single combat claim my might,
The stoutest Arab may step forth, and see
If Zaphna fail to greet him as he ought.

Mah. Oh! greatly said, my son; 'tis inspiration!
But heed me: 'tis not by a glaring act
Of human valour heaven has will'd to prove thee;
This infidels themselves may boast, when led
By ostentation, rage, or brute-like rashness.
To do what'er heaven gives in sacred charge,
Nor dare to sound its fathomless decrees,
This, and this only's meritorious zeal.
Attend, adore, obey; thou shalt be arm'd
By death's remorseless angel, which awaits me.

Zaph. Speak out, pronounce! what victim must
I offer?

What tyrant sacrifice? whose blood requir'st thou?

Mah. The blood of a detested infidel;
A murderer, a foe to heaven and me;
A wretch who slew my child, blasphemes my god,
And, like a huge Colossus, bears a world
Of impious opposition to my faith:
The blood of cursed Alcanor!

Zaph. I! Alcanor!

Mah. What! dost thou hesitate? Rash youth,
beware!

He that deliberates, is sacrilegious.
Far, far from me, be those sadacious mortals,
Who for themselves would impiously judge,
Or see with their own eyes; who dares to think,
Was never born a proselyte for me.
Knew who I am; know, on this very spot,

I've charg'd thee with the just decree of heaven.
And when that heaven requires of thee no more
Than the bare off'ring of its deadliest foe,
Nay, thy foe, too, and mine, why dost thou balance
As thy own father were the victim claim'd?
Go, vile idolator! false Mussulman!
Go, seek another master, a new faith!

Zaph. Oh, Mahomet!

Mah. Just when the prize is ready,
When fair Palmira's destin'd to thy arms—
But what's Palmira? or what's heaven to thee,
Thou poor weak rebel to thy faith and love?
Go, serve and cringe to our detested foe.

Zaph. Oh! pardon, Mahomet; methinks I hear
The oracle of heaven. It shall be done.

Mah. Obey, then, strike! and, for his impious
blood,

Palmira's charms and paradise be thine. [*Exit.*]

Zaph. Soft, let me think—This duty wears the
face
Of something more than monstrous. Pardon,
heaven!

To sacrifice an innocent old man,
Weigh'd down with age, unsuccessful, and unarm'd!
When I am hostage for his safety, too!
No matter—heaven has chose me for the duty;
My vow is past, and must be straight fulfill'd.
Ye stern, relentless ministers of wrath,
Spirits of vengeance! by whose ruthless hands
The haughty tyrants of the earth have bled,
Come to my succour, to my flaming zeal
Join your determined courage!

And thou, angel
Of Mahomet, exterminating angel!
That mov'st down nations to prepare his passage,
Support my falt'ring will, harden my heart,
Lest nature pity, plead Alcanor's cause,
And wrest the dagger from me.
Ha! who comes here?

Enter ALCANOR.

Alc. Whence, Zaphna, that deep gloom,
That, like a blasting mildew on the ear
Of promis'd harvest, blackens o'er thy visage?
Grieve not that here, through form, thou art con-
fin'd;

I hold thee not as hostage, but as friend,
And make thy safety partner with my own.

Zaph. And make my safety partner with thy
own! [*Aside.*]

Alc. The bloody carnage, by this truce sus-
pended

For a few moments, like a torrent, check'd
In its full flow, will with redoubled strength
Bear all before it.

In this impending scene of public horror,
Be then, dear youth, these mansions thy asylum;
I'll be thy hostage now, and, with my life,
Will answer that no mischief shall befall thee.
I know not why, but thou art precious to me.

Zaph. Heaven! duty! gratitude! humanity!
[*Aside.*]

What dost thou say, Alcanor? Didst thou say
That thy own roof should shield me from the
tempest?

That thy own life stood hostage for my safety?
Alc. Why thus amaz'd at my compassion for
thee?

I am a man myself, and that's enough
To make me feel the woes of other men,
And labour to redress them.

Zaph. What melody these accents make!
[*Aside.*]

Can, then, a foe to Mahomet's sacred law
Be virtue's friend?

Alc. Thou know'st but little, Zaphna,
If thou dost think true virtue is confin'd
To climes or systems; no, it flows spontaneous,
Like life's warm stream, throughout the whole
creation,

And beats the pulse of every healthful heart.
How canst thou, Zaphna, worship for thy god
A being claiming cruelty and murders
From his adorers? Such is thy master's god.

Zaph. Oh! my relenting soul! thou'rt almost
thaw'd
From thy resolve. (*Aside.*) I pray you, sir, no
more.

Peace, reason, peace!

Alc. The more I view him, talk with him, ob-
serve

His understanding towering 'bove his age,
The more my breast takes int'rest in his welfare.

(*Aside.*)
Zaphna, come near: I oft have thought to ask thee
To whom thou ow'st thy birth, whose gen'rous
blood

Swells thy young veins, and mantles at thy heart?

Zaph. That dwells in darkness; no one friendly
beam

E'er gave me glimpse from whom I am descended.
The camp of godlike Mahomet has been
My oradle and my country; whilst, of all
His captive infants, no one more has shar'd
The sunshine of his clemency and care.

Alc. I do not blame thy gratitude, young man:
But why was Mahomet thy benefactor?

Why was not I? I envy him that glory.
Why, then, this impious man has been a father
Alike to thee and to the fair Palmira.

Zaph. Oh!

Alc. What's the cause, my Zaphna, of that sigh,
And all that language of a smother'd anguish?
Why didst thou snatch away thy cordial eye,
That shone on me before?

Zaph. Oh! my torn heart!
Palmira's name revives the racking thought
Of my near-blunted purpose. (*Aside.*)

Alc. Come, my friend,
The flood-gates of destruction soon thrown ope,
Will pour in ruin on that curse of nations.
If I can save but thee and fair Palmira,
From this o'erflowing tide, let all the rest
Of his abandon'd minions be the victims
For your deliverance. I must save your blood.

Zaph. Just heaven! and is't not I must shed his
blood? (*Aside.*)

Alc. Nay, tremble if thou dar'st to hesitate.
Follow me straight.

Enter PHARON.

Pha. Alcanor, read that letter,
Put in my hands this moment by an Arab,
With utmost stealth, and air bespeaking somewhat
Of high importance.

Alc. (*Reads.*) Whence is this? Heroides!
Cautious, my eyes! be sure you're not mistaken
In what you here insinuate. Gracious heaven!
Will then thy providence, at length o'errule
My wayward fate, and by one matchless blessing,
Sweeten the suff'rings of a threescore years?
(*Looks for some time earnestly at Zaphna.*)

Follow me.

Zaph. Thee! But Mahomet—

Alc. Thy life,
And all its future bliss, dwells on this moment.
Follow, I say. [*Exit with Pharon.*]

*Re-enter MIRVAN, with his Attendants, hastily, on
the other side of the stage.*

Mir. Traitor, turn back: what means
This conf'rence with the foe? To Mahomet
Away this instant; he commands thy presence.

(*To Zaphna.*)
Zaph. Where am I? Heavens! how shall I now
resolve?

How set! A precipice on every side
Awaits me, and the first least step's perdition.
(*Aside.*)

Mir. Young man, our prophet brooks not such
delay;
Go, stop the bolt that's ready to be launch'd
On thy rebellious head.

Zaph. Yes, and renounce
This horrid vow that's poison to my soul. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The Temple.

Enter ZAPHNA, with a drawn sword in his hand.

Zaph. Well, then, it must be so; I must dis-
charge
This cruel duty: Mahomet enjoins it,
And heaven, through him, demands it of my hands.
Horrid, though sacred act! my soul shrieks back,
And won't admit conviction.
Oh! dire obedience!
Why, duty, art thou thus at war with nature?

Enter PALMIRA.

Thou here, Palmira? Oh! what fatal transport
Leads thee to this sad place, these dark abodes,
Sacerd to death! Thou hast no business here.

Pal. Oh! Zaphna, fear and love have been my
guides.

What horrid sacrifice is this enjoin'd thee?

What victim does the god of Mahomet
Claim from thy tender hand?

Zaph. Oh! my guardian angel,
Speak, resolve me;
How can assassination be a virtue?
How can the gracious Parent of mankind
Delight in mankind's suff'rings? Mayn't this pro-
phet,

This great announcer of his heavenly will,
Mistake it once?

Pal. Oh! tremble to examine.

He sees our hearts. To doubt is to blaspheme.

Zaph. Be steady, then, my soul, firm to thy pur-
pose.

Come forth, thou foe to Mahomet and heaven,

And meet the doom thy rebel faith deserves:

Come forth, Alcanor.

Pal. Who? Alcanor?

Zaph. Yes.

Pal. The good Alcanor?

Zaph. Curse on his pagan virtues! he must die;
So Mahomet commands: and yet, methinks,
Some other deity arrests my arm,
And whispers to my heart—"Zaphna, forbear!"

Pal. Distracting state!

Zaph. Alas! my dear Palmira,
I'm weak, and shudder at this bloody business.

Help me, oh! help, Palmira; I am torn,
Distracted, with this conflict.

Zeal, horror, love, and pity, seize my breast,
And drag it different ways. Alas! Palmira,
You see me tossing on a sea of passions;
'Tis thine, my angel, to appease this tempest,
Fix my distracted will, and teach me—

Pal. What?

What can I teach thee in this strife of passions?

Oh! Zaphna, I revere our holy prophet,
Think all his laws are register'd in heaven,
And every mandate minted in the skies.

Zaph. But then to break through hospitality,
And murder him by whom we are protected!

Pal. Oh! poor Alcanor! gen'rous, good Alcanor!
My heart bleeds for thee.

Zaph. Know, then, unless I act this horrid scene,
Unless I plunge this dagger in the breast
Of that old man, I must—I must—

Pal. What?

Zaph. Must, Palmira—

(Oh! agonizing thought!) lose thee for ever!

Pal. Am I the price of good Alcanor's blood?

Zaph. So Mahomet ordains.

Pal. Horrible dowry!

Zaph. Thou know'st the curse our prophet has denounc'd,
Of endless tortures on the disobedient;
Thou know'st with what an oath I've bound myself
To vindicate his laws, extirpate all
That dare oppose his progress. Say, then, fair one,
Thou tutress divine, instruct me how,
How to obey my chief, perform my oath,
Yet list to mercy's call.

Pal. This rends my heart.

Zaph. How to avoid being banish'd thee for ever.

Pal. Oh! save me from that thought! must that e'er be?

Zaph. It must not: thou hast now pronounc'd his doom.

Pal. What doom? Have I?

Zaph. Yes, thou hast seal'd his death.

Pal. I seal his death? Did I?

Zaph. 'Twas heaven spoke by thee; thou'rt its oracle;

And I'll fulfil its laws. This is the hour

In which he pays, at the adjoining altar,

Black rites to his imaginary gods.

Follow me not, Palmira.

Pal. I must follow;

I will not, dare not, leave thee.

Zaph. Gentle maid,

I beg thee fly these walls; thou canst not bear
This horrid scene. Oh! these are dreadful moments!

Begone! quick!—this way—

Pal. No, I follow thee,
Retread thy every footstep, though they lead
To the dark gulf of death.

Zaph. Thou matchless maid! to the dire trial, then. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—The inner part of the Temple, with a pagan altar and images.

ALCANOR discovered, addressing himself to the idols.

Alc. Eternal powers! that deign to bless these mansions,

Protectors of the sons of Ishmael,
Crush, crush this blasphemous invader's force,
And turn him back with shame. If power be your's,
Oh! shield your injur'd votaries, and lay
Oppression bleeding at your altar's foot.

Enter ZAPHNA and PALMIRA.

Pal. Act not this bloody deed: oh! save him, save him! (Apart to Zaphna.)

Zaph. Save him, and lose both paradise and thee! (Apart.)

Pal. Ha! yon he stands. Oh! Zaphna, all my blood

Is frozen at the sight. (Apart.)

Alc. 'Tis in your own behalf that I implore

The terrors of your might; swift, swiftly

Pour vengeance on this vile apostate's head!

Zaph. Hear how the wretch blasphemes! So,

now— (Apart.)

Pal. Hold, Zaphna! (Apart.)

Zaph. Let me go. (Apart.)

Pal. I cannot—cannot. (Apart.)

Alc. But if, for reasons which dim-sighted mortals

Can't look into, you'll crown this daring rebel

With royalty and priesthood, take my life:

And if, ye gracious powers! you've aught of bliss

In store for me, at my last hour permit me

To see my children, pour my blessing on them,

Expire in their dear arms, and let them close

These eyes, which then would wish no after sight.

Pal. His children, did he say? (Apart.)

Zaph. I think he did. (Apart.)

Alc. For this I'll at your altar pay my vows,

And make it smoke with incense.

(Retires behind the altar.)

Zaph. (Draws his sword.) Now let me strike!

Pal. Stay but one moment, Zaphna.

Zaph. It must not be—unhand me.

Pal. What to do?

Zaph. To serve my god and king, and merit thee.

(Breaks from Palmira, and going towards the altar, he starts, and stops short.)

Ha! what are ye, ye terrifying shades?

What means this lake of blood that lies before me?

Pal. Oh! Zaphna! let us fly these horrid roofs.

Zaph. No, no. Go on, ye ministers of death;

Lead me the way; I'll follow ye.

Pal. Stay, Zaphna;

Heap no more horrors on me; I'm expiring

Beneath the load.

Zaph. Be hush'd—the altar trembles!

What means that omen! does it spur to murder,

Or would it rein me back? No, 'tis the voice

Of heaven itself, that chides my ling'ring hand.

Now send up thither all thy vows, Palmira,

Whilst I obey its will, and give the stroke.

(Goes behind the altar, after Alcanor.)

Pal. What vows? Will heaven receive a murderer's vows?

For, sure, I'm such, whilst I prevent not murder.

Why beats my heart thus? what soft voice is this

That's waken'd in my soul, and preaches mercy?

If heaven demands his life, dare I oppose?

Is it my place to judge? Ha! that dire groan

Proclaims the bloody business is about.

Zaphna! oh, Zaphna!

Re-enter ZAPHNA from behind the altar.

Zaph. Ha! where am I?

Who calls me? Where's Palmira? She's not here.

What fiend has snatch'd her from me?

Pal. Heavens! he raves!

Dost thou not know me, Zaphna? her, who lives

For thee alone? Why dost thou gaze thus on me?

Pal. Where are we?

Zaph. Hast thou then discharg'd

The horrid duty?

Zaph. What dost thou say?

Pal. Alcanor—

Zaph. Alcanor! what Alcanor?

Pal. Gracious heaven,

Look down upon him!

Let's be gone, my Zaphna;

Let's fly this place.

Zaph. Oh! whither fly? to whom?

D'y'e see these hands? who will receive these hands?

Pal. Oh! come, and let me wash them with my tears.

Zaph. Who art thou? let me lean on thee: I find

My powers returning. Is it thou, Palmira?

Where have I been? what have I done?

Pal. I know not.

Think on't no more.

Zaph. But I must think, and talk on't, too, Palmira.

I seiz'd the victim by his hoary looks—

(Thou, heaven, didst will it)—

Then, shuddering with horror, buried straight

The poniard in his breast. I had redoubled

The bloody plunge—

But that the venerable sire pour'd forth

So piteous a groan!—look'd so, Palmira—

And with a feeble voice cried—"Is it Zaphna?"

I could no more. Oh! hadst thou seen, my love,

The fell, fell dagger in his bosom—view'd

His dying face, where sat such dignity,

Cloth'd with compassion tow'rd his base assassin—

(Throws himself on the ground.)

The dire remembrance weighs me to the earth:

Here 'let me die.

Pal. Rise, my lov'd Zaphna, rise,

And let us fly to Mahomet for protection:

If we are found in these abodes of slaughter,

Tortures and death attend us: let us fly.

Zaph. (*Starting up.*) I did fly at that blasting sight, Palmira,

When, drawing out the fatal steel, he cast
Such tender looks! I fled—the fatal steel,
The voice, the tender looks, the bleeding victim,
Blessing his murderer—I could not fly:
No, they clung to me, riv'd my throbbing heart,
And set my brain on fire! What have we done?

Pal. Hark! what's that noise? I tremble for thy life!

Oh! in the name of love, by all the ties,
Those sacred ties, that bind thee mine for ever,
I do conjure thee, follow me.

Re-enter ALCANOR from behind the altar, leaning against it, with the bloody sword in his hand.

Zaph. Ha! look, Palmira! see, what object's that,

Which bears upon my tortured sight? Is't he,
Or is't his bloody manes come to haunt us?

Pal. 'Tis he himself, poor wretch! struggling with death,

And feebly crawling tow'rd's us. Let me fly,
And yield what help I can: let me support thee,
Thou much-lamented, injur'd, good, old man!

Zaph. Why don't I move? my feet are rooted here,

And all my frame is struck and wither'd up
As with a lightning's blast.

Alc. My gentle maid,

Wilt thou support me?

Weep not, my Palmira.

Pal. I could weep tears of blood, if that would serve thee.

Alc. (*Sitting down.*) Zaphna, come hither; thou hast ta'en my life,

For what offence, or what one thought towards thee,

That anger or malevolence gave birth,
Heaven knows I am unconscious. Do not look so.
I see thou dost relent.

Enter PHARON, hastily.

Pha. (*Starting back.*) Ha! 'tis too late, then!
Alc. Would I could see Heroides! Pharon, lo!

Thy martyr'd friend, by his distemper'd hand,
Is now expiring.

Pha. Dire, unnatural crime!

Oh! wretched parricide! Behold thy father!
(*Pointing to Alcanor.*)

Zaph. My father!

Pal. Father! ha!

Alc. Mysterious heaven!

Pha. Heroides, dying by the hand of Mirvan,
Who slew him lest he should betray the secret,
Saw me approach, and in the pangs of death,
Cried, "Fly, and save Alcanor; wrest the sword
From Zaphna's hands, if 'tis not yet too late,
That's destin'd for his death; then let him know
That Zaphna and Palmira are his children."

Pal. Dost hear that, Zaphna?

Zaph. 'Tis enough, my fate!
Canst thou aught more?

Alc. Oh, nature! oh, my children!

By what vile instigations wert thou driv'n,
Unhappy Zaphna, to this bloody action?

Zaph. (*Falling at his father's feet.*) Oh! I cannot speak:

Restore me, sir, restore that damned weapon,
That I, for once, may make it, as I ought,
An instrument of justice.

Pal. (*Kneels.*) Oh! my father,
Strike here; the crime was mine: 'twas I, alone,
That work'd his will to this unnatural deed!

Zaph. Strike your assassins—

Alc. I embrace my children,
And joy to see them, though my life's the forfeit.
Rise, children, rise and live! live to revenge
Your father's death. But in the name of nature,
By the remains of this paternal blood,

That's oozing from my wound, raise not your hands
'Gainst your own being. Zaphna, wouldst thou do me

A second deadlier mischief?

Self-slaughter can't atone for parricide.

Thy undetermin'd arm ha'n't quite fulfill'd

Its bigot purpose; I hope to live, to animate

Our friends 'gainst this impostor; lead them,
Zaphna,

To root out a rapacious, baneful crew,

Whose zeal is frenzy, whose religion, murder!

Zaph. Swift, swift, ye hours, and light me to revenge!

Come, thou infernal weapon,

(*Snatches the bloody sword.*)

I'll wash off thy foul stain with the heart's blood
Of that malignant sanctified assassin.

Enter MIRVAN and his Followers.

Mir. Seize Zaphna!

Help you the good Alcanor. Hapless man!

Our prophet, in a vision, learn'd to-night,

The mournful tale of thy untimely end,

And sent me straight to seize the vile assassin,

That he might wreak severest justice on him:

Mahomet comes to vindicate the laws,

Not suffer with impunity their breach.

Alc. Heav'n! what accumulated crimes are here!

Zaph. Where is the monster? bear me instant to him,

That I may blast him with my eye!—may curse him,

With my last hesitating voice!

Pal. Thou traitor!

Did not thy own death-doing tongue enjoin

This horrid deed?

Mir. Off with him, (*To the Soldiers.*)

And see him well secur'd!

Pal. Let me go with him; I will share thy fate,

Unhappy Zaphna, for I share thy guilt!

Mir. No more—you must to Mahomet:

Our great prophet

Will take you under his divine protection.

Pal. Oh, death! deliver me from such protection!

(*Aside.*)

Mir. Away! (*To the Soldiers who hold Zaphna*)

You, this way. (*To Palmira.*)

Zaph. Pardon!

Pal. Oh! pardon!

[*They are led off by degrees, looking alternately at their Father and each other.*]

Alc. Oh! insupportable!

Both from me torn, then when I wanted most

Their consolation! (*A shout.*)

Pha. Hark!

The citizens are rous'd, and all in arms

Rush on to your defence.

Alc. Pharon support me

Some moments longer. Help, conduct me tow'rd's

them;

Bare this wound to them; let that speak the cause,

The treach'rous cause, for words begin to fail me;

Then, if in death I can but serve my country,

Save my poor children from this tyrant's gripe!

What patriot, or parent, but would wish,

In so divine a cause to fall a martyr! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter MAHOMET and MIRVAN.

Mah. Wrong will be ever nurs'd and fed with blood—

So this boy bigot held his pious purpose?

Mir. Devoutly.

Mah. What a reasonless machine

Can superstition make the reasoner, man!

Alcanor lies there, on his bed of earth?

Mir. This moment he expir'd; and Mecca's youth
In vain lament their chief.
The silent and desponding crowd,
Broke out in murmurs, plaints, and last, in shouts;
And each mechanic grew a Mussulman.

Mah. But, say, is not our army at their gates?

Mir. Omar commands
Their nightly march, through unsuspected paths,
And with the morn appears.

Mah. At sight of them,
The weak remaining billows of this storm
Will lash themselves to peace—But where is
Zaphna?

Mir. Safe in a dungeon, where he dies apace,
Unconscious of his fate; for well thou know'st,
Ere at the altar's foot he slew his sire,
In his own veins he bore his guilt's reward,
A deadly draught of poison.

Mah. I would be kind, and let him die deceiv'd,
Nor know that parent blood defiles his soul.

Mir. He cannot know it: if the grave be silent,
I'm sure Heracles is—

Mah. Unhappy Zaphna!
Something like pity checks me for thy death.
My safety claim'd his life,
And all the heaven of fair Palmira's charms
Shall be my great reward.

Mir. My noble lord,
Palmira is at hand, and waits your pleasure.

Mah. At hand! how, Mirvan, couldst thou let
me talk

On themes of guilt, when that pure angel's near?

Mir. The weeping fair, led on by flat'ring
hope

Of Zaphna's life, attends your sacred will:
A silent pale dejection shrouds her cheeks,
And, like the lily in a morning show'r,
She droops her head, and locks up all her sweets.

Mah. Say Mahomet awaits, and then
Assemble all our chiefs, and on this platform
Let them attend me straight. [*Exit Mirvan.*]

Enter PALMIRA.

Pal. Where have they led me?
Methinks, each step I take, the mangled corpse
Of my dear father, by poor Zaphna mangled,
Lies in my way, and all I see is blood. (*Starts.*)
'Tis the impostor's self!—Burst, heart, in silence!
(*Aside.*)

Mah. Maid, lay aside this dread. Palmira's fate,
And that of Mecca, by my will is fix'd.
This great event, that fills thy soul with horror,
Is mystry to all, but heaven and Mahomet.

Pal. Oh! ever righteous heaven, canst thou
suffer

This sacrilegious hypocrite, this spoiler,
To steal thy terrors and blaspheme thy name,
Nor doom him instant dead? (*Aside.*)

Mah. Child of my care,
At length from galling chains I've set thee free,
And made thee triumph in a just revenge:
Think then thou'rt dear to me, and Mahomet
Regards thee with a more than father's eye;
Then know, if thou'lt deserve the mighty boon,
A higher name, a nobler fate awaits thee.

Pal. What would the tyrant?

Mah. Raise thy thoughts to glory;
And sweep this Zaphna from thy memory,
With all that's past: let that mean flame expire
Before the blaze of empire's radiant sun.
Thy grateful heart must answer to my bounties,
Follow my laws, and share in all my conquests.

Pal. What laws, what bounties, and what con-
quests, tyrant?

Fraud is thy law, the tomb thy only bounty;
Thy conquests, fatal as infected air,
Dispeopling half the globe!—See here, good hea-
ven!

The venerable prophet I rever'd,
The king I serv'd, the god that I ador'd!

Mah. (*Approaches her.*) Whence this unwonted
language, this wild frenzy?

Pal. Where is the spirit of my martyr'd father?
Where Zaphna's? where Palmira's innocence?
Blasted by thee—by thee, infernal monster!
Thou found'st us angels, and hast made us fiends!
Give, give us back our lives, our fame, our virtue!
Thou canst not, tyrant!—yet thou seek'st my love;
Seek'st with Alcanor's blood, his daughter's love!

Mah. Horror and death! the fatal secret's known!
(*Aside.*)

Re-enter MIRVAN.

Mir. Oh, Mahomet! all's lost, thy glory tar-
nish'd,

And the insatiate tomb ripe to devour us!
Heracles' parting breath divulg'd the secret.

The prison's forc'd, the city all in arms:
See, where they bear aloft their murder'd chief,
Fell Zaphna in their front, death in his looks,
Rage all his strength. Spite of the deadly draught,
He holds in life, but to make sure of vengeance.

Mah. What dost thou here, then? Instant with
our guards,

Attempt to stem their progress, till the arrival
Of Omar with the troops

Mir. I haste, my lord.

[*Exit.*]

Pal. Now, now, my hour's at hand!

Hear'st thou those shouts that rend the ambient
air?

See'st thou those glancing fires that add new horrors
To the night's gloom?—Fresh from thy murder'd
poniard,

My father's spirit leads the vengeful shades
Of all the wretches whom thy sword has butcher'd!

Mah. What terror's this that hangs upon her
accents?

I feel her virtue, though I know her weakness.
(*Aside.*)

Pal. Thou ask'st my love; go, seek it in the
grave

Of good Alcanor—Talk'st of grateful minds;
Bid Zaphna plead for thee, and I may hear thee:
Till then thou art my scorn—May'st thou, like me,
Behold thy dearest blood spilt at thy feet.

Mecca, Medina, all our Asian world,
Join, join to drive the impostor from the earth,
Blush at his chains, and shake them off in ven-
geance!

Mah. Be still, my soul, nor let a woman's rage
Ruffle thy wonted calm. (*Aside.*) Spite of thy hate,
Thou'rt lovely still, and charming even in madness.
(*A shout, and noise of fighting.*)

My fair, retire—nor let thy gentle soul
Shake with alarms; thou'rt my peculiar care:

I go to quell this trait'rous insurrection,
And will attend thee straight.

Pal. No, tyrant, no!

I'll join my brother, help to head our friends,
And urge them on. (*A shout.*)

Roll, roll your thunders, heaven, and aid the storm!
Now, hurl your lightning on the guilty head,
And plead the cause of injur'd innocence! [*Exit.*]

Enter ALI.

Mah. Whence, Ali, that surprise?

Ali. My royal chief,

The foe prevails: thy troops, led on by Mirvan,
Are all cut off, and valiant Mirvan's self,
By Zaphna slain, lies wel'ring in his blood:
The guard, that to our arms should open the gates,
Struck with the common phrenzy, vow thy ruin;
And death and vengeance is the gen'ral cry.

Mah. Can Ali fear? Then, Mahomet be thyself?

Ali. See, thy few friends, whom wild despair
bath arm'd,

But arm'd in vain, are come to die beside thee.

Mah. Ye heartless traitors! Mahomet alone
Shall be his own defender, and your guard
Against the crowds of Mecca—Follow me!

Re-enter PALMIRA, with ZAPHNA, PHARON, Citizens, and the body of ALCANOR, on a bier.

Ha!

Zaph. See, my friends, where the impostor
stands,
With head erect, as if he knew not guilt;
As if no tongue spake from Alcanor's wound,
Nor call'd for vengeance on him!

Mah. Impious man!
Is't not enough to have spilt thy parent's blood,
But with atrocious and blaspheming lips,
Dar'st thou arraign the substitute of heaven?

Zaph. The substitute of heaven! so is the sword,
The pestilence, the famine—such art thou!
Such are the blessings heaven has sent to man,
By thee its delegate!

How couldst thou damn us thus?

Mah. Babblers, avaunt!

Zaph. Well thou upbraid'st me, for to parley
with thee,
Half brands me coward. Oh!—revenge me, friends,
Revenge Alcanor's massacre! revenge
Palmira's wrongs, and crush the rancorous monster!

Mah. Hear me, ye slaves! born to obey my
will—

Pal. Ah! hear him not—fraud dwells upon his
tongue!

Zaph. Have at thee, fiend!—Ha! heaven!
(Advances, reels, and reclines on his sword.)
What cloud is this

That thwarts upon my sight? My head grows dizzy,
My joints unloose—sure, 'tis the stroke of fate!

Mah. The poison works: then triumph, Mahomet!
(Aside.)

Zaph. Off, off, base lethargy!

Pal. Brother, dismay'd!

Hast thou no power but in a guilty cause,
And only strength to be a parricide?

Zaph. Spare that reproach. Come on—It will
not be.

(Hangs down his sword, and reclines on Pharon.)
Some cruel power unnerves my willing arm,
Blasts my resolves, and weighs me down to earth.

Mah. Such be the fate of all who brave our law!
Nature and death have heard my voice, and now
Let heaven be judge 'twixt Zaphna and myself,
And instant blast the guilty of the two.

Pal. Brother! Oh, Zaphna!

Zaph. Zaphna, now no more.

(Sinks down by Alcanor's body, and leans on the bier; Pharon kneels down with him, and supports him.)

Down, down, good Pharon! Thou, poor injur'd
corse,

May I embrace thee? Won't thy pallid wound
Purple anew at the unnatural touch,
And ooze fresh calls for vengeance?

Pal. Oh! my brother!

Zaph. In vain's the guiltless meaning of my
heart;

High heaven detests th' involuntary crime,
And dooms for parricide. Then tremble, tyrant!
If the Supreme can punish error thus,

What new-invented tortures must await
Thy soul, grown leprous with such foul offences!
But soft—now fate and nature are at strife—
Sister, farewell! with transport should I quit
This toilsome, perilous, delusive stage,
But that I leave thee on't—leave thee, Palmira,
Expos'd to what is worse than fear can image—

That tyrant's mercy. Look on her, heaven!
Guide her, and—Oh!—

Pal. Think not, ye men of Mecca,
This death inflicted by the hand of heaven;
'Tis he—that viper!

Mah. Know, ye faithless wretches!

'Tis mine to deal the bolts of angry heaven.
Behold them there; and let the wretch who doubts,
Tremble at Zaphna's fate, and know that Mahomet
Can read his thoughts, and doom him with a look.
Go then, and thank your pontiff and your prince,
For each day's sun he grants you to behold.
Hence, to your temples, and appease my rage!

(The people go off.)
Pal. Ah! stay: my brother's murder'd by this
tyrant!

Mah. 'Tis done. Thus ever be our law receiv'd!
(Aside.)

Now, fair Palmira—

Pal. Monster! is it thus
Thou mak'st thyself a god, by added crimes,
And murders, justify'd by sacrilege?

Mah. Think, exquisite Palmira, for thy sake—

Pal. Thou'st been the murderer of all my race.
See where Alcanor, see where Zaphna lies!
Do they not call for me, too, at thy hands?
Oh! that they did! But I can read thy thoughts;
Palmira sav'd for something worse than death;
This to prevent—Zaphna, I follow thee.

(Stabs herself with Zaphna's sword.)

Mah. What hast thou done?

Pal. A deed of glory, tyrant!
Thou'st left no object worth Palmira's eye,
And when I shut out light, I shut out thee. *(Dies.)*

Mah. Farewell, dear victim of my boundless
passion!
Oh! justice, justice!

In vain are glory, worship, and dominion!
Al canq'r as I am, I am a slave,
And, by the world ador'd, dwell with the damn'd!
My crimes have planted scorpions in my breast:
Here, here I feel them! 'Tis in vain to brave
The host of terrors that invade my soul—
I might deceive the world, myself I cannot.

Al. Be calm awhile, my lord; think what you
are.

Mah. Ha! what am I? *(Turns to the bodies.)*
Ye breathless family!

Let your loud-crying wounds say what I am!
Oh! snatch me from that sight. quick, quick, trans-
port me

To nature's loneliest mansion, where the sun
Ne'er enter'd: where the sound of human tread
Was never heard. But wherefore? still, I there,
There still shall find myself. Ay, that's the hell!
I'll none on't. *(Draws his sword.)*

Al. Heavens! help, hold him!
(Al and others disarm him.)

Mah. Paltry dastards!
You fled the foe, but can disarm your master.
Angel of death, whose power I've long proclaim'd,
Now aid me, if thou canst now, if thou canst
Draw the kind curtain of eternal night,
And shroud me from the horrors that beset me.

Pha. Oh! what a curse's life when self-con-
viction

Flings our offences hourly in our face,
And turns existence to suffer to itself!
Here let the mad enthusiast turn his eyes,
And see, from bigotry, what horrors rise.
Here, in the blackest colours, let him read,
That zeal, by craft misled, may set a deed,
By which both innocence and virtue bleed.

(Exeunt.)

THE CARMELITE;

TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND.



ACT V.—SCENE I.

CHARACTERS.

SAINT VALORI
LORD HILDEBRAND
LORD DE COURCI

MONTGOMERY
GYFFORD
FITZ-ALLAN

RAYMOND
MATILDA
ATTENDANTS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A rocky Shore, with a view of the sea, at break of day.*

Enter FITZ-ALLAN and RAYMOND, meeting.

Raym. Well met, Fitz-Allan; what's the time of day?

Fitz-A. Broad morning by the hour.

Raym. Sleeps the sun yet?

Or has the stormy south, that howls so loud,
Blown out his untrimm'd lamp, and left us here
To be witch-ridden by this hag of night,
Out of time's natural course?

Fitz-A. Methinks, the winds,
Which peal'd like thunder thro' Glendarlock's
towers,

Have lower'd their note a pitch; the flecker'd
Lifting their misty curtain in the east,
Unmask the weeping day.

Enter MONTGOMERY, hastily.

Mont. Oh! are you men?

Have you less mercy than the winds and waves,
That you stand here aloof?

Fitz-A. Why, what has chanc'd?

Mont. A noble vessel breaks upon the rocks,
That jut from old Dunnose's rugged base;
And, as the floating fragments drive ashore,
Our plund'ring islanders (convert their hearts,
Holy St. Michael!) dash the drowning wretches
From the poor wreck they cling to, and engulf
them

Quick in the boiling waves: by heav'n that made
I could forswear my nature, when I see
Man so degenerate!

Raym. Lo! we are ready:
Lead to the beach.

Mont. Alas! 'tis now too late;

It's not left it but that all was lost:

The element had mercy, man had none.

Two I have sav'd; the one a Carmelite,
Noble the other in his mien and habit;
I left them in the outskirts of the grove;
Let us go forth, my friends, and bring them in:
You to that quarter, I to this. Away. *[Exit.*

Enter LORD HILDEBRAND and SAINT VALORI.

Saint V. Bear up, Lord Hildebrand; there's hope
in view.

Seest thou yon turrets, that o'er top the wood?
There we may shelter from the storm, and men
More merciless than rocks and winds, that wreck'd
Our strong-ribb'd galley in the foaming surge.

Lord H. I see the towers you point at, but I fear
My limbs will fail their burden ere we reach them.
Let me lie down beneath these oaks, and die.

Saint V. If thus you shake with the soul's ague,
fear,

Back to the sea, and seek the death you fled from;
Make not a coward's grave on English ground;
Your life is stak'd, your gauntlet is exchang'd,
Each drop of blood about you is in pledge
To meet the champion of Saint Valori,
A lady's champion, in King Henry's lists:
There fight, or if you needs must die, die there;
Fall as a Norman knight should fall, in arms.

Lord H. Father, your words accord not with
your weeds.

Saint V. Our ancestors were holy men, and they
Orduin'd the combat, as the test of truth;
Let them who made the law defend the law,
Our part is to obey it. Hark! who comes?
The islanders will be upon us. Stand!

Re-enter FITZ-ALLAN and RAYMOND.

Fitz-A. What, ho! Montgomeri! the men are
found.

Saint V. Inhuman Englishmen! Will you destroy
Your brethren? We are Normans.

Re-enter MONTGOMERI.

Mont. Ye are men,

Let that suffice; we are no savages.

Saint V. 'Tis the brave youth who sav'd us.

Mont. Heav'n hath sav'd you, [death:
To heav'n give thanks, oh! men redeem'd from
All else have perish'd. 'Tis a barbarous coast.

Saint V. How is your island nam'd?

Mont. The Isle of Wight. [fatal!

Saint V. Alas! that isle so fair should prove so
And you our benefactor, by what name
Shall we record you in our prayers?

Mont. I am call'd

Montgomeri.

Saint V. 'Twill be our grateful office,
Generous Montgomeri, to make suit to heaven
To bless, reward, and from distress like ours
Protect you ever.

Mont. Now declare thyself, [dumb,
And this thy mournful friend, whom grief makes
Say who he is.

Lord H. A wretch without a name.

Saint V. A gentleman of Normandy he is,
One who has seen good days. 'Tis now no time
To tell you further: he has wounds about him,
And bruises dealt him on the craggy beach,
That cry for charity. Whose is that castle?

Mont. A lady's, whom we serve, of Norman
birth. [Normans;

Saint V. Then lead us to her gates, for we are
Poor, helpless men, fainting with want of food
And over-watching: tedious nights and days
We struggled with the storm: the greedy deep
Has swallow'd up our ship, our friends, our all,
And left us to your mercy. Sure, your lady,
Who owns so fair a mansion, owns withal
A heart to give us welcome. You are silent.

Fitz-A. To save you, and supply your pressing
wants

With food and raiment, and what else you need,
We promise, nothing doubting: more than this
Stands not within our privilege: no stranger
Enters her castle.

Saint V. Wherefore this exclusion?
What can she fear from us?

Fitz-A. Ask not a reason;

We question not her orders, but obey them.

Saint V. Then lay us down before her castle-
gates,

And let us die: inhospitable gates!
Your roofs shall echo with our famish'd shrieks.
A Norman she! impossible: our wolves
Have hearts more pitiful.

Mont. Your saints in bliss,
Your calendar of martyrs does not own
A soul more pure, a virtue more sublime:
Her very name will strike defamers dumb.

Saint V. Speak it.

Mont. Saint Valori.

Saint V. Uphold me, heaven!
The ways of Providence are full of wonder,
And all its works are mercy. How now, sir!
Will you betray yourself? what shakes you thus?

Lord H. I sickened at the heart: let me go hence,
And make myself a grave.

Saint V. Be patient: stay!

And has your lady here consum'd her youth
In pensive solitude? Twenty long years,
And still a widow?

Mont. Still a mournful widow. [yet

Saint V. Has she such sorrows of her own, and
No heart to pity ours? It cannot be:
I'll not believe but she will take us in,
And comfort her poor countrymen.

Mont. Forbid it, heav'n,
That misery thus should plead, and no friend found
To speak in its behalf! I'll move her for you.

Saint V. The mother of our Lord reward you
'Twill be a Christian deed. [for it!

Fitz-A. Montgomeri, turn:

Have you your senses? the attempt is madness.

Raym. Where is the man, native or foreigner,
(Inmates excepted,) ever pass'd her doors?
Who dares to ask it?

Mont. I. Montgomeri.

Raym. So dare not I.

Fitz-A. Nor I: success attend you!
But share the attempt I dare not; so, farewell!

Mont. Farewell to both! Strangers, be not dis-
may'd,

I'll soon return; the place will be your safeguard.
[Exit.

Saint V. Lord Hildebrand, stand not aghast:
you see

The youth is confident: look up and live!

Lord H. By my soul's penitence, I'd rather die
Unpitied, starv'd, and to her castle dogs
Bequeath my untomb'd carcass, than receive
Life from her hands; the widow of Saint Valori!
That brave, heroic champion of the cross,
Who, from the holy wars returning home,
Within the rugged Pyrenean pass—

Saint V. No more of that: I have your full con-
fession;

You slew Saint Valori, and now his widow
Provokes you by her champion to defend
The rights you seiz'd, the title you inherit,
Add hold by bloody charter. What's your fear?
Saint Valori's dead; he cannot rise again,
And heard you in the lists.

Lord H. Oh! that he could;

So I were not a murderer.

Saint V. Grant you slew him, [wound
Twenty long years have stanch'd the bleeding
Of him you slew, and laid his angry ghost.
Have you not rear'd his stately tomb, endow'd
The abbey of Saint Valori, and purchas'd
Perpetual masses to reclaim his soul
From purgatory's bondage? Have you faith
In absolution's power, and do you doubt
If yet atonement's made?

Lord H. I do perceive

The hand of heav'n hangs o'er me and my house:
Why am I childless else? seven sons swept off
To their untimely graves; their wretched mother
By her own hand in raging frenzy died;
And last behold me here, forlorn, abandon'd,
At life's last hour, before her surly gate,
Deaf to my hungry cries: and shall we rank
Such judgments in the casual course of things?
To me 'tis palpable that heav'n's justice
Puts nature by, and to the swelling sum
Of my uncancell'd crimes adds all the lives
Of them who sunk this morning.

Saint V. What know'st thou,
Blind or obdurate man? Shall we despond,
On whom the light of this deliverance shines?
No, let us boldly follow: there's a voice
Angurs within me wondrous things, and new,
Now on the moment's point: for, of a certain,
I know this lady shall set wide her gates
To give us joyful welcome: sable weeds
Shall turn to bridal robes, and joy shall ring
Thro' all her festive mansion, where of late
Deep groans and doleful lamentations howl'd.
Therefore no more: from my prophetic lips
Receive heaven's mandate—and behold 'tis here!

Enter MONTGOMERI.

Mont. Health to your hopes, that were but now
so sick!

Ye sons of sadness, cast off your despair;
Heav'n has vouchsaf'd deliverance, and sends
Its angel messenger in person to you.

Saint V. Then let me kneel, and hail the heav'nly
vision! (Kneels.)

Enter MATILDA.

Him, to Him alone, who, by the hand,

Leads his unseeing creatures thro' the vale
Of sorrow, to the day-spring of their hope,
Be praise and adoration! A poor monk, (*Rising.*)
Who has trod many a weary league, as far
As there was Christian ground to carry him,
Asks for himself, and for this mournful man,
Newly escap'd from shipwreck, food and rest,
Warmth, and the shelter of your peaceful roof.

Mat. Are ye of Normandy?

Saint V. We are of Normandy:

But were we not your countrymen, distress
Like ours would make us so. Two of your servants
Spoke harshly, and had thrust us from your gates,
But for this charitable youth.

Mat. Alas!

I am a helpless solitary woman,
A widow, who have lost—Oh, God! oh, God!
'Twill turn my brain to speak of what I've lost:
It is amongst the lightest of my griefs
That I have lost myself.

Saint V. Thyself?

Mat. My senses:

At best they are but half my own, sometimes
I am bereft of all. Therefore, I lead
On this lone coast a melancholy life,
And shut my gate, but not my charity,
Against the stranger.

Saint V. Oh! support me, heav'n!
'Tis she, 'tis she! that woe-tun'd voice is hers;
Those eyes, that cast their pale and waning fires
With such a melting languor thro' my soul,
Those eyes are her's and sorrow's. Heart, be still!
She speaks again. (*Aside.*)

Mat. You shall have food and clothing;
I'll bring you medicines for your bruised wounds.
What else you need, declare.

Saint V. If I speak now,
She cannot hear it, it will turn her brain. [men—
What shall I say? (*Aside.*)—We are your country-
Oh! my full heart! Oh! anguish to dissemble!

Mat. Nay, if you weep—

Saint V. Let us but touch your altar:
We are the sole sad relics of the wreck.
Let us but kneel and offer up one prayer
For our soul's peace, then turn us forth to die.

Mat. Mercy forbid it! Oh! approach and enter.
If you can weep, we will converse whole days,
And speak no other language; we will sit,
Like fountain statues, face to face oppos'd,
And each to other tell our griefs in tears,
Yet neither utter word. Pray you, pang on;
I had not been thus strict, but that I hear
Lord Hildebrand is on the seas: I hope
You are not of his friends.

Lord H. Death to my heart!
Oh! father Carmelite, I must have leave—
Saint V. On your salvation, peace!

Mat. What would he say? [away;

Saint V. His brain begins to turn: take him
I pray you, lead him hence.

[*Montgomeri leads off Hildebrand.*

Mat. Alas! I pity him.
Why dost thou stay behind? Whence that emotion?
What wouldst thou more?

Saint V. I would invoke a blessing,
But that each sainted spirit in the skies
Will be thy better advocate.

Mat. Remember,
When you converse with heav'n, there is a wretch
Who will be glad of any good man's prayers.
Farewell.

Saint V. Oh! tell me, have you, then, endur'd
Twenty long years of mournful widowhood?

Mat. They say 'tis twenty years ago he died:
I cannot speak of time; it may be so;
Yet I should think 'twas yesterday.

Saint V. I saw you—

Mat. You saw me! When?

Saint V. When you did wed your lord.

The paragon of all this world you was.
Grief has gone o'er you like a wintry cloud.
You've heard this voice before.

Mat. I think I have:

It gives a painful sense of former days:
I've heard such voices in my dreams; sometimes
Convers'd with them all night; but then, they told
me

My senses wander'd. Pray you, do not harm me:
Leave me, good monk; indeed I know you not.

Saint V. I wore no monkish cowl in that gay hour
When you wore bridal white. On Pagan ground,
Beneath the banner of the Christian cross,
Faithful I fought; I was God's soldier, then,
Tho' now his peaceful servant.

Mat. You have fought

Under the Christian cross? You shake my brain.

Saint V. Peace to your thoughts! I will no far-
ther move you:

Shall I not lead you hence?

Mat. Stand off; stand off!

The murderer of Saint Valori is abroad;
The bloody Hildebrand is on the seas.
Rise, rise, ye waves! blow from all points, ye winds,
And whelm th' accursed plank that wafts him over
In fathomless perdition! Let him sink,
He and his hateful crew! let none escape,
Not one; or if one, let him only breathe
To tell his tale, and die! Away, begone!
You've made me mad.

Saint V. I was Saint Valori's friend:
He never yet bled with the battle's wound,
But I shed drop for drop: when o'er the sands
Of sultry Palestine with panting heart
He march'd, my panting heart with his kept time,
And number'd throb for throb.

Mat. Where are my people?

What, ho! Montgomeri! Lead, lead me hence.

Re-enter MONTGOMERI, hastily, with GYFFORD.
Give me thine arm; support me. Oh! 'tis well.

To horse, to horse! I have a champion now,
Whose hand, heart, soul, are mine, and mine are his;
One who has valour to assert my cause,
And worth to wear the honours he defends.

Mont. What hast thou done, old man?

Gyf. Stay not to question;

Look to the lady: leave the monk with me.

Mat. Come, let us hence; I do not live without
thee. [*Exit with Mont.*

Saint V. Amazement! Speak, what kindred, what
affection,

What passion binds her to that youth? Resolve me,
Who and what is he?

Gyf. You are curious, father.

Who he may be I know not; what he was
I well remember.

Saint V. What was he?

Gyf. Her page;

A menial thing, no better than myself.

Saint V. Heavens! can it be? Will she so far
descend

From her great name, to wanton with her page?
Saw you the look she gave him?

Gyf. I did see it. [*them.*

Saint V. It seem'd as tho' his eyes had magic in
That charm'd away her madness. Ha! you sigh:
What means that pensive movement of your head?
Answer.

Gyf. Good father, question me no more.

Fortune can level all things in this world,
Pull down the mighty and exalt the mean:

But you and I, methinks, have outlived wonders.

Now to the castle: shut both ears and eyes:

Hear without noting; see, but not observe. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in Matilda's castle.

Enter SAINT VALORI and GYFFORD.

Gyf. With awful wonder I survey and hear you,
Whilst thro' the veil of that disguiseful habit,

Thro' all the changes time and toil have wrought
In that once noble visage, I scarce trace
The lineaments of my most honour'd lord.

Saint V. Awake from this surprise, and hear me,
Gyfford.

I am no spectre, but thy living master:
Wounded and breathless, on the ground I lay
Welt'ring in blood: th' assassins fled and left me;
There I had soon expir'd, but that a company
Of merchants, journeying from Venice, found me,
And charitably stanch'd my bleeding wounds.
To their own homes they bore me: heal'd, restor'd,
In a Venetian galley I embark'd,
And sail'd for Gexoa; but ere we reach'd
Our destin'd port, a Saracen assail'd
And master'd our weak crew. To tell the tale
Of my captivity, escape, return,
Would ask more leisure, and a mind at ease.

Gyf. But why does brave Saint Valori appear
A bearded Carmelite?

Saint V. This holy habit,
Thro' a long course of dangerous pilgrimage,
Has been my saving passport: thus attir'd,
I reach'd my native castle, found it lorded
By the usurper Hildebrand; with zeal
I burn'd to call my faithful people round me,
And throw off my disguise; this I had done,
But straight arriv'd a herald from King Henry
To warn him to the lists against the champion
Of my supposed widow: the pale coward
Shrunk, yet obey'd the summons. The thought
struck me

To join his train, and in my sovereign's presence,
At the last trumpet's signal, to come forth
Before the king, the lords, and armed knights,
And strike confusion to the traitor's soul.
The rest needs no relation.

Gyf. 'Tis resolv'd
To-morrow for Southampton we depart;
There Henry keeps his court.

Saint V. Why, then, to-morrow
Truth and the morning-sun shall rise together,
And this black night of doubt shall be dispell'd:
Till, then, lock fast my secret in thy heart,
And know me for none other than I seem.
Lo! where they come. Yet, yet I will be patient;
Time will bring all things forth. Gyfford, withdraw.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter MATILDA and MONTGOMERY.

Mat. I think he said he was my husband's friend;
If so, I've been too harsh: reason forsook me,
For he did speak of things that rent my heart:
But let that pass. Dost thou observe, Montgomery?

Mont. With fix'd attention and devoted heart
I hear, and note your pleasure.

Mat. I am calm,
Then seat I am, and not about to speak,
Sometimes, when my thoughts obey no order:
Therefore, I pray thee mark: thou must have noted
With what a tenderness I've train'd thee up
From helpless infancy to blooming manhood:
Hast thou not noted this?

Mont. I were most vile
Did I forget it.

Mat. I am sure thou dost not;
For from the moment of thy birth till now
I've nurs'd thy opening virtues, mark'd their growth,
And gloried in the fruit of my adoption:
I've register'd each movement of thy soul,
And find it tun'd to honour's loftiest pitch,
To soft affection modell'd, and to love,
The harmony of nature: my best hopes
Are satisfied, and thou art all I pray'd for.

Mont. What thou hast made me, that I truly am,
And will be ever: hands, head, heart, are your's.

Mat. The day is coming on, the wish'd-for day
(After a night of twice ten tedious years)
At length is coming on: justice is granted:
Go to Henry's court; Lord Hildebrand

Is summon'd to the lists: and where's the man
To avenge the widow's cause?

Mont. Where is the man!

And can you want a champion? Have I liv'd
The creature of your care, the orphan child
Of your adopting charity, the thing
Your plastic bounty fashion'd from the dust
Of abject misery; and does my heart
Utter one drop of blood that is not your's?
One artery that does not beat for you?

Mat. Know, then, I have a champion, noble,
brave,

Heir of the great Saint Valori, my son. [liv'd,

Mont. What do I hear? thy son! Where has he
That I have never seen him? never known
There was a living hero of the name?

Oh! tell me where he is, that I may fly
To do him faithful service, on my knee
Brace on his glittering armour, bear his shield,
The glorious badge of his nobility,
And shout with triumph, when his conqu'ring sword
Cleaves the assassin's crest. Oh! send me hence,
To hail his victory, or share his fall.

Mat. Thou art my son.

Mont. Merciful God! thy son!

Mat. Thou art my son; for thee alone I've liv'd,
For thee I have surviv'd a murder'd husband;
For thee—but it would break thy filial heart
To hear what I have suffer'd; madness seiz'd me,
And many a time, (sweet Jesus intercede,
For I was not myself!) yes, many a time
In my soul's anguish, with my desperate hand
Rais'd for the stroke of death, a thought, a glance
Of thee, my child, has smote my shatter'd brain,
And stopp'd th' impending blow.

Mont. Oh! spare thyself,
Spare me the dread description.

Mat. Thou hast been

Thy mother's guardian angel: furious once,
In the mind's fever, to Glendarlock's roof
Madd'ning I rush'd; there, from the giddy edge
Of the projecting battlements, below,
Measuring the fearful leap, I cast my eye:
Thy cherub form arrested it; my child
Upon the pavement underneath my feet
Sported with infant playfulness; my blood
Drove back upon my heart; suspended, pois'd,
High hung in air, with outstretch'd arms I stood,
Pondering the dreadful deed; thy fate prevail'd,
Nature flew up, and push'd me from the brink:
I shrunk, recoil'd, and started into reason. [ror.

Mont. Oh! terrible to thought. Oh! pictur'd hor-
It pierces to my brain; there's madness in it.

Mat. Yea, sorrow had o'erturn'd thy mother's
brain:

I have been mad, my son; and oftentimes
I find, alas! all is not yet compos'd,
Sound, and at peace: it takes a world of time
To heal the wounds of reason; even now,
When I would fain relate my life's sad story,
I cannot range my scatter'd thoughts into order
To tell it as I should. I pray thee, pardon me;
I'll do my best to recollect myself,
If thou'lt be patient.

Mont. Patient! Oh! thou sufferer!

Oh! thou maternal softness! hear thy son,
Thus kneeling, bathing with his tears thy feet,
Swear to cast off each fond, alluring thought,
The world, its honours, pleasures, and ambition;
Here in this solitude to live with thee,
To thee alone devoted.

Mat. No, my son:

Tho' in this solitude I have conceal'd thee,
Ev'n from thyself conceal'd thee, to evade
A fell usurper's search, and stemm'd the tide
Of nature, gushing to a mother's heart;
Still I have done it in the sacred hope
Of some auspicious hour, when I might shew thee
Bright as thy father's fame.

Mont. I own the cause,
And know how watchfully this hungry vulture
Has hover'd o'er thee on his felon wings.
Now I can solve this solitude around us,
Why thou hast built thineerie in this crag,
And with a mother's care conceal'd thy young.

Mat. Another day, and then—meanwhile be secret;

Discovery now would but disturb the house
From its sobriety, and mar the time
Of awful preparation. Pass to-morrow!
(Oh! all ye saints and angels, make it happy!)
Then, if thou com'st at a living conqueror home,
This roof, that still has echoed to my groans,
Shall ring with triumphs to Saint Valori's name:
But if—

Mont. Avert the sad, ill-omen'd word!
Thou shalt not name it: my great father's spirit
Swells in my bosom. When my falchion gleams,
When the red cross darts terror from my shield,
The coward's heart shall quail, and heaven's own
arm,

Ere mine can strike, shall lay the murderer low.

Mat. Thy father stirs within thee: hark! methinks

I hear the shrieks of his unburied ghost, [me]
Screaming for vengeance. Oh! support, defend
See where he gleams, he bursts upon my sight!
'Tis he, 'tis he! I clasp him to my heart;
My hero! my Saint Valori! my husband!

(Embraces him.)

Re-enter GYFFORD, unseen.

Gyf. Husband! oh, fatal word! undone for ever!

Mat. I will array thee in a sacred suit,
The very armour my Saint Valori wore,
When in the single combat he unhors'd
And slew the Lord Fitz-Osborn. On that helm
High plum'd victory again shall stand,
And clap her wings exulting; from that shield
Vengeance with gorgon terrors shall look forth,
Awfully frowning. Ha! what man art thou?

(Discovering Gyfford.)

Gyfford, what wouldst thou? wherefore this intrusion?

Gyf. A noble messenger from Henry's court
Is landed on the isle.

Mat. From the king, say'st thou?

Gyf. A runner of his train, whose utmost speed
Scarce distant'd him an hour, is now arriv'd,
And gives this warning.

Mat. Did you not inquire
His master's name and title?

Gyf. Lord De Courci.

Mat. A generous and right noble lord he is:
Our Normandy boasts not a worthier baron,
Nor one affianc'd to our house more kindly:
Prepare to give him welcome. Follow me.

[Exit with Montgomery.]

Gyf. Yes, to destruction; for that way thou
lead'st.

Husband! her husband! her Saint Valori!
It cannot be. Without the church's rite,
Wed him she could not; to conceal those rites,
And wed by stealth, is here impossible.
What must I think? That he is yet her husband
In meditation only, not in form.
Embracing, too! Oh! mortal stab to honour!
Oh! shame, shame, shame! that I should live to
see it.

Enter SAINT VALORI, hastily.

Saint V. What hast thou seen? My mind is on
the rack;

Thou'st been in conference with thy lady; speak!
If thou hast aught discover'd that affects
My honour, tell it.

Gyf. Hard task you enjoin;
Would rather I were in my grave, than living
To utter what I've seen.

Saint V. Nay, no evasion.

Gyf. For the world's worth I would not with
my knowledge
Add or diminish of the truth one tittle. [truth
Saint V. Gyfford, as thou shalt render up the
To the great Judge of hearts, say what thou know'st
Of my unhappy wife; nor more nor less,
Give me the proof unvarnish'd.

Gyf. I surpris'd

Her and Montgomery heart to heart embracing—
Saint V. Death! Heart to heart embracing!
Woman, woman! [lay;

Gyf. Fond and entranc'd within his arms she
Then with uplifted, rapturous eyes exclaim'd,
"My hero! my saint Valori! my husband!"

Saint V. Husband! reflect. Art sure she call'd
him husband?

Gyf. If there be faith in man, I've spoke the
truth. [past;

Saint V. Why, then, the truth is out, and all is
I have no more to ask.

Gyf. Hear me with favour;
I'll not abuse the license of old age
And faithful service with too many words.

Saint V. What canst thou tell me? I have one
within

That is my monitor: not unprepar'd
I meet this fatal stroke, nor with revilings
Or impious curses (be my witness, Gyfford!)
Do I profane heav'n's ear, tho' hard and painful
This bitter visitation of its wrath.

Gyf. Tho' to the sure conviction of my senses
I saw and heard what I have now reported,
Yet, circumstances weigh'd, I must believe
As yet, she is not wedded.

Saint V. Ha! not wedded?
Perish the man who dares to breathe a doubt
Of her unspotted chastity. Not wedded!
Yet heart to heart embracing! dreadful thought!
Death in his diest shape approach me rather
Than that dishonest thought!

Gyf. Would I had died
Ere I had seen this day!

Saint V. Wretch that I am,
Why was I snatch'd from slaughter? why deliver'd
From barbarous infidels? why, when o'erwhelm'd
And sinking in th' oblivious deep, preserv'd,
Wash'd like a floating fragment to the shore,
Sav'd, nourish'd, ransom'd by the very hand
That out of my heart asunder; set in view
Of all my soul held dear; and now, ev'n now,
As I reach forth my hand to seize the goal,
The resting-place and haven of my hope,
Dash'd in a moment back, and lost for ever?

Gyf. Such is the will of heaven! For me, thus
old,

And blighted with misfortune, I've no strength,
No root to bear against this second storm;
There, where I fall, I'll make myself a grave.

Saint V. No more of this: you've heard my last
complaint;

For I must soon put off these monkish weeds,
And what a consecrated knight should do,
Fitting the cross he wears, that must be done.
How stands your preparation for to-morrow?
Will she depart?

Gyf. I think she will; for now
The Lord De Courci, from King Henry sent,
Bears courtly salutation to your lady,
With formal summons to her challenger.

Saint V. If it be that De Courci who was once
My youth's companion, and my bosom friend,
A more accomplish'd knight ne'er carried arms:
His coming is most timely. Tell me, Gyfford,
Rememberest thou the armour which I wore
When in the lists I combatted Fitz-Osborn?
I gave it to my wife.

Gyf. I well remember.

Saint V. And hath she kept it, think'st thou?
Gyf. She hath kept it.

Saint V. 'Tis well; for that's the suit, the very
Which I must wear to-morrow. [suit,

Gyg. Ah! my lord,
She hath bestow'd that armour on her champion;
And young Montgomeri, with to-morrow's dawn,
Starts, like another Phœton, array'd
In substituted splendour: on his arm
He bears the shield of great Saint Valori,
A golden branch of palm, with this device,
"Another, and the same!" 'Twill be a pagan's
Glittering as vanity and love can make it. [take?

Saint V. Mournful as death. My armour will she
My shield, my banners, to array her champion?
Let them beware how they divide the spoil
Before the lion's kill'd. Oh! fall of virtue.
Oh! all ye matron powers of modesty;
How time's revolving wheel wears down the edge
Of sharp affliction! Widows' sable weeds
Soon turn to grey; drop a few tears upon them,
And dusky grey is blanch'd to bridal white;
Then comes the sun, shines thro' the drizzling shower.
And the gay rainbow glows in all its colours. [Exeunt.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in the Castle.

Enter LORD HILDEBRAND and SAINT VALORI.

Lord H. Ah! father Carmelite, where hast thou
been?

Was it well done to leave thy wretched friend
To be devour'd by heart-consuming anguish?

Saint V. I left you to repose.

Lord H. I know it not:

Sleep is my horror; then the furies rise;
Then pale Saint Valori appears before me:
Trembling I wake, cold damp bedew my limbs,
And my couch floats with tears. Is this repose?

Saint V. No; yet it moves my wonder why your
conscience,

Mate for so many years, should on the sudden
Break into voice, and cry so loud against you.
I found you lull'd in a luxurious calm,
Feasting upon the spoils of him you stabb'd;
Your castle flow'd with revelry and wine,
And you the loudest of the sons of riot:
Where was your conscience then?

Lord H. With you it came;
You are the father of my soul's repentance:
Your fascinating eye pervades my breast;
Conscious, abash'd, uncover'd to the heart,
I stand before you; to your ear confide
Things unreveal'd to man. Now, as I see you,
Tho' in religion's peaceful garment cloth'd,
Saint Valori, methinks, appears before me,
Dreadful in arms, and braves me to the lists.

Saint V. Take food and rest, recruit your body's
And you'll forget these fears. [strength,

Lord H. I'll die with famine
Before I'll eat the charitable bread
Of her I made a widow; and for sleep,
I tell thee once again, sleep is my horror.
Methought but now by shipwreck I was plung'd
Into the foaming ocean; on the shore
Your figure stood with beak'ning hand outstretch'd
To snatch me from the waves; cheer'd with the
sight,

Thro' the white surf I struggled; with strong arm
You rais'd me from the gulf; joyful I ran
T' embrace my kind preserver, when at once
Off fell your habit, bright in arms you stood,
And with a voice of thunder cried aloud,
"Villain, avaunt! I am Saint Valori!"
Then push'd me from the cliff: down, down I fell,
Fathoms on fathoms deep, and sunk for ever.

Saint V. This was your dream.

Lord H. Now bear my waking terrors.
Awak'd by this dream I started, to the wall
Frenzied I rush'd, to dash my desperate brains:
Met with the force, a secret door flew open,
Where full in view a lighted altar blaz'd
With lofty tapers bright; around it hung

The funeral trophies of Saint Valori;
Red gleam'd the banner of the bloody cross,
And on a tablet underneath was written,
"Pray for the peace of his departed soul!"
Upon my knees I dropp'd, and would have pray'd,
When soon, behold, the lady widow enter'd,
Led by the generous youth who sav'd our lives:
I rose, made low obeisance, and retir'd.

Saint V. You left them there. Did all this pass
in silence?

Lord H. All; not a word was spoken.

Saint V. Did you note

Her look, her action? How did she dismiss you?
Abruptly, eagerly?

Lord H. With matron grace,
Her hand thus gently waving, she dismiss'd me;
The other hand most lovingly was lock'd
In his on whom she lean'd.

Saint V. No more of this.

Hark! you are summon'd: rouse from this despair;
Shake off your lethargy. [Trumpets.]

Lord H. What trumpet's that?

Saint V. To you, or to your challenger, the last;
Death sounds the knell, and justice seals the doom.

Lord H. My soul sinks down abash'd: I cannot
fight; [murder.

What would you more? I have confess'd the
Saint V. You have confess'd you know not what:
retire!

Go to your chamber; I will quickly follow.

And bring you comfort. [Exeunt.

Enter MATILDA and her Domestics, LORD DE
COURCI and his train.

Mat. My noble lord, thrice welcome! you are
come [sence

To glad the mourner's heart, and with your pre-
Make her poor cottage rich.

Lord De C. Most noble lady,
Henry of Normandy, the kingly heir
Of England's mighty conqueror, of his grace
And princely courtesy, by me his servant,
As a most loving father, kindly greets you;
Which salutation past, I am to move you
Upon the matter of your suit afresh,
Its weight and circumstance; how many years
It hath been let to sleep; what forfeiture
And high default you stand in, should it fail:
Conjuring you, as fits a Christian king,
By the lov'd memory of your honour'd lord
Who now hath tenanted the silent grave
These twenty years and more, not to proceed
In this high matter on surmise, or charge
Of doubtful circumstance; the crime alledg'd
Being so heinous, the appeal so bloody,
And he whom you attain so brave and noble.

Mat. I know, my lord, in property the law
Can plead prescription and the time's delay;
But justice, in an inquisition made for blood,
With retrospective eye thro' ages past,
Moves her own pace, nor hears the law's demur.
Why I have let this murder sleep thus long,
Necessity, and not my will, must answer.
The conqueror William, and his furious son,
With iron hand upheld th' oppressor's power,
And stopp'd their ears against the widow's cries.
In painful silence brooding o'er my grief,
On this lone rock, upon the ocean's brink,
Year after year I languish'd, in my dreams
Conversing oft with shadowy shapes and horrors,
That scar'd me into madness. Oh! my lord,
Bear with my weakness: pray, regard me not;
I have a remedy at hand—my tears. [Weeps.]

Lord De C. Sad relit of the bravest, best of men,
Tell not thy griefs to me, nor let my words
(Which by commission, not of choice, I speak)
Shake thy firm purpose; for on England's throne
No tyrant sits, deaf to the widow's cause,
But heav'n's vicegerent, merciful and just.
If steadfast thou art fix'd in thy appeal,

Stadfast in justice is thy sovereign, too.
Bring forth thy knight appellat, for the lists
Expoit him, and may heav'n defend the right!

Mat. Thanks to thy royal sender! on my knee
I offer prayers to heaven for length of days,
And blessings shower'd on his anointed head.
Now, gallant lord, you shall behold my champion,
My shepherd boy, who, like the son of Jesse,
Unskill'd in arms, must combat this Philistine.
Montgomeri, come forth!

Enter MONTGOMERI.

Lord De C. Is this your knight? [strength
Mat. This is my knight. I trust not in the
Of mortal man; heaven will uphold my cause,
And to a murderer's heart will guide the blow,
Tho' from an infant's hand.

Lord De C. Of what degree
Must I report him? In the royal lists,
Against so proud a name as Hildebrand,
The warlike forms of knighthood will demand
That noble shall to noble be oppos'd.

Mat. Not unprepar'd I shall attend the lists;
And, at my sovereign's feet, prefer the proofs
Which honour's forms demand.

Lord De C. You know the peril,
If you fall short.

Mat. I take it on my head.

Lord De C. Where have you serv'd? what battles
have you seen?

Mont. Few and unfortunate have been the fields,
Where I have fought. I serv'd a sinking cause;
Robert of Normandy was my liege lord,
For I am Norman born.

Lord De C. Have you been train'd
in tournaments?

Mont. I never broke a lance,
Nor shall I, as I hope, but in his heart
Who stabb'd Saint Valori.

Lord De C. Noble lady,
I would impart something of nearest import
To your more private ear.

Mat. Let all withdraw. *(They withdraw.)*
Leave us. And now, my lord and honour'd guest,
Impart your noble thoughts; for sure I am
None others can be native of a soul,
Where courtesy and valour are enshrined,
As in a holy altar, under guard
Of consecrated keepers; therefore, speak.

Lord De C. Let infamy fix on me, when I wrong
A confidence so generous. Heav'n bestow'd
One friend, the pride and blessing of my life;
Heav'n, when you lost a husband, from me also
Took that one friend away, and in his grave
Buried my heart beside him.

Mat. Yes, my lord,
We both have cause to mourn him: I remember
The day he parted for the holy wars,
His manly bosom struggling to repress
Its bursting passion, in those racking moments,
When stern religion rent him from my arms,
Then, even then, in his capacious soul
Friendship had part—you shar'd it with Matilda.
Need I proceed? Ah! no, for you was present,
You took him from me, on your neck he fell;
I parted, sunk, and never saw him more.

Lord De C. 'Twas in those parting moments he
committed

A sacred charge, the very test of friendship,
Your soft, unshelter'd beauty, to my care.
I serv'd, consol'd you; lov'd you as a brother;
But soon Saint Valori call'd me from my charge,
For war and sickness had consumed our host,
And Palestine was drench'd with Christian blood.
We fought, we conquer'd, and from Pagan hands
Rescued the captive cross: and now command
My zealous heart, you are its mistress still.

Mat. There needs not this, my lord; for I can read
Your zeal without a preface: freely then,
As a friend should, and plainly speak your thoughts.

Lord De C. When rumour of this combat reach'd
Without delay, I sent a trusty page, [my ears,
Offering myself as your devoted knight:
He brought for answer, that you had a champion;
You thank'd me for my offer; cold repulse
Temper'd in courteous phrase! still I submitted
In silence, as became me, to your pleasure,
Musing who this might be—

Mat. And now you find him
A stripling youth unknown, in arms a novice,
And you condemn my choice; these are your
thoughts.

Lord De C. I do confess it. Oh! reflect in time;
Think not, because nature hath cast a form
In fair proportion, strung his youthful joints
With nerves that bear him bounding to the chase,
Or hurl the wrestler in the shouting ring,
That you have train'd a champion to encounter
A combatant so practis'd in the lists,

So valorous in fight as Hildebrand. [my lord,

Mat. What I have done, I've done. Your zeal,
May start new terrors for my hero's danger,
Shake me with new alarms, but change it cannot.

Lord De C. Turn not away, but still with patience
hear me.

Think what you are, great in yourself, yet greater
As brave Saint Valori's widow: oh! preserve
That name untainted; hear what honour counsels;
Truth makes me bold, your danger is my warrant.

Mat. You was my husband's friend; I owe your
Lo! I am turn'd to hear. Proceed. [plea.

Lord De C. I was his friend,
I am your's also; and as such, I warn you
Against a deed so fatal, that the steel
Of Hildebrand gave not a stab more mortal
To life than this to fame.

Mat. My lord, my lord!
You rise too fast upon me, and advance
Too strongly on so weak a disputant,
So much to seek for reason as I am.

Lord De C. May I not then demand, what is
this boy?

Whom you thus dignify? this page, this lacquey,
The very topmost pitch of whose promotion
Had been to touch the stirrup of Saint Valori?

Mat. What is he!—but you question me too
harshly;

I'll answer to the King; but to a friend
Who treats me with suspicion, I am silent.
You bid me call to memory what I am:
I hope, when thus you school me, you yourself
In your own precepts need no monitor.
I think I am as humble as I should be
Under such hard correction. I acknowledge
Two powerful duties: to my husband one,
The first and strongest; to yourself the next,
As my much-honour'd guest; but I oppose
The tyranny of friendship, which would stamp
Dishonour on the worthy, and forbid
My free affections to direct their choice
Where nature warrants, and my soul approves.

[Exit.
Lord De C. Why, then, there's no perfection in
the sex,

Or I had found it here. Farewell to grief;
So much for tears! I thought twenty years they flow
They wear no channels in a widow's cheeks;
And still the ambush'd smile lurks underneath
The watry surface, ready to start up
At the next lover's summons; now to greet
A hero's passion, now to wed a page.

Enter SAINT VALORI.
Saint V. My Lord De Courai, doth your memory
To recollect a certain pledge of love, [serve
A jewel, which the lady of this house
Gave to her husband by your hands?

Lord De C. A bracelet;
She took it from her arm when they did part:
I well remember it.

Saint V. Was it like this?

Lord De C. The very same; I gave it to Saint
When he embark'd for Palestine.

Saint V. You did:

I had it then; your memory is perfect. [of this?

Lord De C. You had it then! What must I think

Saint V. Can you this little token keep in mind,
And not remember him you gave it to?

Lord De C. Explain yourself; you speak in
[surprise

Saint V. Be temperate, then; let not your loud
Betray me to the house: I'm here unknown.

Lord De C. Impossible! though the dead rose
Yet this cannot be he. [again,

Saint V. My friend! my friend!

Come to my arms! let this embrace convince you.

Lord De C. Oh, earth and heaven! he lives.

Saint V. He lives, indeed,

To a new life of misery. Be still!

Forbear to question me: another time

Thou shalt hear all, but let this hour be sacred

To friendship's pressing call. My wife! my wife!

Lord De C. Oh! my prophetic fears.

Saint V. Unhappy woman!

For why should I accuse her? twenty years

A mournful widow, and at last to start

So wide from all propriety; and now,

After so brave a struggle, now to sink

Her honour, which still bore so proud a sail

Through the rough tide of time. Oh! bitter
Oh! aggravating shame! [thought!

Lord De C. Alas! my friend,

How shall I comfort you? I see you point

At young Montgomeri: in friendship's right

I ask'd her private ear, and boldly urg'd

The peril of her fume.

Saint V. And what reply? [I touch'd

Lord De C. Patient at first she heard; but when

The master-string, and set to view how base

The choice of such a minion, such a page,

Then—but 'twere painful to describe the scene,

Vain to conceal: she loves him to distraction.

Saint V. Can it be doubted? She has married

Lord De C. Indeed! [him.

Saint V. I have a trusty servant here,

Who saw her clasp him in her wanton arms,

Twine, like pale ivy round the polish'd bark

Of the smooth beech, whilst rapt'rous she exclaim'd,

"My hero! my Saint Valori! my husband!"—

Oh! she is lost, beyond redemption lost.

Lord De C. Who now shall dream of constancy

in woman? [bat.

What's to be done? Your life dissolves the com-

Saint V. That shame I've sav'd her from: Lord

Is dying in this house. [Hildebrand

Lord De C. Lord Hildebrand!

How many strange events are here combin'd

Of sorrow and surprise; so thick they crowd,

So swift they change, I know not where to turn,

Nor what to counsel.

Saint V. What can counsel give?

Can words revoke, can wisdom reconcile,

Th' indissoluble web which fate has wove?

And shall I stay and harbour here with shame?

Walk, like a discontented moping ghost,

To haunt and hover round their nuptial bed,

When I can die, as I have liv'd, in arms?—

Off, holy counterfeit! begone, disguise!

Lord De C. Stop, I conjure you; rush not on

despair. [so long

Saint V. Despair! And have I worn the cross

But as the mask and mockery of religion?

No, 'tis the armour of a Christian knight,

And with this gaudlet I defy despair.

Lord De C. Then by that sacred symbol, by our

friendship

And faithful brotherhood in God's holy service,

I do beseech thee to persist in hope:

For whilst one circumstance of doubt remains,

One, though the slightest fragment is afloat,
That fond credulity e'er clung to, still,
Still will I keep some happy chance in view
To save thy lady's honour.

Saint V. Gallant friend,
Thy counsel shall prevail; I will persist;
And as misfortune is the world's best school
For true philosophy, I will extract
The cordial patience from the bitter root
Of this implanted pain. Come, brave De Courci!
Pleasure's gay scene, and hope's delusive dream,
Are vanish'd, lost; love's fairy palace sinks
In the false fleeting sand on which 'twas built;
Whilst thy immortal constancy alone
Stands in the waste, a solitary column,
To tell life's mournful traveller where once
Joy revell'd, and a stately fabric rose. [Exeunt.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in the castle.

Enter MATILDA and LORD HILDEBRAND.

Mat. Stop, stranger! wherefore have you left
your chamber?

Will you go forth with all your wounds about you?
Return, nor rashly counteract our care,

That labours to preserve you.

Lord H. Shall I make
Your house a grave? The wounds you see are no-

thing, [ments;
Their pain may be assuag'd by drugs and oint-
Nature abounds in simples, that can heal
These tumours of the body.

Mat. If the cure
Be, as you say, no easy, why oppose it?
Is pain your choice, that you resist our medicines,
And thus expose your rankling wounds undress'd
To the raw, fest'ring air?

Lord H. Ah! generous lady,
'Tis but a superficial flattering art
To heat the skin, and make the surface whole,
When an unsearchable and mortal sting
Has pierc'd the nobler part.

Mat. That sting is grief:
You mourn a wife, perhaps, or some dear friend,
In your late shipwreck lost: if it be so,
I'll not arraign your sorrow; yet remember,
Though short of their allotted time they fell,
'Twas heav'n that struck them short, they were
not murder'd,

As my Saint Valori, by vile treach'rous man.

Lord H. Oh, horror! horror!

Mat. Have I touch'd the cause?

Was there a friend? a wife?

Lord H. Nor wife, nor friend;

And yet—

Mat. What yet? Your heart perhaps was fix'd
Upon your freighted treasures, hoarded up
By carking care, and a long life of thrift;
Now, without interest or redemption, swallow'd
By the devouring bankrupt waves for ever:
What then? your cares have perish'd with your
fortune. [wail

Lord H. The wreck of friends and fortune I be-
As things heav'n gives and takes away at pleasure;
Conditional enjoyments, transient loans,
Bliss that accumulates a debt of pain:
Swift their succession, sudden their reverse.
To-day the setting sun descends in tears,
To-morrow's dawn breaks forth, and all is joy:
But guilt involves me in perpetual night;
No morning star, no glimmering ray of hope;
Eternal tossings on a bed of thorns,
Conscience, that raven, knelling in my ear,
And vulture furies plucking at my heart!

Mat. Then I conjectur'd right, and 'tis remorse
Which tortures you; I read it in your eyes:
Did that descending virtue come on earth,
To set at large the captive or the free?
'Twas to redeem the captive: turn to him,
Turn then, and seek your saving hope, repentance;

Go to your Carmelite, confess to him,
Fly to your soul's physician for a cure;
Whether with soft emollients he assuage,
Or with corrosive penances consume
The cankerous gangrene that now gnaws your heart.

Lord H. I have confess'd to him, he knows my guilt;

But what can he, alas! there lives but one
Under heav'n's canopy, who can absolve.
Either th' immediate hand of heav'n has led me,
Hopeless of pardon, to expire before you,
And cast your husband's murderer at your feet.

Mat. Ah! scorpion! is it thou? I shake with horror.

Thou have I pitied? thou have I preserv'd?
Monster, avaunt! Go to the rocks for food,
Call to the winds for pity! lay thee down
Beneath some blighted yew, whose poisonous leaf
Kills as it falls; there howl thyself to death!
Hangs the roof o'er us yet? I am astonish'd.
Art not ashamed, oh! earth, to bear him yet?
Oh! sea, to cast him up again? Begone!

Lord H. I do not wait for pardon, but for death;
Call to your servants; whelm me with their swords.
Heav'n throws me on your mercy; you receiv'd
And gave me shelter; hospitably tender'd
Food and restoring medicines; I refus'd them:
My thirst is unallay'd, my wounds undress'd,
No particle of food has past my lips,
For I disdain a fraud upon your pity;
And, where I can't have pardon, scorn support.
The only mercy I implore is death.

Mat. Mercy! and dare thy tongue pronounce the name?

Mercy! thou man of blood, thou hast destroy'd it,
It came from heaven to save Saint Valori:
You saw the cherub messenger alight
From its descent; with outspread wings it sat,
Covering his breast; you drew your cursed steel,
And through the pleading angel pierc'd his heart.
Then, then the moon, by whose pale light you
struck,

Turn'd fiery red, and from her angry orb
Darted contagious sickness on the earth;
The planets in their courses shriek'd for horror;
Heav'n dropt maternal tears. Oh! art thou come?

Enter MONTGOMERI.

Mont. Why dost thou tremble? Why this ghastly terror?

Mat. Save me, support me! In thy arms I fall:
I mov'd not till thou cam'st, lest I had sunk
Upon the floor, and catching at the hand
That stabb'd Saint Valori, his touch had kill'd me.

Mont. That stabb'd Saint Valori! Is this the wretch?

Is this Hildebrand before me? Draw, thou traitor!
Stand to defence, or die!

Lord H. Behold my heart!

Strike! I expect no mercy.

Mat. Stop thine hand:

Black though he be, as infamy can make him,
He is defenceless, wounded, and expiring.

Lord H. Wilt thou not add, repentant? I am vanquish'd,

Body and soul laid prostrate by despair.

I do confess my crime; what can I more?

Castle, demesne, and treasure, all the spoils

Of my accursed avarice, I resign:

Take my life too; dismiss me from a world

Where I have none to mourn me, no kind hand

To close my eyes; of children, wife, and friends,

(Save only this poor Carmelite) bereft;

Be merciful to him, he is not guilty.

If I dare ask a little earth to cover me

For Christian decency, I would—but that,

That were too much—my tears will sink a grave.

Mont. He's deeply penitent: you'll not refuse

What he petitions for: 'twere most unchristian

• To let him die without the church's rites.

Mat. Forbear!

Mont. He's dying—see, he faints—he falls.
(*Hildebrand sinks on the ground.*)

'Twill give him comfort in the hour of death;
And that I'd give ev'n to a murderer.

Mat. You never knew your father, and in you
Pity is natural; in me 'tis treason

To breathe the air which his pollution taints;

A crime to look upon his eyes and live. [fall:

Mont. I feel, I feel your cause; there let him
Dre where he lists, but give his corpse a grave.

And see, the Carmelite approaches.

Mat. Ha!

The Lord De Courci, too! Stand by the body;

And if the wretch has breath to speak again,

Call them to witness his confession. Mark!

In heav'n's own presence, mark this awful scene,

And write it on thy heart. Farewell! Be con-

stant! [Exit.

Enter SAINT VALORI and DE COURCI.

Mont. Noble De Courci, and thou, reverend fa-
ther,

From whom the penitent in life's last hour

Draws holy comfort, look upon that wretch,

Visit his soul with peace at its departure,

And take confession from his dying lips.

Saint V. Withdraw, and stand apart then, out
of hearing. [They withdraw.

Lord Hildebrand, if thou hast sense and motion,
Reach forth thine hand. So! if thou canst, look

I am the Carmelite. [up!

Lord H. Oh! save me, save me!

I am a sinful man.

Saint V. But not a murderer:

He who speaks to you is Saint Valori.

Lord H. God of my hope! is it some blessed
Or living man that speaks? [spirit,

Saint V. A living man,

Saint Valori himself; no spirit. Mark!

I grasp your hand in token of forgiveness:

Dost thou perceive it?

Lord H. At my heart I feel it.

Can you forgive me? May I die in peace?

Saint V. Lo! thus with friendly hand I close
thine eyes:

Sleep, sleep! and be at rest from thy afflictions;

Would mine were laid beside thee in the grave!

Lord H. Oh! balmy comfort! oh! how sweet
to die!

Farewell for ever: do not quit my hand;

Let it not go, till I am dead. Farewell! (*Dies.*)

Saint V. He's dead; his soul forsook him with
that sigh.

Now, sirs, return—'tis past; I have beheld

Religion's triumph, a repentant death.

Re-enter DE COURCI and MONTGOMERI.

Call to your servants, and remove the body.

Mont. There is a charitable house hard by,

Where, on the ocean's edge, a few poor monks,

A slender brotherhood of Mercy dwell;

For human misery a small asylum;

There often from the foundering bark escap'd,

The houseless wretch finds shelter, and his wounds

With balsams by the fathers coull'd, are dress'd:

There we'll entomb the body.

Saint V. Be it so. [wreck:

Mont. You now alone survive the morning's

You by peculiar providence are sav'd

From a devoted vessel, which the sins

Of its dire owner sunk; still I must wonder

How God's own servant with a demon leagu'd,

And piety with murder could embark. [care

Saint V. You think he was a murderer; have a

How you incline too rashly to such tales.

Let not your vassals triumph and rejoice

Too much o'th' sudden; let your castle keep

Some remnant of its old propriety:

And you, the champion, hang not up your lance

In token of a bloodless victory,

But keep it sharpen'd for a fresh encounter ;
And stick your valour to the test, young knight,
Lest haply some new questioner should come,
And dash your feast with horror.

Mont. Reverend stranger,
It will become your order to desist [ing,
From threats, which cover some mysterious mean-
And speak without disguise. You boast yourself
Noble Saint Valori's friend, yet plead the cause
Of Hildebrand, defend him from the crime
Of murder, and with gloomy menace bid me
Expect some new appellant. Lo! I'm ready.

Saint V. Away, vain boy, away!

Mont. Vain let me be,
Not of myself, but of the cause I stand for :
The lady of Saint Valori accounts me
Worthy to be her champion, by that title
I do impeach the memory of Lord Hildebrand ;
And in the presence of this lord, whose person
Stands for the king, arraign him as a murderer :
If any love his memory so well
As to adopt his cause, let him stand forth,
I pledge myself to answer.

Saint V. Lord De Courci,
Shall I reveal myself? I'm strongly tempted?

Lord De C. I do protest against it; and, [Aside.)
Whilst he is thus in train, leave it to me [you,
To draw confession up.

Saint V. I am content.

Lord De C. Montgomery, in virtue of my charge
I've noted your defiance: should there come
A knight of known degree to challenge it,
Say, by what stile and title wilt thou answer?

Mont. Ask that of her in whose defence I stand.

Lord De C. We know thee for her champion;
but declare,
Hast thou no nearer name, no closer tie?

Saint V. Answer to that. 'Tis palpable, 'tis gross:
Your silence is confession.

Mont. Ah! good father,
Have you so us'd confession as an engine
To twist and torture silence to your purpose,
And stain the truth with colouring not its own?

Saint V. The man who flies to silence for evasion,
When plainly questioned, aims at a deception
Which candour's self will construe to condemn him.

Mont. Thyself a stranger, dark, inscrutable,
With Hildebrand associate, thou to question me!
First answer for thyself.

Saint V. For myself then—

Lord De C. Stop, re-collect your thoughts.

Saint V. Thanks, noble lord!

For myself, then, I own I am your debtor
For no less gift than life; and though that life
Makes what you gave a gift of misery,
Yet is the gift uncancell'd.

Mont. Set it down

For nothing but the mutual debt of nature,
Common from man to man. To-morrow's sun,
With favouring winds to aid us, shall transport
This castle's noble mistress and myself
Across the straight that severs this fair isle
From its maternal shore; there to renew
At Henry's feet, against this bloody mgn
Newly deceas'd, our ordinal appeal,
Arraigning him for murder.

Saint V. Ha! beware!

Mont. Who shall oppose it?

Saint V. I; this noble witness;

Truth, and the living evidence of sight.

Mont. To you, my Lord De Courci, not to him,
Who is a son of peace, to you, a knight
Seal'd with the cross, and militant for truth,
Thus I appeal. What say you to our charge?

Lord De C. False, false; I pledge my life upon
the proof. [dare

Mont. Ha! by my father's soul, if thou shalt
To whisper that to-morrow—

Lord De C. If I dare

To whisper it! My herald shall proclaim it;
I'll cry it in the lists. There is my gauntlet.

[Throws it down.)

Saint V. Hold! I forbid it.

[Takes up Lord De Courci's gauntlet.)

Brother of the cross,
Upon your knightly honour I conjure you,
Put up your gauntlet: I revoke the combat.
Hear me, young sir, you tread upon your grave;
Fate waves the sword of vengeance o'er your head;
I've pass'd it by, and paid you life for life.
Lo! I provoke you to a gentler combat;
Behold my peaceful gauntlet! Take this jewel;

[Gives the bracelet.)

And an hour hence, when I am on my way,
Shew it to her (what shall I call your lady?)
To her that own'd it once.

Mont. I will obey you.

What more have you in mind?

Saint V. Tell her the monk,

Through all his pilgrimage from Holy Land
Preserv'd it sacred; journeying night and day,
By sea, by land, in shipwreck, in the waves,
Still guarded it with reverence more devout
Than holy relics of departed martyrs.
Now 'tis no longer worth: 'tis her's, 'tis your's,
'Tis the next favourite's prize, a transient bauble,
The fleeting emblem of a woman's love.
No more: farewell! Come, gallant lord, to horse.

[Exit with Lord De Courci.]

Mont. To horse! why so a warrior would have
call'd;

With such a step a warrior would have trod:
A monk!—Mysterious man! I'll not believe it.
This jewel may unfold the labyrinth—
What thou? Shall I commit the clue
To sorrow's trembling hand, or firmly hold it
Till more shall be discover'd? Time direct me!

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Chapel with an altar decorated with
the funeral trophies of Saint Valori. MATILDA
is discovered kneeling at the altar. MONTGOMERY
enters, and after a pause, speaks.

Mont. Still at the altar! Ever on her knees!

Nothing but peace! peace to her husband's soul!
Perpetual requiems. If, as we believe,
Th' uncircumscribed spirit of a man
Walks after death, till it can find a grave,
Or holy church, with soul-compelling hymns,
Shall chant it to repose, I am amaz'd
My father's ghost, whilst unappeas'd by prayer,
Ne'er took its shadowy journey to this spot.
Why, when De Courci and the monk outlac'd me,
Did he not then arise with all his wounds,
And score them to confession? I am lost,
Bewilder'd, and perplex'd. But see! she moves.

[Matilda arises, and comes down from the altar.]

Mat. My son! my joy! my blessing!

Mont. Whence is this?

What sudden transformation? By my hopes,
There is a joyful emanation round thee,
That strikes a gleam of rapture to my heart.
What angel of good tidings hath been with thee?
Who hath exorcis'd thy despair, and breath'd
This beam of placid pleasure in thine eyes?

Mat. Thy father hath been with me.

Mont. Heav'n's! my father? [with him

Mat. I've seen him in my vision; commun'd
Before the altar: soft his accents fell,
Like voices of departed friends heard in our dreams,
Or music in the air, when the night-spirits
Warble their magic minstrelsy.

Mont. Indeed!

Would I had seen him, too!

Mat. Would heav'n thou hadst.

Mont. What was his form?

Mat. Majestically sweet;

He smil'd upon me; straight through all my veins.

Methought I felt a thrilling virtue run,
Healing, where'er it cours'd, both heart and brain.

Mont. Saw you no wounds about him?

Mat. None, no wounds;

Nor was he in his youth, or when he died,
But grey with years, and much transform'd by time:

At first I knew him not, and as he spoke,
So chang'd methought he was, with pain I trac'd
The faded record.

Mont. Spoke he of his murder?

Mat. Oh! not a word; but as it ne'er had been,
And he were living now, so look'd and spoke.

Mont. 'Tis strange—one question more. Say,
did this form
Ne'er visit you before?

Mat. Never, till now.

Mont. Nor this, nor any other shape?

Mat. Oh! never, never.

Mont. Then, I own my confidence is shaken;
And fit it is no longer to conceal
What I have newly heard so boldly vouch'd,
That my faith reels.

Mat. Speak, I conjure thee, speak!

Mont. I came this instant from the Carmelite
And Lord De Courci: on the floor was stretch'd
The breathless corpse of Hildebrand; the monk
In his last moments had been private with him:
I urg'd the murder, to his own confession
Appealing in my accusation's proof;
When, strange to tell, his confessor the monk
Boldly denied that he had kill'd Saint Valori.
Rous'd at this daring insult, and indignant,
I turn'd upon De Courci, and demanded
If he would vouch the falsehood; he, more hot
And no less confident than t'other, hurl'd
Defiance in my teeth, and to the ground
Threw down his gauntlet, pledging to the truth
Of what the monk affirm'd.

Mat. I am amaz'd;

There is a trembling expectation in me,
That by some secret impulse draws me on
To the great revelation of my fate:
Therefore proceed!

Mont. Before I could reply,
The Carmelite had seiz'd De Courci's pledge,
And with a tone and gesture more beseeching
A haughty warrior than a son of peace,
Sternly forbade the challenge to proceed:
Then with a mournful action turning tow'rd's me,
And sighing, drew from forth his bosom this,
This pearly chain. *(Produces the bracelet.)*

Mat. Ah! Do my eyes betray me?

Help, help! uphold me, whilst I look upon it.
The same, the same! I gave it to my husband;
My last, fond, parting pledge: guide, guide my
hands,
My trembling hands, to touch it. Sacred relic!
Enthusiastic as the pilgrim's kiss,
Thus to my lips I press thee. Hail, thrice hail!
To thee, oh! altar, with those banners deck'd,
Hallow'd with daily incense, and besieg'd
With never-ceasing requiems for his soul,
I dedicate this trophy of my love!
Lead me, my son!

Mont. Oh! dost thou love thy son?

Mat. Love thee! Oh! heaven!

(Falls on his neck, weeping.)

Mont. By that, then, I conjure thee
Come to thy couch. Now, as thy cheek turns pale,
Convulsion shakes thy lip, and the full stream
Bursts from thine eyes, return not to the altar:
Let me conduct thee forth.

Mat. Where, where's the monk?
Shall I not see him?

Mont. Yes, thou suffering saint!

Be patient for a while, and thou shalt see him.

Mat. Come, then, dispose of me as to thy love
And piety seems best: I will obey.

Let me have this; thou wilt not take this from me?
(Holding the bracelet.)

Mont. Not for the worth of all this world.

Mat. I thank thee. *[Exeunt.]*

Enter SAINT VALORI, LORD DE COURCI, and GYFFORD.

Saint V. Suffer this last one, weakness. Ha!—
she's gone;

The chapel is deserted: I had hop'd
Once more to have look'd upon her ere we parted.

Lord De C. 'Tis better as it is.

Saint V. It may be so;

And yet 'twere stern philosophy, methinks,
That could refuse the sight one short indulgence,
Ere the heart breaks with sorrow.

Lord De C. I am pain'd

To see this tender sorrow swell so fast.

Saint V. Oh! call to mind how I have lov'd
this woman!

Gyfford, thou know'st it; say, thou faithful servant,
What was my passion; how did absence feed it?
But how canst thou compute my sum of sorrows?
Years upon years have roll'd since thou wast with me:

Time hath been wearied with my groans, my tears
Have damp'd his wings, till he scarce crept along;
The pitying sun ne'er wink'd upon my toils;
All day I dragg'd my slavery's chain, all night
Howl'd to its clanking on my bed of straw;
And yet these pains were recreation now,
To those I feel, whilst I resign Matilda.

Gyff. Stay, then, my noble master, here abide,
And to this awful place convoke your lady.

Saint V. This awful place! she'll visit it no
more;

Or, if she does, 'twill be to strip these trappings;
These mockeries shall come down, they've had
their day,

They've serv'd the uses of hypocrisy,
And festive garlands now shall fill their place
Around this nuptial altar.

Lord De C. No, my friend,

I am a witness to her unfeign'd sorrows;
And were I left to judge of them unbiass'd,
By what I saw besides, I should believe
She were the very mirror of her sex
For matchless constancy.

Saint V. You rend my heart. *[wash'd]*

Gyff. Thrice on her knees this morning hath she
This altar's feet with tears, and with her pray'rs
Sent up a mingled cry of sighs and groans.

Saint V. Why, then, old man, didst thou dis-
tract my soul!

With gossip tales to slander her fair fame,
And murder my repose? If thou art conscious
Of having wrong'd her, get thee hence, begone!
Fall at her feet for pardon, howl for pity.

And hide thyself where light may never find thee.

Gyff. With grief, but not with shame, I will retire
From thee and light. I have not wrong'd the truth.

Saint V. Stay, Gyfford, stay, thou loyal, good
old man!

Pity thy master, and forgive my frenzy.

Lo! I am calm again: the pledge I've given

To young Montgomeri shall be the test.

Yes, with that chain I'll draw her to the proof;
Link'd and entwin'd about her heart I'll hold it,
And tent her nature to its inmost feelings.

See, the young favorite comes.

Enter MONTGOMERI.

Mont. Oh! timely found,
Well are you thus encounter'd, holy sir!
The lady of Saint Valori demands you;
And lo! where she advances.

Enter MATILDA.

Mat. Ha! 'tis well.

In presence of this altar we are met:
And may the sacred genius of the place
Prosper our interview.

Saint V. Amen! amen!

[the chapel]

Mat. Good friends, withdraw! let none approach whilst we are private. Now, be firm, my heart.

(They go out—she passes some time, and then addresses herself to Saint Valori.)

Father, I thank you! I've receiv'd your pledge, The smil, but prizeless relic you have brought me. The bracelet, given by Lord De Courci's hands In times long past (sic, lie upon these tears, They will have way) to a departed friend. Perhaps he priz'd this trifle—but, alas! 'Tis fated, like the arm from which 'twas taken, Never to clasp him more.

Saint V. Alas! I fear it.

Mat. I hope De Courci gave it to my lord.

Saint V. He did; I saw him give it.

Mat. Ha! you saw him! [told you]

Saint V. When he embark'd for Palestine; I've We never march'd apart. I wore the cross In those fame-seeking days.

Mat. I do remember.

And this poor favour, did my hero wear it?

Saint V. Devoutly, at his heart.

Mat. Then, then, indeed [come!]

Thou hast bestow'd a treasure. Welcome, wel-
(As she is pressing it to her heart, Saint Valori observing her agitation, runs to her assistance.)

Saint V. He wore it like an amulet; with this Before his heart, first through the yawning breach Thy sacred walls, Jerusalem, he storm'd; Tore down the moony standard, where it hung In impious triumph; thrice their Pagan swords Shiver'd his mailed crest, as many times That sacred amulet was dy'd in blood Nearest his heart.

Mat. Stop there! I charge thee stop!

Tell me no more: oh! follow him no further, For see, th' accursed Pyreneans rise, Streaming with blood; there hellish murder howls; There madness rages, and with haggard eyes Glares in the craggy pass. She'll spring upon me, If I advance. Oh! shield me from the sight.

Saint V. Be calm, collect thyself: it was not there,

It was not there Saint Valori met his death.

'Twas not the sword of Hildebrand that slew him; Though pierc'd with wounds, that ambush he surviv'd. [altar:]

Mat. What do I hear? Oh! look upon this Think where you stand, and do not wrong the truth.

Saint V. He who is truth itself be witness for me! Deep was the stroke that dire assassin gave, Yet short of life it stopp'd; unhors'd and fall'n, Welt'ring in blood, your wounded husband lay, Till haply found by charitable strangers Journeying to Venice, he was heal'd, restor'd; And, thence embarking, by a barbarous rover Was captur'd. Start not; but repress your terrors.

Mat. Admire not that I tremble; marvel rather That I hear this and live. Saint Valori captur'd! The bravest captain of the cross enslav'd By barbarous Pagans!

Saint V. Tedious years he suffer'd Of hard captivity—

Mat. Oh! where, ye heavens, Where was your justice then? And died he there?

Saint V. 'Twas not his lot to find a distant grave.

Mat. Where, where? oh! speak; release me from Where did my hero fall? [the rack!]

Saint V. Where did he fall!

Nor Pagan awards, nor slavery's galling chain, Nor murderers' daggers, Afric's burning clime, Toils, storms, nor shipwreck, kill'd him—here he fell!

Grief burst his heart—here in this spot he fell!

(He falls to the ground.)

Mat. Ah! horror, horror! Help, for mercy, help!

My son, my son! your father lies before you.

MONTGOMERY runs in, followed by LORD DE COURCI and GYFFORD.

Mont. My father! heav'n and earth! Oh! save him; save him!

Where shall I turn? See, see! she faints, she falls! *(Supports her in his arms.)*

Lord De C. He is her son. Awake, look up, my friend!

Live, live! De Courci bids Saint Valori live.

Your rival is your son.

Saint V. *(Raising himself on his knees, unsheaths his dagger.)*

Off! give me way:

I'll kill him in her arms.

Lord De C. He is your son;

Hear me, thou frantic father! I, De Courci,

I speak to you. Would you destroy your son?

Saint V. Bind up his wounds. Oh! if I've slain Perdition will not own me! [my son,

Mont. He revives.

Nature awakens reason. Hush! be still.

She stirs. Withhold him from her arms awhile;

Let all be silence, whilst disposing heaven,

That showers this joy, shall fit them to receive it.

Mat. How could you say my husband is alive?

Which of you keeps him from me? Oh! 'tis cruel!

Saint V. Uncase me of my weeds: tear of my cowl!

Now, she'll know me; now I am Saint Valori.

(Throws off his habit, and appears in armour.)

Mat. Stand off! Oh! blessed light of heaven, shine forth!

Visit my aching eyes, ye solar beams,

And let me see my hero! Ha! the cross—

He gleams—he glimmers,—like a mist he rises.

He lives! he lives! I clasp him in my arms.

My lost Saint Valori! my long-lost husband!

(Runs into his arms.)

Saint V. Oh! my heart's joy! do I again embrace thee!

Soul of all honour, constancy, and truth!

Mat. This transport is too quick, it melts my brain;

The sky runs round; the earth is all in motion;

Nay, now it whirls too fast.

Saint V. Ye saints in bliss!

Heroic matrons! ye angelic virtues,

Protect your fair resemblance! Ha! she weeps!

Kind tears, I thank you! Nature's soft relief,

Waters, that from the soul's full fount run o'er,

To joy or grief welcome alike ye flow,

Assist our patience, and assuage our pain.

Mat. Alas! alas! that I should know thee not.

What ravages have time and sorrow made

In heav'n's most perfect work, the fairest temple

Nature e'er rear'd in majesty and grace!

Saint V. What dire calamity have we escap'd!

Now 'tis dispers'd, the mists of doubt are fled,

Truth, like the sun, breaks forth, and all is joy.

My son, my son! oh! throw my arms about him,

And let me cling for ever to his neck.

Mont. Oh! sympathetic energy of nature.

This morn a nameless orphan, now the son

Of living parents: he for virtue fam'd,

For dignity of soul, and matchless courage;

She for affection, constancy renown'd,

Inspir'd with truth, with every grace adorn'd,

A woman's fondness and an angel's faith.

Mat. Heaven hear my praises! echo them, oh! earth:

Cherubs, that come with healing on your wings,

Waft my thanksgiving back! Bright beam of mercy,

Visit the inmost chambers of my heart;

And where grief rear'd a husband's monument

Fix now his living image: there, as time

Shook not the faithful witness from my soul,

When grief assail'd it, so in joy support me,

And guard my constancy in both extremes.

[Exeunt.]

THE WAY OF THE WORLD;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY WILLIAM CONGREVE.



Act IV.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

SIR WILFUL WITWOULD
MIRABLE
MIRABELL

WITWOULD
PETULANT
WAITWELL

LADY WISHFORT
MRS. MILLAMANT
MRS. MARWOOD

MRS. FAINALL
FOIBLE
MINCING

ACT. I.

SCENE I.—A Chocolate-house.

MIRABLE and FAINALL, rising from cards; BETTY waiting.

Mir. You are a fortunate man, Mr. Fainall.

Fain. Have we done? [you.]

Mir. What you please. I'll play on to entertain *Fain.* No, I'll give you your revenge another time, when you are not so indifferent; you are thinking of something else now, and play too negligently; the coldness of a losing gamester lessens the pleasure of the winner. I'd no more play with a man that slighted his ill fortune, than I'd make love to a woman who undervalued the loss of her reputation.

Mir. You have a taste extremely delicate, and are for refining on your pleasures.

Fain. Pr'ythee, why so reserved? Something has put thee out of humour.

Mir. Not at all: I happen to be grave to-day; and you are gay: that's all.

Fain. Confess, Millamant and you quarrelled last night, after I left you: my fair cousin has some humours that would tempt the patience of a stoic. What, some coxcomb came in, and was well received by her, while you were by?

Mir. Witwould and Petulant! and what was worse, her aunt, your wife's mother, my evil genius; or, to sum up all in her own name, my old Lady Wishfort came in.

Fain. Oh! there it is, then. She has a lasting passion for you, and with reason. What, then my wife was there?

Mir. Yes, and Mrs. Marwood, and three or four more, whom I never saw before: Seeing me, they all put on their grave faces, whispered one another, then complained aloud of the vapours, and after fell into a profound silence.

Fain. They had a mind to be rid of you.

Mir. For which reason I resolved not to stir. At last the good old lady broke through her painful

taciturnity, with an invective against long visits. I would not have understood her, but Millamant joining in the argument, I rose, and with a constrained smile told her, I thought nothing was so easy as to know when a visit began to be troublesome; she reddened, and I withdrew, without expecting her reply.

Fain. You were to blame to resent what she spoke only in compliance with her aunt.

Mir. She is more mistress of herself than to be under the necessity of such resignation.

Fain. What! though half her fortune depends upon her marrying with my lady's approbation?

Mir. I was then in such a humour, that I should have been better pleased if she'd been less discreet.

Fain. Now I remember, I wonder not they were weary of you; last night was one of their cabal nights; they have 'em three times a week, and meet by turns at one another's apartments; where they come together like the coroner's inquest, to sit upon the murdered reputations of the week. You and I are exclud'd; and it was once proposed that all the male sex should be excepted, but somebody moved, that, to avoid scandal, there might be one man of the community; upon which motion Witwould and Petulant were enrolled members.

Mir. And who may have been the foundress of this sect? My Lady Wishfort, I warrant, who publishes her detestation of mankind; and, full of the vigour of fifty-five, declares for a friend and ratafia.

Fain. The discovery of your sham addresses to her, to conceal your love to her niece, has provoked this separation: had you dissembled better, things might have continued in the state of nature.

Mir. I did as much as man could, with any reasonable conscience; I proceeded to the very last act of flattery with her, and was guilty of a song in her commendation. But for the discovery of this amour, I am indebted to your friend, or your wife's friend, Mrs. Marwood.

Fain. What should provoke her to be your enemy, unless she has made you advances which you have slighted? Women do not easily forgive omissions of that nature.

Mir. She was always civil to me, till of late; I confess I am not one of those coxcombs who are apt to interpret a woman's good manners to her prejudice; and think that she who does not refuse 'em every thing, can refuse 'em nothing.

Fain. You are a gallant man, Mirabell; and though you may have cruelly enough not to answer a lady's advances, you have too much generosity not to be tender of her honour. Yet you speak with an indifference which seems to be affected, and confesses you are conscious of a negligence.

Mir. You pursue the argument with a distrust that seems to be unaffected, and confesses you are conscious of a concern for which the lady is more indebted to you, than is your wife.

Fain. Fie, fie! friend, if you grow censorious, I must leave you. I'll look upon the gamesters in

Mir. Who are they? [the next room.]

Fain. Petulant and Witwould. Bring me some chocolate. [Exit.

Mir. Betty, what says your clock?

Betty. Turned of the last o'clock, sir.

Mir. How pertinently the jade answers me! (Aside.) Ha! almost one o'clock! (Looking on his watch.) Oh! y'are come.—[Enter a Footman.]—Well; is the grand affair over? You have been something tedious.

Foot. Sir, there's such coupling at Panoras, that they stand behind one another, as 'twere in a country dance. Our's was the last couple to lead up; and no hopes appearing of despatch, besides, the parson growing hoarse, we were afraid his lungs would have failed before it came to our turn; so we drove round to Duke's-place; and there they were riveted in a trice.

Mir. So, so; you are sure they are married?

Foot. Incontestibly, sir: I am witness.

Mir. Have you the certificate?

Foot. Here it is, sir.

Mir. Has the tailor brought Waitwell's clothes home, and the new liveries?

Foot. Yes, sir.

Mir. That's well. Do you go home again, d'ye hear? bid Waitwell shake his ears, and dame Partlet rustle up her feathers, and meet me at one o'clock by Rosamond's-pond, that I may see her before she returns to her lady; and as you tender your ears, be secret. [Exit Footman.]

Enter FAINALL.

Fain. Joy of your success, Mirabell; you look pleased.

Mir. Ay; I have been engaged in a matter of some sort of mirth, which is not yet ripe for discovery. I am glad this is not a cabal-night. I wonder, Fainall, that you, who are married, and of consequence should be discreet, will suffer your wife to be of such a party.

Fain. Faith, I am not jealous. Besides, most who are engaged, are women and relations; and for the men, they are of a kind too contemptible to give scandal.

Mir. I am of another opinion. The greater the coxcomb, always the more the scandal: for a woman who is not a fool, can have but one reason for associating with a man that is one.

Fain. Are you jealous as often as you see Witwould entertained by Millamant? [person.]

Mir. Of her understanding I am, if not of her

Fain. You do her wrong; for, to give her her due, she has wit.

Mir. She has beauty enough to make any man think so; and complaisance enough not to contradict him who shall tell her so.

Fain. For a passionate lover, methinks you are a man somewhat too discerning in the failings of your mistress.

Mir. And for a discerning man, somewhat too passionate a lover; for I like her with all her faults; nay, like her for her faults. Her follies are so natural, or so artful, that they become her; and those affectations, which in another woman would be odious, serve but to make her more agreeable. I'll tell thee, Fainall, she once used me with that insolence, that in revenge I took her to pieces; sifted her, and separated her failings; I studied 'em and got 'em by rote. The catalogue was so large, that I was not without hopes, one day or other, to hate her heartily: do which and I so used myself to think of 'em, that at length, contrary to my design and expectation, they gave me every hour less disturbance; till in a few days, it became habitual to me, to remember them without being displeased. They are now grown as familiar to me as my own frailties; and in all probability, in a little time longer, I shall like 'em as well.

Fain. Marry her, marry her; be half as well acquainted with her charms, as you are with her defects, and my life on't, you are your own man again.

Mir. Say you so?

Fain. I, I, I have experience. I have a wife, and so forth. Enter Messenger.

Mess. Is one 'squire Witwould here?

Betty. Yes; what's your business?

Mess. I have a letter for him, from his brother, Sir Wilful, which I am charged to deliver into his own hands.

Betty. He's in the next room, friend. That way. [Exit Messenger.]

Mir. What, is the chief of that noble family in town, Sir Wilful Witwould?

Fain. He is expected to day. Do you know him?

Mir. I have seen him. He promises to be an extraordinary person. I think you have the honour to be related to him.

Fain. Yes; he is half-brother to this Witwould by a former wife, who was sister to my Lady Wishfort, my wife's mother. If you marry Millamant, you must call cousins too. [quaintance.]

Mir. I would rather be his relation than his acquaintance.

Fain. He comes to town in order to equip himself for travel. [above forty.]

Mir. For travel! Why, the man that I mean is

Fain. No matter for that; 'tis for the honour of England, that all Europe should know we have blockheads of all ages.

Mir. I wonder there is not an act of parliament to save the credit of the nation, and prohibit the exportation of fools.

Fain. By no means, 'tis better as 'tis; 'tis better to trade with a little loss, than to be quite eaten up with being overstocked.

Mir. Pray are the follies of this knight-errant and those of the 'squire, his brother, anything related?

Fain. Not at all; Witwould grows by the knight like a medlar grafted on a crab. One will melt in your mouth, and t'other set your teeth on edge; one is all pulp, and the other all core.

Mir. So, one will be rotten before he be ripe, and the other will be rotten without being ripe at all.

Fain. Sir Wilful is an odd mixture of bashfulness and obstinacy. But when he's drunk, he's as loving as the monster in the Tempest; and much after the same manner. To give t'other his due, he has something of good nature, and does not always want wit.

Mir. Not always; but as often as his memory fails him, and his common-place comparisons. He is a fool with a good memory, and some few scraps of other folks' wit. He is one whose conversation can never be approved, yet it is now and then to be endured. He has indeed one good quality; he is not exceptionous; for he so passionately affects the reputation of understanding raillery, that he will construe an affront into a jest; and call downright rudeness and ill language, satire and wit.

Fain. If you have a mind to find his picture,

you have an opportunity to do it at full length. Besides the original.—[Enter WITWOULD.]

Wit. Afford me your compassion, my dears; pity me, Fainall; Mirabell, pity me.

Mir. I do, from my soul.

Fain. Why, what's the matter?

Wit. No letters for me, Betty?

Betty. Did not a messenger bring you one but Wit. Ay, but no other? [now sir?

Betty. No, sir,

Wit. That's hard, that's very hard! a messenger, a mule, a beast of burden; he has brought me a letter from the fool my brother, as heavy as a panegyric in a funeral sermon, or a copy of commendatory verses from one poet to another. And what's worse, 'tis as sure a forerunner of the author, as an epistle dedicatory.

Mir. A fool, and your brother, Witwould!

Wit. Ay, ay, my half-brother, My half-brother he is, no nearer upon honour.

Mir. Then 'tis possible he may be but half a fool.

Wit. Good, good, Mirabell *le drole*! Good, good, hang him, don't let's talk of him. Fainall, how does your lady? 'Gad I say anything in the world to get this fellow out of my head. I beg pardon that I should ask a man of pleasure, and the town, a question at once so foreign and domestic. But I talk like an old maid at a marriage; I don't know what I say; but she's the best woman in the world.

Fain. 'Tis well you don't know what you say, or else your commendation would go near to make me either vain or jealous.

Wit. No man in town lives well with a wife but Fainall. Your judgment, Mirabell?

Mir. You had better step and ask his wife, if you would be credibly informed.

Wit. Mirabell.

Mir. Ay.

Wit. My dear, I ask ten thousand pardons. 'Gad! I have forgotten what I was going to say to

Mir. I thank you heartily, heartily. [you.

Wit. No, but prythee, excuse me, my memory is such a memory.

Mir. Have a care of such apologies, Witwould, for I never knew a fool but he affected to complain, either of the spleen or his memory.

Fain. What have you done with Petulant?

Wit. He's reckoning his money; my money it was. I have had no luck to-day.

Fain. You may allow him to win of you at play; for you are sure to be too hard for him at repartee. Since you monopolize the wit that is between you, the fortune must be his of course.

Mir. I don't find that Petulant confesses the superiority of wit to be your talent, Witwould.

Wit. Come, come, you are malicious now, and would breed debates. Petulant's my friend, and a very pretty fellow, and a very honest fellow, and has a smattering—'faith and troth! a pretty deal of an odd sort of a small wit; nay, I do him justice, I'm his friend, I won't wrong him. And if he had any judgment in the world, he would not be altogether contemptible. Come, come, don't detract from the merits of my friend. [bred.

Fain. You don't take your friend to be over-nicely

Wit. No, no, hang him, the rogue has no manners at all, that I must own; no more breeding than a bumbail, that I grant you: 'tis pity; the fellow has fire and life.

Mir. What, courage?

Wit. Hum! 'faith! I don't know as to that; I can't say as to that. Yes, 'faith! in controversy, he'll contradict anybody.

Mir. Though 'twere a man who he feared, or a woman who he loved.

Wit. Well, well, he does not always think because he speaks; we have all our failings; you are the best upon him, you are, 'faith! Let me excuse him; I can defend most of his faults, except one he has, that's the truth on't; if he

were my brother, I could not acquit him; that indeed I could wish were otherwise.

Mir. Ay, marry, what's that, Witwould?

Wit. Oh, pardon me; expose the infirmities of my friend! no, my dear, excuse me there.

Fain. What, I warrant he's insincere, or 'tis some such trifle.

Wit. No, no; what if he be? 'tis no matter for that, his wit will excuse that; a wit should no more be sincere, than a woman constant; one argues a decay of parts, as t'other of beauty.

Mir. May be you think him too positive?

Wit. No, no, his being positive is an incentive to argument, and keeps up conversation.

Fain. Too illiterate?

Wit. That! that's his happiness, his want of learning gives him the more opportunity to shew

Mir. He wants words? [his natural parts.

Wit. Ay, but I like him for that now; for his want of words gives me the pleasure very often to

Fain. He's impudent? [explain his meaning.

Wit. No, that's not it.

Mir. What, he speaks unseasonable truths sometimes, because he has not wit enough to invent an evasion?

Wit. Truth! ha, ha, ha! No, no; since you will have it, I mean, he never speaks truth at all, that's all. He will lie like a chambermaid, or a woman of quality's porter. Now that is a fault.

Enter Coachman.

Coach. Is master Petulant here, mistress?

Betty. Yes. [speak with him.

Coach. Three gentlewoman in a coach would

Fain. Oh, brave Petulant! three!

Betty. I'll tell him.

Coach. You must bring two dishes of chocolate, and a glass of cinnamon-water. [Exit with Betty.

Wit. That should be for two fasting *bona robas* and a procuress troubled with wind. Now you may know what the three are. [quintessence.

Mir. You are very free with your friend's ac-

Wit. Ay, ay, friendship without freedom is as dull as love without enjoyment, or wine without toasting, but, to tell you a secret, these are trulls whom he allows coach-hire, and something more, by the week, to call on him once a day at public

Mir. How? [places.

Wit. You shall see he won't go to 'em, because there's no more company here to take notice of him. Why, this is nothing to what he used to do; before he found out this way, I have known him call for himself.

Fain. Call for himself! What dost thou mean?

Wit. Mean, why he would slip you out of this chocolate-house, just when you had been talking to him—as soon as your back was turned, whip he was gone; then trip to his lodging, clap on a hood and scarf, and a mask, slap into a hackney-coach, and drive hither to the door again in a trice; where he would send in for himself, that is, I mean, call for himself, wait for himself, nay, and what's more, not finding himself, sometimes leave a letter for himself.

Mir. I confess this is something extraordinary; I believe he waits for himself now, he is so long a coming. Oh! I ask his pardon.

Enter PETULANT and BETTY.

Betty. Sir, the coach stays.

Pet. Well, well; I come. 'Shud! I had as good be a professed midwife, as a professed fal-lant, at this rate. To be knocked up, and pushed at all hours, and in all places. Deuce on 'em, I won't come. D'ye hear? tell 'em I won't come. Let 'em snivel and cry their hearts out. [Exit Betty.

Fain. You are very cruel, Petulant.

Pet. All's one, let it pass; I have a humour to be cruel. [you use at this rate.

Mir. I hope they are not persons of condition that

Pet. Condition! 'condition's a dried fig, if I am not in humour. By this hand, if they were you—

a—a—your what-d'ye-call-'ems themselves, they must wait or rub off, if I am not in the vein.

Mir. What-d'ye-call-'ems! what are they, Witwould?

Wit. Empresses, my dear. By your what-d'ye-call-'ems he means sultana queens.

Pet. Ay, Roxalanas.

Mir. Cry your mercy.

Fain. Witwould says they are—

Pet. What does he say th'are?

Wit. I? fine ladies, I say.

Pet. Pass on, Witwould. Harkye, by this light, his relations; two co-heiresses, his cousins, and an old aunt, who loves intriguing better than a conventicle.

Wit. Ha, ha, ha! I had a mind to see how the rogue would come off, ha, ha, ha! 'Gad! I can't be angry with him, if he had said they were my

Mir. No! [mother and my sisters.

Wit. No; the rogue's wit and readiness of invention charm me, dear Petulant.—[Enter BETTY.]

Betty. They are gone, sir, in great anger.

Pet. Enough, let 'em trundle. Anger helps complexions, saves paint.

Fain. This continence is all dissembled; this is in order to have something to brag of the next time he makes court to Millamant, and swear he has abandoned the whole sex for her sake.

Mir. Have you not left off your impudent pretensions there yet? I shall cut your throat, some time or other, Petulant, about that business.

Pet. Ay, ay, let that pass; there are other

Mir. Meaning mine, sir? [throats to be cut.

Pet. Not I, I mean nobody; I know nothing; but there are uncles and nephews in the world, and they may be rivals. What then? all's one for that.

Mir. Now, harkye, Petulant, come hither; explain, or I shall call your interpreter.

Pet. Explain! I know nothing. Why, you have an uncle, have you not, lately come to town, and lodges by my Lady Wishfort's.

Mir. True.

Pet. Why, that's enough; you and he are not friends: and if he should marry and have a child, you may be disinherited, eh! [truth?

Mir. Where hast thou stumbled upon all this

Pet. All's one for that; why, then, say I know something.

Mir. Come, thou art an honest fellow, Petulant, and shalt make love to my mistress, thou shalt, 'faith! What hast thou heard of my uncle?

Pet. I! nothing; I! If throats are to be cut, let swords clash; snug's the word, I shrug and am silent.

Mir. Oh! raillery, raillery. Come, I knew thou art in the women's secrets; what, you're a cubalist; I know you staid at Millamant's last night, after I went. Was there any mention made of my uncle or me? tell me. If thou hadst but good-nature equal to thy wit, Petulant, Tony Witwould, who is now thy competitor in fame, would shew as dim by thee as a dead whiting's eye by a pearl of orient; he would no more be seen by thee, than Mercury is by the sun. Come, I'm sure thou wot't tell me.

Pet. If I do, will you grant me common sense, then, for the future?

Mir. 'Faith! I'll do what I can for thee, and I'll pray that it may be granted thee in the meantime.

Pet. Well, harkye! (They talk apart.)

Mir. Petulant, and you both, will find Mirabell as good a rival as a lover.

Fain. Ha, psba! that she laughs at Petulant is plain. And for my part, but that it is almost a fashion to admire her, I should—harkye! to tell you a secret, but let it go no farther—between friends, I shall never break my heart for her.

Fain. How!

[certain woman.

Wit. She's handsome; but she's a sort of an un-

Fain. I thought you had died for her.

Wit. Humph! no.

Fain. She has wit.

Wit. 'Tis what she will hardly allow anybody else. Now, I should hate that, if she were as handsome as Cleopatra. Mirabell is not so sure of her

Fain. Why do you think so? [as he thinks.

Wit. We staid pretty late there last night, and heard something of an uncle to Mirabell, who is lately come to town, and is between him and the best part of his estate. Whether he has seen Mrs. Millamant or not, I can't say; but there were items of such a treaty being in embryo; and if it should come to life, poor Mirabell would be in some sort unfortunately fobbed, i'faith! [to it.

Fain. 'Tis impossible Millamant should hearken

Wit. 'Faith! my dear, I can't tell; she's a woman, and a kind of a humorist. [lect last night?

Mir. And this is the sum of what you could col-

Pet. The quintessence. May be Witwould knows more, he staid longer; besides, they never mind him; they say anything before him.

Mir. I thought you had been the greatest favourite.

Pet. Ay, tête-à-tête; but not in public, because I

Mir. You do? [make remarks.

Pet. Ay, ay; I'm malicious, man. Now he's soft, you know; they are not in awe of him: the fellow's well-bred; he's what you call a—what-d'ye-call-em? a fine gentleman: but he's silly withal.

Mir. I thank you, I know as much as my curiosity requires. Fainall, are you for the Mall?

Fain. Ay, I'll take a turn before dinner.

Wit. Ay, we'll all walk in the park; the ladies talk of being there.

Mir. I thought you were obliged to watch for your brother, Sir Willful's arrival.

Wit. No, no; he comes to his aunt's, my Lady Wishfort: plague on him! I shall be troubled with him, too; what shall I do with the fool?

Pet. Beg him for his estate, that I may beg you afterwards; and so have but one trouble.

Wit. Oh! rare Petulant; thou art as quick as fire in a frosty morning; thou shalt to the Mall with us, and we'll be very severe.

Pet. Enough; I'm in a humour to be severe.

Mir. Are you? Pray, then, walk by yourselves. Let not us be accessory to your putting the ladies out of countenance with your senseless ribaldry, which you roar aloud as often as they pass by you; and when you have made a handsome woman blush, then you think you have been severe.

Pet. What, what? then let 'em either shew their innocence by not understanding what they hear, or else shew their discretion by not hearing what they would not be thought to understand.

Mir. But hast not thou, then, sense enough to know that thou oughtest to be most ashamed thyself, when thou hast put another out of countenance?

Pet. Not I, by this hand; I always take blushing either for a sign of guilt or ill-breeding.

Mir. I confess you ought to think so. You are in the right, that you may plead the error of your judgment in defence of your practice.

Where modesty's ill-manners, 'tis but fit

That impudence and malice pass for wit. [Exeunt.

ACT II.—SCENE I.—St. James's Park.

Enter MRS. FAINALL and MRS. MARWOOD.

Mrs. F. Ay, ay, dear Marwood, if we will be happy, we must find the means in ourselves, and among ourselves. Men are ever in extremes; either doating or averse. While they are lovers, if they have fire and sense, their jealousies are insupportable: and when they cease to love, (we ought to think, at least,) they loathe: they look upon us with horror and distate; they meet us like the ghosts of what we were, and as from such, fly from us.

Mrs. Mar. True, 'tis an unhappy circumstance of life, that love should ever die before us; and the man so often should outlive the lover, that what you will, 'tis better to be left than have been loved. To pass our youth in idleness, to refuse the sweets of life

once must leave us, is as preposterous as to wish to have been born old, because we one day must be old. For my part, my youth may wear and waste, but it shall never rust in my possession.

Mrs. F. Then it seems you dissemble an aversion to mankind, only in compliance to my mother's humour.

Mrs. Mar. Certainly. To be free; I have no taste of those insipid, dry discourses, with which our sex of force must entertain themselves apart from men. We may affect endearments to each other, profess eternal friendships, and seem to dote like lovers; but 'tis not in our natures long to persevere. Love will resume his empire in our breasts, and every heart, or soon or late, receive and readmit him as its lawful tyrant.

Mrs. F. Bless me, how have I been deceived! Why, you're a professed libertine.

Mrs. Mar. You see my friendship by my freedom. Come, be as sincere, acknowledge that your

Mrs. F. Never. [sentiments agree with mine.

Mrs. Mar. You hate mankind?

Mrs. F. Heartily, inveterately.

Mrs. Mar. Your husband? [meritoriously.

Mrs. F. Most transcendently; ay, though I say it,

Mrs. Mar. Give me your hand upon it.

Mrs. F. There. [been to try you.

Mrs. Mar. I join with you; what I have said has

Mrs. F. Is it possible? dost thou hate those vapours, men?

Mrs. Mar. I have done hating 'em, and am now come to despise 'em; the next thing I have to do, is eternally to forget 'em. [Penthesilea.

Mrs. F. There spoke the spirit of an Amazon, a

Mrs. Mar. And yet, I am thinking sometimes to

Mrs. F. How! [carry my aversion farther.

Mrs. Mar. By marrying; if I could but find one that loved me very well, and would be thoroughly sensible of ill usage, I think I should do myself the violence of undergoing the ceremony.

Mrs. F. You would not dishonour him?

Mrs. Mar. No; but I'd make him believe I did, and that's as bad.

Mrs. F. Why had you not as good do it?

Mrs. Mar. Oh! if he should ever discover it, he would then know the worst, and be out of his pain; but I would have him ever to continue upon the rack of fear and jealousy.

Mrs. F. Ingenious mischief! would thou invert marriage.

Mrs. Mar. Would I were!

Mrs. F. You change colour.

Mrs. Mar. Because I hate him.

Mrs. F. So do I; but I can hear him named. But what reason have you to hate him in particular?

Mrs. Mar. I never loved him; he is, and always was, insufferably proud.

Mrs. F. By the reason you give for your aversion, one would think it dissembled; for you have laid a fault to his charge, of which his enemies must acquit him.

Mrs. Mar. Oh! then it seems you are one of his favourable enemies. Methinks you look a little pale, and now you flush again. [sudden.

Mrs. F. Do I? I think I am a little sick o' the

Mrs. Mar. What ails you?

Mrs. F. My husband. Don't you see him? He turned short upon me unawares, and has almost overcome me.

Enter FAINALL and MIRABELL.

Mrs. Mar. Ha, ha, ha! He comes opportunely for you. [with him.

Mrs. F. For you, for he has brought Mirabell

Fain. My dear.

Mrs. F. My soul.

Fain. You don't look well to-day, child.

Mrs. F. I've think so?

Fain. The only man that does, madam.

Mrs. F. The only man that would tell me so, at the only man from whom I could bear it without infection.

Fain. Oh! my dear, I am satisfied of your tenderness; I know you cannot resent anything from me; especially what is an effect of my concern.

Mrs. F. Mr. Mirabell, my mother interrupted you in a pleasant relation last night; I could fain hear it out.

Mir. The persons concerned in that affair have yet a tolerable reputation. I am afraid Mr. Fainall will be censorious.

Mrs. F. He has a humour more prevailing than his curiosity, and will willingly dispense with the hearing of one scandalous story, to avoid giving an occasion to make another, by being seen to walk with his wife. This way, Mr. Mirabell, and I dare promise you will oblige us both. [Exit with Mir.

Fain. Excellent creature! well, sure, if I should live to be rid of my wife, I should be a miserable

Mrs. Mar. Ay? [man.

Fain. For having only that one hope, the accomplishment of it, of consequence, must put an end to all my hopes; and what a wretch is he who must survive his hopes! nothing remains, when that day comes, but to sit down and weep like Alexander, when he wanted other worlds to conquer.

Mrs. Mar. Will you not follow them?

Fain. No; I think not.

Mrs. Mar. Pray, let us; I have a reason.

Fain. You are not jealous?

Mrs. Mar. Of whom?

Fain. Of Mirabell.

Mrs. Mar. If I am, is it inconsistent with my love to you, that I am tender of your honour?

Fain. You would intimate, then, as if there were a particular understanding between my wife and him.

Mrs. Mar. I think she does not hate him to that degree she would be thought.

Fain. But he, I fear, is too insensible.

Mrs. Mar. It may be you are deceived. [lend it.

Fain. It may be so. I do not now begin to appreciate.

Mrs. Mar. What? [you are false.

Fain. That I have been deceived, madam, and

Mrs. Mar. That I am false! What mean you?

Fain. To let you know I see through all your little arts. Come, you both love him, and both have equally dissembled your aversion. Your mutual jealousies of one another have made you clash till you have both struck fire. I have seen the warm confession, reddening on your cheeks, and sparkling from your eyes,

Mrs. Mar. You do me wrong.

Fain. I do not. 'Twas for my ease to oversee and willfully neglect the gross advances made him by my wife; that, by permitting her to be engaged, I might continue unsuspected in my pleasures, and take you oftener to my arms in full security. But could you think, because the nodding husband would not wake, that e'er the watchful lover slept?

Mrs. Mar. And wherewithal can you reproach me? [love of Mirabell.

Fain. With infidelity, with loving another, with

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis false. I challenge you to shew an instance that can confirm your groundless accusation. I hate him.

Fain. And wherefore do you hate him? He is insensible, and your resentment follows his neglect. An instance! The injuries you have done him are a proof: your interposing in his love. What cause had you to make discoveries of his pretended passion? to undeceive the credulous aunt, the officious obstacle of his match with Mirabell.

Mrs. Mar. My obligations to my lady, and me: I had professed a friendship to her; and could not see her easy nature so abused by that dissembler.

Fain. What, was it conscience, then? Professed a friendship! Oh! the pious friendships of the female sex!

Mrs. Mar. More tender, more sincere, and more enduring, than all the vain and empty vows of men, whether professing love to us, or mutual faith to one another.

Fain. Ha, ha, ha! you are my wife's friend, too.

Mrs. Mar. Shame and ingratitude! Do you reproach me? You, you upbraid me! Have I been false to her through strict fidelity to you, and sacrificed my friendship to keep my love inviolate? and have you the baseness to charge me with the guilt, unmindful of the merit? To you it should be meritorious, that I have been vicious; and do you reflect that guilt upon me, which should lie buried in your own bosom?

Fain. You misinterpret my reproof. I meant but to remind you of the slight account you once could make of strictest ties, when set in competition with your love to me.

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis false; you urged it with deliberate malice; 'twas spoken in scorn, and I never will forgive it.

Fain. Your guilt, not your resentment, begets your rage. If yet you loved, you could forgive a jealousy: but you are stung to find you are discovered.

Mrs. Mar. It shall be all discovered. You, too, shall be discovered; be sure you shall. I can but be exposed; if I do it myself, I shall prevent you.

Fain. Why, what will you do? [baseness.]

Mrs. Mar. Disclose it to your wife; own what

Fain. Frenzy! [has passed between us.]

Mrs. Mar. By all my wrongs I'll do't. I'll publish to the world the injuries you have done me, both in my fame and fortune: with both I trusted you, you bankrupt in honour, as indigent of wealth.

Fain. Your fame I have preserved. Your fortune has been bestowed as the prodigality of your love would have it, in pleasures which we both have shared. Yet, had not you been false, I had ere this repaid it. 'Tis true, had you permitted Mirabell with Millamant to have stolen their marriage, my lady had been incensed beyond all means of reconciliation: Millamant had forfeited the moiety of her fortune, which then would have descended to my wife. And wherefore did I marry, but to make lawful prize of a rich widow's wealth, and squander it on love and you.

Mrs. Mar. Deceit and frivolous pretence.

Fain. Death! am I not married! what's pretence? Am I not imprisoned, fettered? have I not a wife? pay, a wife that was a widow, a young widow, a handsome widow; and would be again a widow, but that I have a heart of proof, and something of a constitution to bustle through the ways of wedlock and this world. Will you be reconciled to truth and me?

Mrs. Mar. Impossible. Truth and you are inconsistent. I hate you, and shall for ever.

Fain. You know I love you. [is not yet—]

Mrs. Mar. Poor dissembling! Oh! that—Well, it

Fain. What? what is not yet? what is not yet? is it not yet too late? [comfort.]

Mrs. Mar. No, it is not yet too late; I have that

Fain. It is, to love another.

Mrs. Mar. But not to loathe, detest, abhor mankind, myself, and the whole treacherous world.

Fain. Nay, this is extravagance. Come, I ask your pardon. No tears: I was to blame—I could not love you and be easy in my doubts. Pray, forbear: I believe you; I'm convinced I've done you wrong; and any way, every way, will make amends; I'll hate my wife yet more; d— her! I'll part with her, rob her of all she's worth, and we'll retire somewhere, anywhere, to another world. I'll marry them, they are punished—Sdeath! they come; hide your face, your tears—You have a mask, wear it a moment. This way, this way; be persuaded. [Exeunt.]

Mrs. Mar. Mirabell and Mrs. Fainall.

Mrs. Mar. They are here yet.

Mrs. Mar. They are turning into the other walk.

Mrs. F. While I only hated my husband, I could bear to see him; but since I have despised him, he's too offensive.

Mrs. F. Oh! you should hate with prudence.

Mrs. F. Yes, for I have loved with indiscretion.

Mrs. F. You should have just so much disgust for your husband, as may be sufficient to make you relish your lover.

Mrs. F. You have been the cause that I have loved without bounds; and would you set limits to that aversion, of which you have been the occasion? Why did you make me marry this man?

Mrs. F. Why do we daily commit disagreeable and dangerous actions? To save that idol reputation. If the familiarities of our loves had produced that consequence, of which you were apprehensive, where could you have fixed a father's name with credit, but on a husband? I knew Fainall to be a man lavish of his morals, an interested and professing friend, a false and a designing lover; yet one whose wit and outward fair behaviour have gained a reputation with the town, enough to make that woman stand excused who has suffered herself to be won by his addresses. A better man ought not to have been sacrificed to the occasion; a worse had not answered to the purpose. When you are weary of him, you know your remedy. [with you, Mirabell.]

Mrs. F. I ought to stand in some degree of credit

Mrs. F. In justice to you, I have made you privy to my whole design, and put it in your power to ruin or advance my fortune. [your pretended uncle?]

Mrs. F. Who have you instructed to represent

Mrs. F. Waitwell, my servant.

Mrs. F. He is an humble servant to Foible, my mother's woman, and may win her to your interest.

Mrs. F. Care is taken for that: she is won and worn by this time. They were married this morning.

Mrs. F. Who?

Mrs. F. Waitwell and Foible. I would not tempt my servant to betray me by trusting him too far. If your mother, in hopes to ruin me, should consent to marry my pretended uncle, he might, like Mosca in the Fox, stand upon terms; so I made him sure beforehand.

Mrs. F. So, if my poor mother be caught in a contract, you will discover the imposture betimes; and release her, by producing a certificate of her gallant's former marriage.

Mrs. F. Yes, upon condition that she consent to my marriage with her niece, and surrender the moiety of her fortune in her possession.

Mrs. F. She talked last night of endeavouring at a match between Millamant and your uncle.

Mrs. F. That was by Foible's direction, and my instruction, that she might seem to carry it more privately.

Mrs. F. Well, I have an opinion of your success; for I believe my lady will do anything to get a husband; and when she has this which you have provided for her, I suppose she will submit to anything to get rid of him.

Mrs. F. Yes, I think the good lady would marry anything that resembled a man, though 'twere no more than what a butler could pinch out of a napkin.

Mrs. F. Female frailty! we must all come to it, if we live to be old, and feel the craving of a false appetite when the true is decayed.

Mrs. F. An old woman's appetite is depraved like that of a girl—'tis the green sickness of a second childhood; and like the faint offer of a latter spring, serves but to usher in the fall, and withers in an

Mrs. F. Here's your mistress. [affected bloom.]

Enter Mrs. MILLAMANT, WITWOULD, and

MIRNING.

Mrs. F. Here she comes, i'faith! fall sail, with her fan spread and streamers out, and a shoal of fools for tenders—eh! no; I cry her mercy.

Mrs. F. I see but one poor empty vessel; and she tows her woman after him.

Mrs. F. You seem to be unattended, much used to have the *beau monde* throng about you, a flock of gay, fine perukes hovering round you.

Mrs. F. Like moths about a candle. I have lost my comparison for want of

Mrs. Mill. Oh! I have denied myself airs to-day. I have walked as fast through the crowd—

Wit. As a favourite just disgraced; and with as few followers.

Mrs. Mill. Dear Mr. Witwould, truce with your similitudes; for I am as sick of 'em—

Wit. As a physician of a good air. I cannot help it, madam, though 'tis against myself.

Mrs. Mill. Yet again! Mincing, stand between me and his wit.

Wit. Do, Mrs. Mincing, like a screen before a great fire. I confess, I do blaze to-day, I am too bright.

Mrs. F. But, Millamant, why were you so long?

Mrs. M. Long! Lud! have I not made violent haste? I have asked every living thing I met for you; I have inquired after you, as after a new fashion.

Wit. Madam, truce with your similitudes: no, you met her husband, and did not ask him for her.

Mir. By your leave, Witwould, that were like inquiring after an old fashion, to ask a husband for his wife. [it.]

Wit. Hum! a hit, a hit, a palpable hit, I confess.

Mir. You were dressed before I came abroad.

Mrs. Mill. Ay, that's true. Oh! but then I had—

Mincing, what had I? why was I so long?

Min. Oh! mem, your la'ship staid to peruse a

paquet of letters.

Mrs. Mill. Oh! ay, letters: I had letters; I am persecuted with letters; I hate letters; nobody knows how to write letters; and yet one has 'em, one does not know why—they serve one to pin up one's hair.

Wit. Is that the way? Pray, madam, do you pin up your hair with all your letters? I find I must keep copies.

Mrs. Mill. Only with those in verse, Mr. Witwould. I never pin up my hair with prose. I think I tried once, Mincing.

Min. Oh! mem, I shall never forget it.

Mrs. Mill. Ay, poor Mincing tiffed and tiffed all the morning.

Min. Till I had the cramp in my fingers, I'll vow, mem, and all to no purpose. But when your la'ship pins it up with poetry, it sits so pleasant the next day as anything, and is so pure and so crisps!

Wit. Indeed, so crisps?

Min. You're such a critic, Mr. Witwould.

Mrs. Mill. Mirabell, did you take exceptions last night?—Oh! ay, and went away. Now I think on't I'm angry—No, now I think on't, I'm pleased; for I believe I gave you some pain.

Mir. Does that please you?

Mrs. Mill. Infinitely; I love to give pain.

Mir. You would affect a cruelty which is not in your nature; your true vanity is in the power of pleasing.

Mrs. Mill. Oh! I ask your pardon for that. One's cruelty is one's power, and when one parts with one's cruelty, one parts with one's power; and when one has parted with that, I fancy one's old and ugly.

Mir. Ay, ay, suffer your cruelty to ruin the object of your power, to destroy your lover; and then how vain, how lost a thing you'll be! The ugly and old, whom the looking-glass mortifies, yet after commendation, can be flattered by it, and discover beauties in it; for that reflects our praises, rather than your face.

Mrs. Mill. Oh! the vanity of these men! Fainall, d'ye hear him? If they did not commend us, we were not handsome! Now, you must know they could not commend one, if one was not handsome. Beauty the lover's gift! Dear me, what is a lover, that makes us so? Why, one makes lovers as fast as one pleases, and they live as long as one pleases, and then, if one makes more.

Wit. Pretty. Why, you make no more of it, madam, than of making so many

One no more owes one's beauty to a

lover, than one's wit to an echo: they can but reflect what we look and say; vain, empty things, if we are silent or unseen, and want a being.

Mir. Yet, to those two vain, empty things, you owe two of the greatest pleasures of your life.

Mrs. Mill. How so?

Mir. To your lover you owe the pleasure of hearing yourselves praised; and to an echo the pleasure of hearing yourselves talk.

Wit. But I know a lady that loves talking so incessantly, she won't give an echo fair play; she has that everlasting rotation of tongue, that an echo must wait till she dies, before it can catch her last words.

Mrs. Mill. Oh! fiction. Fainall, let us leave these

Mir. Draw off Witwould. (To Mrs. F.) [men.]

Mrs. F. Immediately. I have a word or two for Mr. Witwould. [Exit with Witwould.]

Mir. I would beg a little private audience, too. You had the tyranny to deny me last night; though you knew I came to impart a secret to you that concerned my love.

Mrs. Mill. You saw I was engaged.

Mir. Unkind. You had the leisure to entertain a herd of fools; things who visit you from their excessive idleness; bestowing on your easiness that time, which is the incumbrance of their lives. How can you find delight in such society? It is impossible they should admire you, they are not capable; or if they were, it should be to you a mortification; for, sure, to please a fool is some degree of folly.

Mrs. Mill. I please myself: besides, sometimes to converse with fools is for my health.

Mir. Your health! Is there a worse disease than the conversation of fools? [it, next to *asafetida*.]

Mrs. Mill. Yes, the vapours; fools are physic for

Mir. You are not in a course of fools?

Mrs. Mill. Mirabell, if you persist in this offensive freedom, you'll displease me. I think I must resolve, after all, not to have you. We sha'n't agree.

Mir. Not in our physic, it may be.

Mrs. Mill. And yet, our distemper, in all likelihood, will be the same; for we shall be sick of one another. I sha'n't endure to be reprimanded, nor instructed; 'tis so dull to act always by advice, and so tedious to be told of one's faults, I can't bear it. Well, I won't have you, Mirabell—I'm resolved—I think—You may go. Ha, ha, ha! What would you give that you could help loving me?

Mir. I would give something that you did not know I could not help it. [what do you say to me?]

Mrs. Mill. Come, don't look grave, then. Well,

Mir. I say that a man may as soon make a friend by his wit, or a fortune by his honesty, as win a woman with plain-dealing and sincerity.

Mrs. Mill. Sententious Mirabell! Pr'ythee, don't look with that violent and inflexible wise face, like Solomon at the dividing of the child, in an old tapestry hanging.

Mir. You are merry, madam; but I would persuade you for a moment to be serious.

Mrs. Mill. What, with that face? No, if you keep your countenance 'tis impossible I should hold mine. Well, after all, there is something very moving in a love-sick face. Ha, ha, ha! Well, I won't laugh; don't be peevish. Heigho! Now I'll be melancholy; as melancholy as a watch-light. Well, Mirabell, if ever you will win me, woo me now. Nay, if you are so tedious, fare you well: I see they are walking away.

Mir. Can you not find, in the variety of your disposition, one moment—

Mrs. Mill. To hear you tell me Foible's married, and your plot likely to speed? No.

Mir. But how came you to know it?

Mrs. Mill. Without the help of conjuration, you can't imagine; unless she should tell me herself. Which of the two it may have been, I will leave you to consider; and when you have done thinking of that, think of me. [Exit with Mincing.]

Mir. I have something more—Gone! Think of

you! to think of a whirlwind, though 'twere in a whirlwind, were a case of more steady contemplation; a very tranquillity of mind and mansion. A fellow that lives in a windmill, has not a more whimsical dwelling than the heart of a man that is lodged in a woman. There is no point of the compass to which they cannot turn, and by which they are not turned; and by one as well as another, for motion, not method, is their occupation. To know this, and yet continue to be in love, is to be made wise from the dictates of reason, and yet persevere to play the fool by the force of instinct. Oh! here comes my pair of turtles. What, billing so sweetly! is not Valentine's day over with you yet?—[Enter WAITWELL and FOIBLE.]—Sirrah, Waitwell, why, sure, you think you were married for your own recreation, and not for my convenience.

Wait. Your pardon, sir. With submission, we have, indeed, been billing; but still with an eye to business, sir. I have instructed her as well as I could. If she can take your directions as readily as my instructions, sir, your affairs are in a prosperous way. Give you joy, Mrs. Foible. [perous way.]

Foi. Oh la! sir, I'm so ashamed. I'm afraid my lady has been in a thousand inquietudes for me. But I protest, sir, I made as much haste as I could.

Wait. That she did, indeed, sir.

Foi. I told my lady, as you instructed me, sir, that I had a prospect of seeing Sir Rowland, your uncle; and that I would put her ladyship's picture in my pocket to shew him; which, I'll be sure to say, has made him so enamoured of her beauty, that he burns with impatience to lie at her ladyship's feet, and worship the original. [eloquent in love.]

Mrs. Excellent Foible! Matrimony has made you

Wait. I think she has profited, sir; I think so.

Foi. You have seen Madam Millamant, sir?

Mrs. Yes.

Foi. I told her, sir, because I did not know that you might find an opportunity; she had so much company last night. [time—(Gives money.)]

Mrs. Your diligence will merit more; in the mean-

Foi. Oh! dear sir, your humble servant.

Wait. Spouse—

Mrs. Stand off, sir; not a penny. Go on and prosper, Foible. The lease shall be made good, and the farm stocked, if we succeed.

Foi. I don't question your generosity, sir; and you need not doubt of success. If you have no more commands, sir, I'll be gone; I'm sure my lady is at her toilet, and can't dress till I come. Oh dear! I'm sure that (looking out) was Mrs. Marwood that went by in a mask; if she has seen me with you I'm sure she'll tell my lady. I'll make haste home and prevent her. Your servant, sir. B'ye, Waitwell. [Exit.]

Wait. Sir Rowland, if you please. The jade's so pert upon her preferment, she forgets herself.

Mrs. Come, sir, will you endeavour to forget yourself, and transform into Sir Rowland?

Wait. Why, sir, it will be impossible I should remember myself. [Exit Mrs.] Married, knighted, and attended, all in one day! 'tis enough to make any man forget himself. The difficulty will be how to recover my acquaintance and familiarity with my former self; and fall from my transformation to a reformation into Waitwell. Nay, I sha'n't be quite the same Waitwell neither; for now I remember, I'm married, and can't be my own again.

As there's my grief; that's the sad change of life, To lose my title, and yet keep my wife. [Exit.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Room in Lady Wishfort's house.

LADY WISHFORT at her toilet, PEG waiting.

Lady W. Merciful! no news of Foible yet?

Peg. No, madam.

Lady W. I have no more patience—If I have not fretted myself till I am pale again, there's no verocity in me. Fetch me the red—the red, do you hear? An ariant ash-colour, as I'm a person. Look you

how this wench stirs! why dost thou not fetch me a little red? didst thou not hear me, mopas?

Peg. The red ratasia, does your ladyship mean, or the cherry brandy?

Lady W. Ratasia, fool! no, fool, not the ratasia, fool! Grant me patience! I mean the Spanish paper, idiot; complexion. Darling paint, paint, paint; dost thou understand that, changeling, dangling thy hands like bobbins before thee? why dost thou not stir, puppet? thou wooden thing upon wires.

Peg. Lord, madam, your ladyship is so impatient! I cannot come at the paint, madam; Mrs. Foible has locked it up, and carried the key with her.

Lady W. Plague take you both! Fetch me the cherry-brandy, then. [Exit Peg.] I'm as pale and as faint, I look like Mrs. Quailsnick, the curate's wife, that's always breeding. Wench, come, come, wench; what art thou doing, sipping? tasting? save thee, dost thou not know the bottle?

Enter PEG, with a bottle and china cup.

Peg. Madam, I was looking for a cup.

Lady W. A cup! save thee; and what a cup hast thou brought! dost thou take me for a fairy, to drink out of an acorn? why didst thou not bring thy thimble? hast thou ne'er a brass thimble clinking in thy pocket with a bit of nutmeg? I warrant thee. Come, fill, fill. So, again. [Knocking heard.] See who that is. Set down the bottle here. Here, here, under the table. What, wouldst thou go with the bottle in thy hand, like a tapster? [Exit Peg.] As I'm a person, this wench has lived in an inn upon the road before she came to me.—[Re-enter PEG.]—No Foible yet?

Peg. No, madam; Mrs. Marwood.

Lady W. Oh! Marwood! let her come in. Come in, good Marwood.—[Enter Mrs. MARWOOD.]

Mrs. Mar. I'm surprised to find your ladyship in dishabille at this time of day.

Lady W. Foible's a lost thing; has been abroad since morning, and never heard of since.

Mrs. Mar. I saw her but now, as I came masked through the park, in conference with Mirabell.

Lady W. With Mirabell! you call my blood into my face with mentioning that traitor. She darst not have the confidence. I sent her to negotiate an affair, in which, if I'm detected, I'm undone. If that wheedling villain has wrought upon Foible to detect me, I'm ruined. Oh! my dear friend, I'm a wretch of wretches if I'm detected. [Foible's integrity.]

Mrs. Mar. Oh! madam, you cannot suspect Mrs.

Lady W. Oh! he carries poison in his tongue that would corrupt integrity itself. If she has given him an opportunity, she has as good as put her integrity into his hands. Ah! dear Marwood, what's integrity to an opportunity? Hark! I hear her. Dear friend, retire into my closet, that I may examine her with more freedom. You'll pardon me, dear friend, I can make bold with you. There are books over the chimney: Quarles and Bunyan's works, to entertain you. [Exit Mrs. Mar.] Go, you thing, and send her in.—[Exit Peg. Enter FOIBLE.]—Oh! Foible, where hast thou been? what hast thou been doing?

Foi. Madam, I have seen the party.

Lady W. But what hast thou done?

Foi. Nay, 'tis your ladyship has done, and are to do; I have only promised. But a man so enamoured—so transported! well, if worshipping of pictures be a sin—poor Sir Rowland, I say.

Lady W. The miniature has been counted like—But hast thou not betrayed me, Foible? Hast thou not detected me to that faithless Mirabell? What hadst thou to do with him in the park? answer me, has he got nothing out of thee?

Foi. So mischief has been before-hand, what shall I say? [Aside.] Alas! madam, help it, if I met that confident thing! was I? If you had heard how he used me, and your ladyship's account, I'm sure you suspect my fidelity. Nay, if that had

words, I could have borne: but he had a sting at your ladyship, too; and then I could not hold: but, I faith! I gave him his own.

Lady W. Me! what did the filthy fellow say?

Foib. Oh! madam, 'tis a shame to say what he said: with his taunts and sneers, tossing up his nose. "Humph!" says he, "what, you are hatching some plot," says he, "you are so early abroad; oratorizing," says he, "ferretting for some disbanded officer, I warrant. Half-pay is but thin subsistence," says he. "Well, what pension does your lady propose? Let me see," says he, "what, she must come down pretty deep now she's superannuated," says he; and—

Lady W. Odds my life! I'll have him murdered. I'll have him poisoned. Where does he eat? I'll marry a drawer, to have him poisoned in his wine.

Foib. Poison him! poisoning's too good for him. Starve him, madam, starve him; marry Sir Rowland, and get him disinherited. Oh! you would bless yourself to hear what he said.

Lady W. A villain! superannuated!

Foib. "Humph!" says he, "I hear you are laying designs against me, too," says he, "and Mrs. Millamant is to marry my uncle;" he does not suspect a word of your ladyship; "but," says he, "I'll fit you for that, I warrant you," says he; "I'll hamper you for that," says he, "you and your old frippery, too," says he; "I'll handle you!"—

Lady W. Audacious villain! handle me! would he durst! Friggery! old frigggery! Was there ever such a foul-mouthed fellow! I'll be married to-morrow, I'll be contracted to-night.

Foib. The sooner the better, madam.

Lady W. Will Sir Rowland be here, say'st thou? when, Foible?

Foib. Incontinently, madam. No new sheriff's wife expects the return of her husband after knight-hood, with that impatience in which Sir Rowland burns for the dear honour of kissing your ladyship's hand after dinner.

Lady W. Friggery! superannuated frigggery! I'll frigggery the villain; I'll reduce him to frigggery and rage; a tatteredmellion. I hope to see him hung with tatters, like a Long-lane pent-house, or a gibbet thief. A slander-mouthed railer: I warrant the spendthrift prodigal is in debt as much as the million lottery, or the whole court upon a birthday. I'll spoil his credit with his tailor. Yes, he shall have my niece with her fortune, he shall.

Foib. He! I hope to see him lodge in Ludgate first, and angle into Blackfriars for brass farthings, with an old mitten.

Lady W. Ay, dear Foible; thank thee for that, dear Foible. He has put me out of all patience. I shall never recompose my features, to receive Sir Rowland with any economy of face. The wretch has fretted me, that I am absolutely decayed. Look Foible.

Foib. Your ladyship has frowned a little too rashly, indeed, madam. There are some cracks discernable in the white varnish.

Lady W. Let me see the glass. Cracks, say'st thou? why, I am arrantly flayed: I look like an old peeled wall. Thou must repair me, Foible, before Sir Rowland comes; or I shall never keep up to my picture.

Foib. I warrant you, madam; a little art once made your picture like you; and now a little of the same art must make you like your picture. Your picture must sit for you, madam.

Lady W. But art thou sure Sir Rowland will not fall to come? or will he not fail when he does come? will he be importunate, Foible, and push? for if he should not be importunate—I shall never break down. I shall die with confusion, if I am forced to. Oh! no, I can never advance: I shall never be able to expect advances. No, I hope I am better bred than to put a lady to the breaking her forms. I won't be too coy,

neither. I won't give him despair. But a little disdain is not amiss: a little scorn is alluring.

Foib. A little scorn becomes your ladyship.

Lady W. Yes, but tenderness becomes me best: You see that picture has a sort of—eh! Foible!—a swimmingness in the eyes. Yes, I'll look so. My niece affects it; but she wants features. Is Sir Rowland handsome? Let my toilet be removed; I'll dress above. I'll receive Sir Rowland here. Is he handsome! Don't answer me. I won't know; I'll be surprised; I'll be taken by surprise. [man.

Foib. By storm, madam; Sir Rowland's a brisk

Lady W. Is he? Oh! then he'll importune, if he's a brisk man. I have a mortal terror at the apprehension. Let my things be removed, good Foible. [Exit.

Enter MRS. FAIRALL.

Mrs. F. Oh! Foible, I have been in a fright, lest I should come too late. That devil, Marwood, saw you in the park with Mirabell, and I'm afraid will discover it to my lady.

Foib. Discover what, madam?

Mrs. F. Nay, nay, put not on that strange face. I am privy to the whole design, and know that Waitwell, to whom thou wert this morning married, is to personate Mirabell's uncle, and as such, winning my lady, to involve her in those difficulties from which Mirabell only must release her, by his making his conditions to have my cousin and her fortune left to her own disposal.

Foib. Oh! dear madam, I beg your pardon. It was not my confidence in your ladyship that was deficient; but I thought the former good correspondence between your ladyship and Mr. Mirabell might have hindered his communicating this secret.

Mrs. F. Dear Foible, forget that.

Foib. Oh! dear madam, Mr. Mirabell is such a sweet winning gentleman—But your ladyship is the pattern of generosity. Sweet lady, to be so good! Mr. Mirabell cannot choose but be grateful. I find your ladyship has his heart still. Now, madam, I can safely tell your ladyship our success. Mrs. Marwood has told my lady; but I warrant I managed myself. I turned it all for the better. I told my lady that Mr. Mirabell railed at her. I laid horrid things to his charge, I'll vow; and my lady is so incensed, that she'll be contracted to Sir Rowland to-night, she says.

Mrs. F. Oh rare Foible!

Foib. Madam, I beg your ladyship to acquaint Mr. Mirabell of his success. I would be seen as little as possible to speak to him; besides, I believe Madam Marwood watches me; she has a penchant; but I know Mr. Mirabell can't abide her. John, remove my lady's toilet. Madam, your servant. My lady is so impatient, I fear she'll come for me if I stay.

Mrs. F. I'll go with you up the back stairs, lest I should meet her. [Exit.

Enter MRS. MARWOOD.

Mrs. Mar. Indeed, Mrs. Engine, is it thus with you? Are you become a go-between of this importance? Yes, I shall watch you. Why, this wench is the *pass-partout*, a very master-key to every body's strong box. My friend Fairall, have you carried it so swimmingly? I thought there was something in it; but it seems 'tis over with you. Your loathing is not from a want of appetite, then, but from a surfeit: else you could never be so cool to fall from a principal to be an assistant; to procure for him! a pattern of generosity, that I confess. Oh! man, man! Woman, woman! The devil's an ass: if I were a painter, I would draw him like an idiot, a driveller, with a bib and bells. Man should have his head and horns, and woman the rest of him. Poor simple fiend! Madam Marwood has a penchant, but he can't abide her. Here comes the good lady, panting ripe; with a heart full of hope, and a head full of care, like any chemist upon the day of projection.

Enter LADY WISHFORT.

Lady W. Oh! dear Marwood, what shall I say

for this rude forgetfulness? But my dear friend is all goodness. [very well entertained.]

Mrs. Mar. No apologies, dear madam. I have been

Lady W. As I'm a person, I am in a very chaos to think I should so forget myself; but I have such an olio of affairs, really I know not what to do. (*Cells.*) Foible! I expect my nephew, Sir Wilful, every moment, too.—Why, Foible!—He means to travel for improvement.

Mrs. Mar. Methinks Sir Wilful should rather think of marrying than travelling at his year.. I hear he is turned of forty.

Lady W. Oh! he's in less danger of being spoiled by his travels. I am against my nephew's marrying too young. It will be time enough when he comes back, and has acquired discretion to choose for himself.

Mrs. Mar. Methinks, Mrs. Millamant and he would make a very fit match. He may travel afterwards. 'Tis a thing very usual with young gentlemen.

Lady W. I promise you I have thought on't; and since 'tis your judgment, I'll think on't again. I assure you I will; I value your judgment extremely. On my word, I'll propose it.—[*Enter FOIBLE.*]—Come, come, Foible. I had forgot my nephew will be here before dinner. I must make haste.

Fo. Mr. Witwould and Mr. Petulant are come to dine with your ladyship.

Lady W. Oh dear! I can't appear till I'm dressed. Dear Marwood, shall I be free with you again, and beg you to entertain 'em? I'll make all imaginable haste. Dear friend, excuse me. [*Exit with Foible.*]

Enter MRS. MILLAMANT AND MINCING.

Mrs. Mill. Sure, never anything was so unbred as that odious man, Marwood, your servant.

Mrs. Mar. You have a colour: what's the matter?

Mrs. Mill. That horrid fellow, Petulant, has provoked me into a flame. I have broken my fan. Mincing, lend me your's. Is not all the powder out of my

Mrs. Mar. No. What has he done? [hair?]

Mrs. Mill. Nay, he has done nothing; he has only talked; nay, he has said nothing neither; but he has contradicted everything that has been said. For my part, I thought Witwould and he would have quarrelled. [have sit.]

Mrs. M. I vow, mem, I thought once they would

Mrs. Mill. Well, 'tis a lamentable thing, I swear, that one has not the liberty of choosing one's acquaintance as one does one's clothes.

Mrs. Mar. If we had that liberty, we should be as weary of one set of acquaintance, though never so good, as we are of one suit, though never so fine. A fool and a doisy stuff would now and then find days of grace, and be worn for variety.

Mrs. Mill. I could consent to wear 'em, if they would wear alike; but fools never wear out. They are such *drap-de-berry* things! without one could give 'em to one's chambermaid after a day or two.

Mrs. Mar. 'Twere better so, indeed. Or what think you of the play-house? A fine, gay, glossy fool should be given there, like a new masking-habit after the masquerade is over, and we have done with the disguise. For a fool's visit is always a disguise; and never admitted by a woman of wit, but to blind her affair with a lover of sense. If you would but appear barefaced now, and own Mirabell, you might as easily put off Petulant and Witwould as your hood and scarf. And, indeed, 'tis time, for the town has found it; the secret is grown too big for the pretence: indeed, Millamant, you can no more conceal it than my Lady Strammel can her face, that goodly face, which, in defiance of her Rhenish wine tea, will not be comprehended in a mask.

Mrs. Mill. I'll take my death, Marwood, you are more comelier than a decayed beauty, or a discoloured beast. Mincing, tell the men they may come up. My aunt is not dressing here; their folly is less provoking than your malice. [*Exit Mincing.*] The town has found it! what has it found? That Mirabell loves me is no more a secret, than it is a secret

that you discovered it to my aunt, or than the reason why you discovered it is a secret.

Mrs. Mar. You are nettled.

Mrs. Mill. You're mistaken. Ridiculous!

Mrs. Mar. Indeed, my dear, you'll tear another fan if you don't mitigate those violent airs.

Mrs. Mill. Oh, silly! Ha, ha, ha! I could laugh immoderately. Poor Mirabell! His constancy to me has quite destroyed his complaisance for all the world beside. I swear I never enjoined it him, to be so coy; if I had the vanity to think he would obey me, I would command him to shew more gallantry. 'Tis hardly well-bred to be so particular on one hand, and so insensible on the other. But I despair to prevail, and so let him follow his own way. Ha, ha, ha! Pardon me, dear creature, I must laugh—ha, ha, ha!—though I grant you 'tis a little barbarous. Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. Mar. What pity 'tis so much fine raillery, and delivered with so significant gesture, should be so unhappily directed to miscarry!

Mrs. Mill. Dear creature, I ask your pardon. I swear I did not mind you.

Mrs. Mar. Mr. Mirabell and you both may think a thing impossible, when I shall tell him by telling you—

Mrs. Mill. Oh dear! what? for, 'tis the same thing, if I hear it. Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. Mar. That I detest him, hate him, madam.

Mrs. Mill. Oh! madam, why, so do I. And yet the creature loves me. Ha, ha, ha! How can one forbear laughing to think of it? I am a sybil if I am not amazed to think what he can see in me. I'll take my death, I think you are handsomer, and within a year or two as young. If you could but stay for me, I should overtake you. But that cannot be. Well, that thought makes me melancholic. Now I'll be sad. [sooner than you think.]

Mrs. Mar. Your merry note may be changed

Mrs. Mill. D'ye say so? Then I'm resolved I'll have a song to keep up my spirits.

Enter MINCING.

Mrs. M. The gentlemen stay but to comb, madam; and will wait on you.

Enter PETULANT AND WITWOULD.

Mrs. Mill. Is your animosity composed, gentlemen? Wit. Raillery, raillery, madam; we have no animosity; we hit off a little wit now and then, but no animosity. The falling out of wits, is like the falling out of lovers. We agree in the main, like treble and bass. Eh! Petulant? [to contradict—]

Pet. Ay, in the main. But when I have a humour Wit. Ay, when he has a humour to contradict, then I contradict, too. What! I know my cue. Then we contradict one another like two battledores; for contradictions beget one another like Jews.

Pet. If he says black's black—if I have a humour to say 'tis blue—Let that pass; all's one for that. If I have a humour to prove it, it must be granted.

Wit. Not positively must; but it may, it may.

Pet. Yes, it positively must, upon proof positive.

Wit. Ay, upon proof positive it must; but upon proof presumptive it only may. That's a logical distinction now, madam.

Mrs. Mar. I perceive your debates are of importance, and very learnedly handled.

Pet. Inimportance is one thing, and learning's another; but a debate's a debate, that I assert.

Wit. Petulant's an enemy to learning; he relies altogether on his parts. [me.]

Pet. No, I'm no enemy to learning; it hurts not *Mrs. Mar.* That's a sign, indeed, 'tis no enemy to you. [that have it.]

Pet. No, no; 'tis no enemy to anybody but those *Mrs. Mill.* Well, an illiterate man's my aversion. I wonder at the impudence of an illiterate man, to offer to make love.

Wit. That, I confess, I wonder at, too.

Mrs. Mill. Ah! to marry an ignorant! that can hardly read or write.

Pet. Why should a man be any further from being married though he can't read, than he is from being hanged? The ordinary's paid for setting the psalm, and the parish priest for reading the ceremony. And for the rest which is to follow, in both cases, a man may do it without book; so all's one for that.

Mrs. Mill. D'y'e hear the creature? Lord! here's company! I'll be gone. *[Exit with Mincing.]*

Enter SIR WILFUL WITWOULD in a riding-dress, and Footman.

Wit. In the name of Bartholomew and his fair, what have we here? *[know him?]*

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis your brother, I fancy. Don't you *Wit.* Not I. Yes, I think it is he. I've almost forgot him; I have not seen him since the revolution.

Foot. Sir, my lady's dressing. Here's company; if you please to walk in, in the meantime.

Sir W. Dressing! What, 'tis but morning here I warrant with you in London; we should count it towards afternoon in our parts, down in Shropshire. Why, then, belike my aunt ha'n't dined yet;

Foot. Your aunt, sir? *[eh! friend?]*

Sir W. My aunt, sir? yes, my aunt, sir, and your lady, sir; your lady is my aunt, sir. Why, what, dost thou not know me, friend? Why, then, send somebody hither that does. How long hast thou lived with thy lady, fellow, eh?

Foot. A week, sir; longer than any in the house, except my lady's woman.

Sir W. Why, then, belike thou dost not know thy lady, if thou seest her; eh, friend?

Foot. Why, truly, sir, I cannot safely swear to her face in a morning, before she is dressed. 'Tis like I may give a shrewd guess at her by this time.

Sir W. Well, pr'ythee, try what thou canst do; if thou canst not guess, inquire her out; dost hear, fellow? and tell her, her nephew, Sir Wilful Wit-

Foot. I shall, sir. *[would, is in the house.]*

Sir W. Hold ye, hear me, friend; a word with you in your ear: pr'ythee, who are these gallants?

Foot. Really, sir, I can't tell; here come so many here, 'tis hard to know 'em all. *[Exit.]*

Sir W. Oons! this fellow knows less than a starling; I don't think a' knows his own name.

Mrs. Mar. Mr. Witwould, your brother is not behind-hand in forgetfulness. I fancy he has forgot you, too. *[bers first, I say.]*

Wit. I hope so. The deuce take him that remem-

Sir W. Save you, gentlemen and lady.

Mrs. Mar. For shame, Mr. Witwould; why won't you speak to him? And you, sir.

Wit. Petulant, speak.

Pet. It seems as if you had come a journey, sir; hem, hem! *[Surveying him round.]*

Sir W. Very likely, sir, that it may seem so.

Pet. No offence, I hope, sir. *[sir.]*

Sir W. May be not, sir; thereafter as 'tis meant,

Wit. Smoke the boots, the boots; Petulant, the boots. Ha, ha, ha! *[boots.]*

Pet. Sir, I presume upon the information of your

Sir W. Why, 'tis like you may, sir: if you are not satisfied with the information of my boots, sir, if you will step to the stable, you may inquire further of my horse, sir.

Pet. Your horse, sir! your horse is an ass, sir.

Sir W. Do you speak by way of offence, sir?

Mrs. Mar. The gentleman's merry, that's all, sir. 'Slife! we shall have a quarrel betwixt a horse and an ass, before they find one another out. You must not take anything amiss from your friends, sir. You are among your friends here, though it may be you don't know it. If I am not mistaken, you are Sir Wilful Witwould.

Sir W. Right, lady; I am Sir Wilful Witwould, no I write myself; no offence to anybody, I hope; and nephew to the Lady Wishfort of this mansion.

Mrs. Mar. Don't you know this gentleman, sir?

Sir W. Hum! What, sure, 'tis not—yes, by'r lady, but 'tis. 'Sheart! I know not whether 'tis or no. Yes, but 'tis, by the wrenkin. Brother An-

thony! what, Tony, i'faith! what, dost thou not know me? By'r lady, nor I thee, thou art so belaced, and so beperiwigged. 'Sheart! why dost not speak? art thou overjoyed? *[brother.]*

Wit. Odsso! brother, is it you? your servant,

Sir W. Your servant! why, your's, sir.

Wit. No offence, I hope, brother.

Sir W. 'Sheart! sir, but there is, and much offence. A plague! is this your innas-o'-court breeding, not to know your friends and your relations, your elders, and your betters?

Wit. Why, brother Wilful of Salop, you may be as short as a Shrewsbury cake, if you please. But I tell you, 'tis not modish to know relations in town. 'Tis not the fashion here; 'tis not, indeed, dear brother.

Sir W. The fashion's a fool; and you're a fop, dear brother. 'Sheart! I suspected this; by'r lady, I conjectured you were a fop, since you began to change the style of your letters, and write on a scrap of paper, gilt round the edges, no bigger than a subpoena. I might expect this when you left off "honoured brother," and "hoping you are in good health," and so forth, to begin with a "Rat me, knight, I'm sick of a last night's debauch." You could write news before you were out of your time, when you lived with honest Pimpenose, the attorney of Furnival's-inn, you could entreat to be remembered then to your friends round the Wrenkin.

Pet. 'Slife! Witwould, were you ever an attorney's clerk, of the family of the Furnivals? Ha, ha!

Wit. Ay, ay, but that was but for awhile. Not long, not long. Psha! I was not in my own power then. An orphan, and this fellow was my guardian; ay, ay, I was glad to consent to that, man, to come to London. He had the disposal of me then. If I had not agreed to that, I might have been bound 'prentice to a felt-maker in Shrewsbury; this fellow would have bound me to a maker of felts.

Sir W. 'Sheart! and better than be bound to a maker of fops; where, I suppose, you have served your time; and now may set up for yourself.

Mrs. Mar. You intend to travel, sir.

Sir W. Belike I may, madam. I may chance to sail upon the salt seas, if my mind hold.

Pet. And the wind serve.

Sir W. Serve or not serve, I sha'n't ask licence of you, sir; nor of the weathercock your companion. I direct my discourse to the lady, sir. 'Tis like my aunt may have told you, madam; yes, I have settled my concerns, I may say now, and am minded to see foreign parts. *[at all adventures.]*

Mrs. Mar. I thought you had designed for France

Sir W. I can't tell that; 'tis like I may, and 'tis like I may not. I am somewhat dainty in making a resolution, because when I make it, I keep it. I don't stand-shill I, shall I, then; if I say't, I'll do't: but I have thoughts to tarry a small matter in towns, to learn somewhat of your lingo-first, before I cross the seas. I'd gladly have a spice of your French, whereby to hold discourse in foreign countries.

Mrs. Mar. Here's an academy in town for that, and dancing, and curious accomplishments, calculated purely for the use of grown gentlemen.

Sir W. Is there? 'tis like there may.

Mrs. Mar. No doubt you will return very much improved. *[whale-fishing.]*

Wit. Yes, refined like a Dutch skipper from a

Enter LADY WISHFORT and FAIRALL.

Lady W. Nephew, you are welcome.

Sir W. Aunt, your servant.

Fain. Sir Wilful, your most faithful servant.

Sir W. Cousin Fainall, give me your hand.

Lady W. Cousin Witwould, your servant; Mr. Petulant, your servant. Nephew, you are welcome again. Will you drink anything after your journey, nephew, before you eat? dinner's almost ready.

Sir W. I'm very well, I thank you, aunt; however, I thank you for your courteous offer. 'Sheart! I was afraid you would have been in the fashions,

too, and have remembered to have forgot your relations. Here's your cousin Tony; belike I mayn't call him brother, for fear of offence.

Lady W. Oh! he's a railer, nephew; my cousin's a wit: and your great wits always rally their best friends to choose. When you have been abroad, nephew, you'll understand railery better. *(Fain and Mrs. Marwood talk apart.)*

Sir W. Why, then, let him hold his tongue in the meantime, and rail when that day comes.

Enter MINCING.

Min. Mem, I am come to acquaint your la'ship that dinner is impatient.

Sir W. Impatient! why, then, belike it won't stay till I pull off my boots. Sweetheart, can you help me to a pair of slippers? My man's with his horses I warrant.

Lady W. Fie, fie! nephew, you would not pull off your boots here; go down into the hall; dinner shall stay for you. *[Exeunt Mincing and Sir W.]* My nephew's a little unbred; you'll pardon him, madam. Gentlemen, will you walk? Marwood?

Mrs. Mar. I'll follow you, madam, before Sir Wilfal is ready. *[Exeunt Lady W., Pet., and Wit.]*

Fain. Why, then, Foible's a procuress; an errant, rank, match-making procuress. And I, it seems, am a husband, a rank husband; and my wife a very errant, rank wife, all in the way of the world. 'Sdeath! to be out-witted, out-jilted, out-matrimonied, and be outstripped by my wife; 'tis sourry wedlock.

Mrs. Mar. Then shake it off: you have often wished for an opportunity to part; and now you have it. But first prevent their plot; the half of Millamant's fortune is too considerable to be parted with, to a foe, to Mirabell.

Fain. Ay, that had been mine, had you not made that fond discovery; that had been forfeited, had they been married. My wife had added lustre to my dishonour by that increase of fortune. I could have worn 'em tipped with gold.

Mrs. Mar. They may prove a cap of maintenance to you still, if you can away with your wife. You married her to keep you; and if you can contrive to have her keep you better than you expected, why should you not keep her longer than you intended?

Fain. The means, the means.

Mrs. Mar. Discover to my lady your wife's conduct; threaten to part with her. My lady loves her, and will come to any composition to save her reputation. Take the opportunity of breaking it just upon the discovery of this imposture. My lady will be enraged beyond bounds, and sacrifice niece and fortune, and all, at that conjuncture. And let me alone to keep her warm; if she should flag in her part, I will not fail to prompt her.

Fain. This has an appearance.

Mrs. Mar. I'm sorry I hinted to my lady to endeavour a match between Millamant and Sir Wilfal; that may be an obstacle.

Fain. Oh! for that matter, leave me to manage him; I'll disable him for that; he will drink like a Dane: after dinner, I'll set his hand in.

Mrs. Mar. Well, how do you stand affected towards your lady?

Fain. Why, 'faith! I'm thinking of it. Let me see: I am married already; so that's over: my wife has played the jade with me; well, that's over, too: I never loved her, or if I had, why, that would have been over, too, by this time: jealous of her I cannot be, for I am certain; so there's an end of jealousy. Weary of her, I am and shall be—no, there's no end of that; no, no, that were too much to hope. Thus far concerning my repose. Now for my reputation: as to my own, I married not for it; so that's out of the question. *[Innourable.]*

Mrs. Mar. Besides, you forget, marriage is ho-

Fain. Hum! 'faith! and that's well thought on. Marriage is honourable, as you say.—So, so! well, how do we proceed?

Mrs. Mar. I will contrive a letter which shall be delivered to my lady at the time when that rascal who is to act Sir Rowland is with her. It shall come as from an unknown hand; for the less I appear to know of the truth, the better I can play the incendiary. Besides, I would not have Foible provoked if I could help it, because, you know, she knows some passages—nay, I expect all will come out; but let the mine be sprung first, and then I care not if I be discovered.

Fain. If the worst come to the worst, I'll turn my wife to grass: I have already a deed of settlement of the best part of her estate, which I wheedled out of her; and that you shall partake at least.

Mrs. Mar. I hope you are convinced that I hate Mirabell now; you'll be no more jealous.

Fain. Jealous! no, by this kiss. Let husbands be jealous; but let the lover still believe: or, if he doubt, let it be only to endear his pleasure, and prepare the joy that follows, when he proves his mistress true. But let husbands' doubts convert to endless jealousy; or if they have belief, let it corrupt to superstition, and blind credulity. I am single, and will herd no more with 'em. True, I wear the badge, but I'll disown the order. And since I take my leave of 'em, I care not if I leave 'em a common motto to their common oreast.

All husbands must or pain or shame endure;

The wise too jealous are, fools too secure. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT IV.—SCENE I.—THE SAME.

Enter LADY WISHFORT and FOIBLE.

Lady W. Is Sir Rowland coming, say'st thou, Foible! and are things in order?

Foi. Yes, madam. I have put wax-lights in the sconces, and placed the footmen in a row in the hall, in their best liveries, with the coachman and postillion to fill up the equipage.

Lady W. Have you pulvilled the coachman and postillion, that they may not stink of the stable, when

Foi. Yes, madam. *[Sir Rowland comes by.]*

Lady W. And are the dancers and the music ready, that he may be entertained in all points with correspondence to his passion?

Foi. All is ready, madam.

Lady W. And—well, and how do I look, Foible?

Foi. Most killing well, madam.

Lady W. Well, and how shall I receive him? in what figure shall I give his heart the first impression? There is a great deal in the first impression. Shall I sit?—No, I won't sit—I'll walk—ay, I'll walk from the door upon his entrance; and then turn full upon him—no, that will be too sudden. I'll lie—ay, I'll lie down—I'll receive him in my little dressing-room. There's a couch—yes, yes, I'll give the first impression on a couch—I won't lie neither, but loil and lean upon one elbow, with one foot a little dangling off, joggling in a thoughtful way; yes, and then as soon as he appears, start, ay, start and be surprised, and rise to meet him in a pretty disorder—yes—oh! nothing is more alluring than a levee from a couch in some confusion: it shews the foot to advantage, and furnishes with blushes, and re-composing airs beyond comparison. Hark!

Foi. 'Tis he, madam. *[There's a cough.]*

Lady W. Oh dear! has my nephew made his addresses to Millamant? *[The parlor.]*

Foi. Sir Wilfal is set in to drinking, madam, in *Lady W.* Ods my life! I'll send him to her. Call her down, Foible; bring her hither. I'll send him as I go; when they are together, then come to me, Foible, that I may not be too long alone with Sir Rowland. *[Exit.]*

Enter MRS. MILLAMANT and MRS. FAINALL.

Foi. Madam, I staid here to tell your ladyship that Mr. Mirabell has waited this half-hour for an opportunity to talk with you. Though my lady's orders were to leave you and Sir Wilfal together. Shall I tell Mr. Mirabell that you are at leisure?

Mrs. Mil. No. What would the dear man have?

I am thoughtful, and would amuse myself. Bid him come another time. (*Repeating.*)

*Then never yet was woman made,
Nor shall, but to be cur'd.*

Mrs. F. You are very fond of Sir John Suckling to-day, Millamant, and the poets.

Mrs. Mill. He'll say, and filthy verses, so I am.

Fol. Sir Wilful is coming, madam. Shall I send Mr. Mirabell away?

Mrs. Mill. Ay, if you please, Foible, send him away, or send him hither, just as you will, dear Foible. I think I'll see him: shall I? ay, let the wretch come. (*Repeating.*)

Thyrsis a youth of the inspired train;—

Dear Fainall, entertain Sir Wilful; thou hast philosophy to undergo a fool; thou art married, and hast patience; I would confer with my own thoughts.

Mrs. F. I am obliged to you, that you would make me your proxy in this affair; but I have business of my own.—[*Enter SIR WILFUL WITWOULD.*—] Oh! Sir Wilful, you are come at the critical instant. There's your mistress, up to the ears in love and contemplation; pursue your point, now or never.

Sir W. Yes, my aunt will have it so: I would gladly have been encouraged with a bottle or two, because I'm somewhat wary at first, before I am acquainted; but I hope, after a time, I shall break my mind—that is, upon further acquaintance. (*Millamant walks about repeating to herself.*) So, for the present, cousin, I'll take my leave. If so be you'll be so kind to make my excuse, I'll return to my company. [*be daunted.*]

Mrs. F. Oh fie! Sir Wilful, what, you must not *Sir W.* Daunted! no, that's not it, it is not so much for that; for if so be that I set out, I'll do it. But only for the present, 'tis sufficient till further acquaintance, that's all: your servant.

Mrs. F. Nay, I'll swear you shall never lose so favourable an opportunity, if I can help it. I'll leave you together, and look the door. [*Exit with Foible.*]

Sir W. Nay, nay, cousin, I have forgot my gloves. What d'ye do? 'Sheart! a' has locked the door, indeed, I think; nay, cousin Fainall, open the door; psha! what a vixen trick is this! Nay, now a' has seen me, too. Cousin, I made bold to pass through as it were—I think this door's enchanted.

Mrs. Mill. (*Repeating.*)

*I pry'these spare me, gentle boy,
Press me no more for that slight toy.*

Sir W. Anan? cousin, your servant. •

Mrs. Mill. (*Repeating.*)

That foolish trifle of a heart—

Sir Wilful! [*cousin?*]

Sir W. Yes; your servant. No offence, I hope,

Mrs. Mill. (*Repeating.*)

*I swear it will not do its part,
Though thou dost thine, employ't thy power and art.*

Natural, easy Suckling!

Sir W. Anan? Suckling! No such suckling neither, cousin, nor stripling: I thank heaven, I'm no minor.

Mrs. Mill. Ah! rustic, ruder than Gothic.

Sir W. Well, well, I shall understand your lingo one of these days, cousin; in the meanwhile, I must answer in plain English. [*Wilful?*]

Mrs. Mill. Have you any business with me, Sir *Sir W.* Not at present, cousin. Yes, I made bold to see, to come and know if that bow you were disposed to fetch a walk this evening; if so be that I might not be troublesome, I would have sought a

Mrs. Mill. A walk? what then? [*walk with you.*]

Sir W. Nay, nothing; only for the walk's sake, that's all.

Mrs. Mill. I nauseate walking; 'tis a country diversion; I loathe the country, and everything that relates to it.

Sir W. Indeed! ha! lookye, lookye, you do? nay, 'tis like you may: here are choice of pastimes here in town, as plays and the like, that must be confessed; indeed.

Mrs. Mill. Ah, l'étourdie! I hate the town, too.

Sir W. Dear heart! that's much—but that you should hate 'em both! ha! 'tis like you may; there are some can't relish the town, and others can't away with the country, 'tis like you may be one of those, cousin.

Mrs. Mill. Ha, ha, ha! Yes, 'tis like I may. You have nothing further to say to me?

Sir W. Not at present, cousin. 'Tis like, when I have an opportunity to be more private I may break my mind in some measure. I conjecture you partly guess; however, that's as time shall try: but, "spare to speak and spare to speed," as they say.

Mrs. Mill. If it be of no great importance, Sir Wilful, you will oblige me by leaving me. I have just now a little business.

Sir W. Enough, enough, cousin: yes, yes, all a case; when you're disposed. Now's as well as another time; and another time as well as now. All's one for that. Yes, yes, if your concerns call you, there's no haste; it will keep cold, as they say. Cousin, your servant. I think this door's locked.

Mrs. Mill. You may go this way, sir.

Sir W. Your servant: then, with your leave, I'll return to my company. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. Mill. Ay, ay! Ha, ha, ha! (*Repeating.*)

Like Phœbus sung the no less am'rous boy.

Enter MIRABELL.

Mir. (*Repeating.*)

I like Daphne she, as lovely and as coy.

Do you look yourself up from me to make my search more curious? Or is this pretty artifice contrived to signify that here the chase must end, and my pursuit be crowned, for you can fly no further?

Mrs. Mill. Vanity! No, I'll fly and be followed to the last moment; though I am upon the very verge of matrimony, I expect you should solicit me as much as if I were wavering at the grate of a monastery, with one foot over the threshold. I'll be solicited to the very last, nay, and afterwards.

Mir. What, after the last?

Mrs. Mill. Oh! I should think I were poor, and had nothing to bestow, if I were reduced to inglorious ease; and freed from the agreeable fatigues of solicitation.

Mir. But do not you know, that when favours are conferred upon instant and tedious solicitation, that they diminish in their value, and that both the giver loses the grace, and the receiver lessens his pleasure?

Mrs. Mill. It may be in things of common application; but never sure in love. Oh! I hate a lover, that can dare to think he draws a moment's air, independent on the bounty of his mistress. There is not so impudent a thing in nature, as the saucy look of an assured man, confident of success. The pedantic arrogance of a very husband has not so pragmatical an air. Ah! I'll never marry, unless I am first made sure of my will and pleasure.

Mir. Would you have 'em both before marriage? or will you be contented with only the first now, and stay for the other till after grace?

Mrs. Mill. Ah! don't be impertinent. My dear liberty, shall I leave thee? My faithful solitude, my darling contemplation, must I bid you, then, adieu? Ay, adieu, my morning thoughts, agreeable wakings, indolent slumbers, ye *douceurs*, ye *sommeils de matin*, adieu! I can't do it; 'tis more than impossible: positively, Mirabell, I'll lie a-bed in a morning as long as I please. [*I please.*]

Mir. Then I'll get up in a morning as early as *Mrs. Mill.* Ah! idle creature, get up when you will; and, d'ye hear? I won't be called names after I'm married: positively, I won't be called names.

Mir. Names!

Mrs. Mill. Ay, as wife, spouse, my dear, joy, jewel, love, sweetheart, and the rest of that nauseous cant, in which men and their wives are so fulsomely familiar; I shall never bear that. Good Mirabell, don't let us be familiar or fond, nor kiss

before folks, like my Lady Fidler and Sir Francis; nor go in public together the first Sunday in a new chariot, to provoke eyes and whispers; and then never be seen there together again; as if we were proud of one another the first week, and ashamed of one another ever after. Let us never visit together, nor go to a play together, but let us be very strange and well bred; let us be as strange as if we had been married a great while; and as well bred as if we were not married at all.

Mir. Have you any more conditions to offer? hitherto, your demands are pretty reasonable.

Mrs. Mill. Trifles, as liberty to pay and receive visits to and from whom I please; to write and receive letters, without interrogatories or wry faces on your part; to wear what I please; and choose conversation with regard only to my own taste; to have no obligation upon me to converse with wits that I don't like, because they are your acquaintance; or to be intimate with fools, because they may be your relations. Come to dinner when I please, dine in my dressing-room when I'm out of humour, without giving a reason. To have my closet inviolate; to be sole empress of my tea-table, which you must never presume to approach without first asking leave. And lastly, wherever I am, you shall always knock at the door before you come in. These articles subsoribed, if I continue to endure you a little longer, I may by degrees dwindle into a wife.

Mir. Your bill of fare is something advanced in this latter account. Well, have I liberty to offer conditions, that when you are dwindled into a wife, I may not be beyond measure enlarged into a husband?

Mill. You have free leave; propose your utmost; speak, and spare not.

Mir. I thank you. *Imprimis* then, I covenant that your acquaintance be general; that you admit no sworn confidant or intimate of your own sex; no she friend to screen her affairs under your countenance, and tempt you to make trial of a mutual secrecy. No decoy-duck to wheedle you a top-scrumbling to the play in a mask; then bring you home in a pretended fright, when you think you shall be found out; and rail at me for missing the play, and disappointing the frolic which you had to pick me up and prove my constancy.

Mrs. Mill. Detestable *imprimis*! I go to the play in a mask!

Mir. Item, I article that you continue to like your own face, as long as I shall: and while it passes current with me, that you endeavour not to new coin it. To which end, together with all vi-sards for the day, I prohibit all masks for the night made of oil'd skins, and I know not what—hog's-bones, hare's-gall, pig-water, and the marrow of a roasted cat. In short, I forbid all commerce with the gentlewoman in What-d'ye-call-it court. Item, I shut my doors against all proconcresses with baskets, and pennyworths of muslin, Chinn, fans, &c. Item, when you shall be breeding—

Mrs. Mill. Ah! name it not.

Mir. I denounce against all straight lacing, squeaking for a shape, till you mould my boy's head like a sugar-loaf, and instead of a man-child, make me father to a crooked-billet. Lastly, to the dominion of the tea-table I submit; but with proviso, that you exceed not in your province; but restrain yourself to native and simple tea-table drinks, as tea, chocolate, and coffee. As like-wise to genuine and authorized tea-table talk, such as mending of fashions, spoiling reputations, raising at absent friends, and so forth; but that on no account you encroach upon the men's prerogative; and presume to drink healths, or toast fellows; for prevention of which I banish all foreign forces, all auxiliaries to the tea-table, as orange-brandy, all ambiseed, cinamom, citron, and Barbadoes-waters, together with ratafia, and the most

noble spirit of clary. But for cownip-wine, poppy-water, and all dormitives, those I allow. These provisos admitted, in other things I may prove a tractable and complying husband.

Mrs. Mill. Oh! horrid provisos; filthy strong waters. I toast fellows, odious men! I hate your odious provisos.

Mir. Then we're agreed. Shall I kiss your hand upon the contract? And here comes one to be a witness to the sealing of the deed.

Enter MRS. FAINALL.

Mrs. Mill. Fainall, what shall I do? shall I have him? I think I must have him. [you do?

Mrs. F. Ay, ay, take him, take him; what should

Mrs. M. Well then—I'll take my death I'm in a horrid fright—Fainall, I shall never say it—well—I think—I'll endure you.

Mrs. F. Fie, fie! have him, have him, and tell him so in plain terms; for I am sure you have a mind to him.

Mrs. Mill. Are you?—I think I have, and the horrid man looks as if he thought so too—well, you ridiculous thing you, I'll have you—I won't be kiss'd, nor I won't be thank'd—here, kiss my hand though—so hold your tongue now, don't say a word.

Mrs. F. Mirabell, there's a necessity for your obedience; you have neither time to talk nor stay. My mother is coming; and, in my conscience, if she should see you, would fall into fits, and may be not recover time enough to return to Sir Rowland, who, as Foible tells me, is in a fair way to succeed. Therefore spare your ecstasies for another occasion, and slip down the back-stairs, where Foible waits to consult you.

Mrs. Mill. Ay, go, go. In the meantime, I'll suppose you have said something to please me.

Mir. I am all obedience. [Exit.

Mrs. F. Yonder's Sir Wilful, drunk; and so noisy, that my mother has been forced to leave Sir Rowland to appease him, but he answers her only with singing and drinking; what they may have done by this time I know not, but Petulant and he were upon quarrelling as I came by.

Mrs. Mill. Well, if Mirabell should not make a good husband, I am a lost thing; for I find I love him violently.

Mrs. F. So it seems; for you mind not what's said to you. If you doubt him, you had better take up with Sir Wilful.

Mrs. Mill. How can you name that superannuated lubber? foh!

Enter WITWOULD.

Mrs. F. So, is the fray made up, that you have left 'em?

Wit. Left 'em? I could stay no longer; I have laugh'd like ten christenings—I am tipsy with laughing—yes, yes, the fray is composed; my lady came in and stopt the proceedings.

Mrs. Mill. What was the dispute?

Wit. That's the jest; there was no dispute. They could neither of 'em speak for rage; and so fell a spitting at one another, like two roasting apples.—[Enter PETULANT, drunk.]—Now, Petulant, all's over, all's well; 'gad! my head begins to whim it about; why dost thou not speak? Thou art both as drunk and as mute as a fish.

Pet. Look you, Mrs. Millamant, if you can love me, dear nymph—say it—and that's the conclusion—pass on, or pass off, that's all.

Wit. Thou hast uttered volumes, folios, in less than *decimo sexto*, my dear Laocodemonian. Sirrah, Petulant, thou art an epitomizer of words.

Pet. Witwould, you are an annihilator of sense.

Wit. Thou art a retailer of phrases; and dost deal in remnants of remnants, like a maker of pin-cushions; thou art in truth (metaphorically speaking) a speaker of short-hand.

Pet. Thou art (without a figure) just one half of an ass, and Baldwin yonder, thy half-brother, is

the rest; a gemini of asses split, would make just four of you.

Mrs. Mill. What was the quarrel?

Pet. There was no quarrel; there might have been a quarrel.

Wit. If there had been words enow between 'em to have expressed provocation, they had gone together by the ears like a pair of castanets.

Pet. You were the quarrel.

Mrs. Mill. Me!

Pet. If I have the humour to quarrel, I can make less matters conclude premises; if you are not handsome, what then, if I have humour to prove it? If I shall have my reward, say so; if not, fight for your face the next time yourself. I'll go sleep.

Wit. Do, wrap thyself up like a wood-louse, and dream revenge; and hear me, if thou canst learn to write by to-morrow morning, pen me a challenge; I'll carry it for thee.

Pet. Carry your mistress's monkey a spider; go flay dogs, and read romances: I'll go to bed to my maid. [Exit.]

Mrs. F. He's horridly drunk. How came you all in this pickle?

Wit. A plot, a plot, to get rid of the knight. Your husband's advice; but he sneaked off.

Enter SIR WILFUL WITWOUND, drunk, and LADY WISHFORT.

Lady W. Out upon't, out upon't! At years of discretion, and comport yourself at this rantipole rate!

Sir W. No offence, aunt.

Lady W. Offence! as I'm a person, I'm ashamed of you—foght! how you stunk of wine! D'y'e think my niece will ever endure such a Borachio! you're an absolute Borachio.

Sir W. Borachio!

Lady W. At a time when you should commence an amour, and put your best foot foremost—

Sir W. 'Sheart! an 'ou grutch me your liquor, make a bill; give me more drink, and take my purse. (Sings.)

Pr'ythee, fill me the glass

Till it's laugh in my face;

With ale that is potent and mellow;

He that whines for a lass

Is an ignorant ass

For a bumper has not its fellow.

But if you would have me marry my cousin, say the word, and I'll do't. Wilful will do't, that's the word; Wilful will do't, that's my crest; my motto I have forgotten.

Lady W. My nephew's a little overtaken, cousin; but 'tis with drinking your health. O my word, you are obliged to him—

Sir W. In vino veritas, aunt. If I drunk your health to-day, cousin, I am a Borachio. But if you have a mind to be married, say the word, and send for the piper: Wilful will do't. If not, dust it away, and let's have t'other round.—Tony, oda-heart! where's Tony? Tony's an honest fellow; but he spits after a bumper, and that's a fault. (Sings.)

We'll drink, and we'll never ha' done, boys.

Put the glass, then, around with the sun, boys.

Let Apollo's example invite us;

For he's drunk every night,

And that makes him so bright,

That he's able next morning to light us.

The sun's a good pimple, an honest soaker; he has a cellar at your Antipodes. If I travel, aunt, I touch at your Antipodes. Your Antipodes are a good, rascally sort of topsy-turvy fellows: if I had a bumper, I'd stand upon my head, and drink a health to 'em. A match or no match, cousin with the hard name! Aunt, Wilful will do't.

Mrs. Mill. Your pardon, madam; I can stay no longer: Sir Wilful grows very powerful. I shall be overcome, if I stay. Come, cousin.

[Exit Mrs. Mill. and Mrs. F.]

Lady W. He would poison a tallow-chandler and his family. Beastly creature! I know not what to do with him. Travel, quotha! ay, travel, travel! get thee gone, get thee gone! get thee but far

enough—to the Saracens, or the Tartars, or the Turks; for thou art not fit to live in a Christian commonwealth, thou beastly pagan!

Sir W. Turks! no; no Turks, aunt: your Turks are infidels, and believe not in the grape. Your Mahometan, your Mussulman is a dry stinkard. No offence, aunt. My map says that your Turk is not so honest a man as your Christian. I cannot find by the map that your Muffi is orthodox; whereby it is a plain case, that orthodox is a hard word, aunt, and (hiccup) Greek for claret. (Sings.)

To drink is a Christian diversion,

Unknown to the Turk or the Persian;

Let Mahometan fools

Live by heathenish rules,

And be damn'd over tea-cups and coffee;

But let British lads sing,

Crown a health to the king,

And a fig for your sultan and sept.

Enter FOIBLE, and whispers LADY WISHFORT.

Eh, Tony!

Lady W. Sir Rowland impatient? Good lack! what shall I do with this beastly tumbler? Go, lie down, and sleep, you sot; or, as I'm a person, I'll have you bastinadoed with broomsticks. Call up the wenches with broomsticks.

Sir W. Ah! wenches, where are the wenches?

Lady W. Dear cousin Witwould get him away, and you will bind me to you inviolably. I have an affair of moment that invades me with some precipitation: you will oblige me to all fatality.

Wit. Come, knight—plague on him, I don't know what to say to him—Will you go to a cock-match?

Sir W. With a wench, Tony?

Wit. Horrible! he has a breath like a bagpipe.—

Ay, ay; come, will you march, my Salopian?

Sir W. Lead on, little Tony; I'll follow thee, my Anthony, my Tanthony. Sirrah, thou shalt be my Tanthony, and I'll be thy pig—"And a fig for your sultan and Sophi." [Exit with Wit. and Foi.]

Lady W. This will never do. It will never make a match; at least, before he has been abroad.

Enter WAITWELL, disguised as Sir Rowland.

Dear Sir Rowland, I am confounded with confusion at the retrospection of my own rudeness. I have more pardons to ask than the pope distributes in the year of jubilee: but I hope where there is likely to be so near an alliance, we may unbend the severity of decorum, and dispense with a little ceremony.

Wait. My impatience, madam, is the effect of my transport; and till I have the possession of your adorable person, I am tantalized on the rack, and do but hang, madam, on the tenter of expectation.

Lady W. You have excess of gallantry, Sir Rowland; and press things to a conclusion, with a most prevailing vehemence—But a day or two, for decency of marriage.

Wait. For decency of funeral, madam. The delay will break my heart; or, if that should fail, I shall be poison'd. My nephew will get an inkling of my designs, and poison me; and I would willingly starve him before I die: I would gladly go out of the world with that satisfaction. That would be some comfort to me, if I could but live so long as to be revenged on that unnatural viper.

Lady W. Is he so unnatural, say you? Truly I would contribute much both to the saving of your life, and the accomplishment of your revenge. Not that I respect myself, though he has been a perfidious wretch to me.

Wait. Perfidious to you!

Lady W. Oh! Sir Rowland, the hours that he has died away at my feet; the tears that he has felt; the trances and tremblings; the ardours and the ecstasies; the kneelings and the risings; the hand-heavings and the hand-gripings; the pangs and the pathetic regards of his protesting eyes; oh! no memory can register. [He dies!]

Wait. What, my rival! Is the rebel my rival?

Lady W. No, don't kill him at once, Sir Rowland; starve him gradually, inch by inch.

Wait. I'll do't. In three weeks he shall be bare-foot; in a month, out at knees with begging an alms. He shall starve upward and upward, till he has nothing living but his head, and then go out like a candle's end upon a saveall.

Lady W. Well, Sir Rowland, you have the way; you are no novice in the labyrinth of love; you have the clue. But as I'm a person, Sir Rowland, you must not attribute my yielding to any sinister appetite, or indigestion of widowhood; nor impute my complacency to any lethargy of continence. I hope you do not think me prone to any iteration of

Wait. Far be it from me. [Nuptials.]

Lady W. If you do, I protest I must recede, or think that I have made a prostitution of decorum; but in the vehemence of compassion, and to save the life of a person of so much importance—

Wait. I esteem it so.

Lady W. Or else you wrong my condescension.

Wait. I do not, I do not.

Lady W. Indeed you do.

Wait. I do not, fair shrine of virtue!

Lady W. If you think the least scruple of carnality was an ingredient—

Wait. Dear madam, no. You are all camphire and frankincense; all chastity and odour.

Lady W. Or that—[Enter FOIBLE.]

Foi. Madam, the dancers are ready; and 'there's one with a letter, who must deliver it into your own hands.

Lady W. Sir Rowland, will you give me leave? Think favourably, judge candidly, and conclude you have found a person who would suffer racks in honour's cause, dear Sir Rowland, and will wait on you incessantly. [Exit.]

Wait. Fie, fie! What a slavery have I undergone! Spouse, hast thou any cordial? I want spirits.

Foi. What a washy rogue art thou, to pant thus for a quarter of an hour's lying and swearing to a lady!

Wait. Oh! she is the antidote to desire. By this hand, I'd rather be a chairman in the dog-days, than act Sir Rowland till this time to-morrow.

Enter LADY WISHFORT, with a letter.

Lady W. Call in the dancers. Sir Rowland, we'll sit, if you please, and see the entertainment. (A dance.) Now, with your permission, Sir Rowland, I will peruse my letter: I would open it in your presence, because I would not make you uneasy. If it should make you uneasy, I would burn it. Speak if it does—but you may see, the superscription is like a woman's hand.

Foi. By heaven! Mrs. Marwood's. I know it. My heart aches—Get it from her. (To *Wait.*)

Wait. A woman's hand? No, madam; that's no woman's hand, I see that already. That's somebody whose throat must be cut.

Lady W. Nay, Sir Rowland, since you give me a proof of your passion by your jealousy, I promise you I'll make a return, by a frank communication. You shall see it; we'll open it together. Look you here. (Reads.)—"Madam, though unknown to you—(Look you there, 'tis from nobody that I know)—I have that honour for your character, that I think myself obliged to let you know that you are abused. He who pretends to be Sir Rowland, is a cheat and a rascal!"—Oh, heavens! what's this?

Foi. Unfortunately, all's ruined!

Wait. How, how! let me see, let me see!—(Reads.)—"A rascal and disguised, and suborned for that imposture."—Oh, villain! oh, villain!—"By the contrivance of"—

Lady W. I shall faint, I shall die—oh!

Foi. Say 'tis your nephew's hand. Quickly, his plot—swear it! (Apart.)

Wait. Here's a villain, madam! Don't you perceive it, don't you see it? [much.]

Lady W. Too well, too well! I have seen too

Wait. I told you at first I knew the hand. A woman's hand! The rascal writes a sort of a large hand; a Roman hand. I saw there was a throat to

be cut presently. If he were my son, as he is my nephew, I'd pistol him.

Foi. Oh, treachery!—But are you sure, Sir Rowland, it is his writing?

Wait. Sure! Am I here? Do I live? Do I love this pearl of India? I have twenty letters in my pocket from him, in the same character.

Lady W. How!

Foi. Oh! what luck it is, Sir Rowland, that you were present at this juncture! this was the business that brought Mr. Mirabell disguised to Madam Milamant this afternoon. I thought something was contriving, when he stole by me and would have hidden his face.

Lady W. How, how! I heard the villain was in the house, indeed; and now I remember, my niece went away abruptly, when Sir Wilful was to have made his addresses.

Foi. Then, then, madam, Mr. Mirabell waited for her in her chamber; but I would not tell your ladyship, to discompose you when you were to receive Sir Rowland.

Wait. Enough; his date is short.

Foi. No, good Sir Rowland, don't incur the law.

Wait. Law! I care not for law. I can but die, and 'tis in a good cause. My lady shall be satisfied of my truth and innocence, though it cost me my life.

Lady W. No, dear Sir Rowland, don't fight. If you should be killed I must never shew my face; or, hanged—Oh! consider my reputation, Sir Rowland—No, you shan't fight. I'll go in and examine my niece; I'll make her confess. I conjure you, Sir Rowland, by all your love, not to fight.

Wait. I am charmed, madam; I obey. But some proof you must let me give you; I'll go for a black box, which contains the writings of my whole estate, and deliver that into your hands.

Lady W. Ay, dear Sir Rowland, that will be some comfort—Bring the black box.

Wait. And may I presume to bring a contract to be signed this night? May I hope so far?

Lady W. Bring what you will; but come alive, pray come alive. Oh! this is a happy discovery.

Wait. Dead or alive I'll come; and married we will be in spite of treachery. Come, my bawom widow:

Ever long, you shall substantial proof receive
That I'm an arrant knight.

Foi. Or arrant knave.

[Exit.]

ACT V.—SCENE I.—The same.

LADY WISHFORT and FOIBLE.

Lady W. Out of my house. out of my house, thou viper, thou serpent, that I have fostered! thou bosome traitress, that I raised from nothing! Begone, begone, begone, go, go? That I took from washing of old gauze and weaving of dead hair, with a bleak blue nose, over a chaffing-dish of starved embers, and dining behind a traverse-rag, in a shop no bigger than a bird-cage—go, go, starve again, do, do!

Foi. Dear madam, I'll beg pardon on my knees.

Lady W. Away, out, out! go set up for yourself again! do, drive a trade, do, with your three-pennyworth of small ware, flaunting upon a pack-thread, under a brandy-seller's bulk, or against a dead wall by a ballad-monger. Go, hang out an old frisoner-gorget, with a yard of yellow colbertain, do; an old gnawed mask, two rows of pins, and a child's fiddle; a glass necklace, with the beads broken, and a quilted night-cap with one ear. Go, go, drive a trade. These were your commodities, you treacherous trull! this was the merchandise you dealt in, when I took you into my house, placed you next myself, and made you governante of my whole family. You have forgotten this, have you, now you have feathered your nest?

Foi. No, no, dear madam. Do but hear me; have but a moment's patience, I'll confess all. Mr. Mirabell seduced me; I am not the first that he has

whoedled with his dissembling tongue: your ladyship's own wisdom has been deluded by him, then how should I, a poor ignorant, defend myself? Oh! madam, if you knew but what he promised me, and how he assured me your ladyship should come to no damage; or else the wealth of the Indies should not have bribed me to conspire against so good, so sweet, so kind a lady as you have been to me."

Lady W. No damage! What, to betray me, and marry me to a coast-serving man? No damage! Oh! thou frontless impudence!

Foi. Pray, do but hear me, madam! He could not marry your ladyship, madam; no, indeed, his marriage was to have been void in law; for he was married to me first, to secure your ladyship. Yes, indeed, I inquired of the law in that case before I would meddle or make.

Lady W. What then, I have been your property, have I? I have been convenient to you, it seems, while you were catering for Mirabell, I have been broker for you? This exceeds all precedent; I am brought to fine uses, to become a botcher of second-hand marriages between Abigail and Andrews! I'll couple you. Yes, I'll baste you together, you and your Philander. I'll Duke's-place you, as I'm a person. Your turtle is in custody already: you shall coo in the same cage, if there be a constable or warrant in the parish. *[Exit.]*

Foi. Oh! that ever I was born! Oh! that I was ever married! A bride, ay, I shall be a Bridewell bride, oh!

Enter MRS. FAINALL.

Mrs. F. Poor Foible, what's the matter?

Foi. Oh! madam, my lady's gone for a constable; I shall be had to a justice, and put to Bridewell to heat hemp. Poor Waitwell's gone to prison already.

Mrs. F. Have a good heart, Foible; Mirabell's gone to give security for him. This is all Marwood's and my husband's doing.

Foi. Yes, yes, I know it, madam; she was in my lady's closet, and overheard all that you said to me before dinner. She sent the letter to my lady; and that missing effect, Mr. Fainall laid this plot to arrest Waitwell, when he pretended to go for the papers; and, in the meantime, Mrs. Marwood declared all to my lady.

Mrs. T. Was there no mention made of me in the letter? My mother does not suspect my being in the confederacy; I fancy Marwood has not told her, though she has told my husband.

Foi. Yes, madam; but my lady did not see that part: we stifled the letter before she read so far. Has that mischievous devil told Mr. Fainall of your ladyship, then?

Mrs. F. Ay, all's out; my affair with Mirabell, everything discovered. This is the last day of our living together, that's my comfort.

Foi. Indeed, madam, and so 'tis a comfort if you knew all: he has been even with your ladyship; which I could have told you long enough since; but I love to keep peace and quietness by my good will: I had rather bring friends together, than set them at a distance. But Mrs. Marwood and he are nearer related than ever their parents thought for.

Mrs. F. Say'st thou so, Foible? Canst thou prove this?

Foi. I can take my oath of it, madam; so can Mrs. Mincing. We have had many a fair word from Madam Marwood, to conceal something that passed in our chamber one evening when we were at Hyde-park; and we were thought to have gone a walking; but we went up unawares—though we were sworn to secrecy, too; Madam Marwood took a book, and swore us both upon it; but it was but a book of poems. So long as it was not a Bible oath, we may break it with a safe conscience.

Mrs. F. This discovery in the most opportune thing I could wish.—Now, Mincing.

Enter MINCING.

Min. My lady would speak with Mrs. Foible, mem. Mr. Mirabell is with her; he has set your spouse at liberty, Mrs. Foible, and would have you hide yourself in my lady's closet, till my old lady's anger is abated. Oh! my old lady is in a perilous passion at something Mr. Fainall has said; he swears, and my old lady cries. There's a fearful hurricane, I vow. He says, mem, now that he'll have my lady's fortune made over to him, or he'll be divorced.

Mrs. F. Does your lady or Mirabell know that?

Min. Yes, mem, they have sent me to see if Sir Wilful be sober, and to bring him to them. My lady is resolved to have him, I think, rather than lose such a vast sum as six thousand pounds. Oh! come, Mrs. Foible, I hear my old lady.

Mrs. F. Foible, you must tell Mincing, that she must prepare to vouch when I call her.

Foi. Yes, yes, madam.

Min. Oh! yes, mem, I'll vouch anything for your ladyship's service, be what it will. *[Exit with Foi.]*

Enter LADY WISHFORT and MRS. MARWOOD.

Lady W. Oh! my dear friend, how can I enumerate the benefits that I have received from your goodness? To you I owe the timely discovery of the false vows of Mirabell; to you I owe the detection of the impostor Sir Rowland; and now you are become an intercessor with my son-in-law, to save the honour of my house, and compound for the frailties of my daughter. Well, friend, you are enough to reconcile me to the bad world, or else I would retire to deserts and solitudes, and feed harmless sheep by groves and purling streams. Dear Marwood, let us leave the world, and retire by ourselves, and be shepherdesses.

Mrs. Mar. Let us first despatch the affair in hand, madam; we shall have leisure to think of retirement afterwards. Here is one who is concerned in the treaty.

Lady W. Oh! daughter, daughter, is it possible thou shouldst be my child, bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh? and, as I may say, another me, and yet transgress the minute particle of severe virtue? Is it possible you should lean aside to iniquity, who have been cast in the direct mould of virtue?

Mrs. F. I don't understand your ladyship.

Lady W. Not understand! Why, have you not been naught? have you not been sophisticated? Not understand? here I am ruined to compound for your caprices; I must part with my plate and my jewels, and ruin my niece, and all little enough—

Mrs. F. I am wronged and abused, and so are you. 'Tis a false accusation; as false as your friend there; ay, or your friend's friend, my false husband.

Mrs. Mar. My friend, Mrs. Fainall? your husband my friend! What do you mean?

Mrs. F. I know what I mean, madam, and so do you; and so shall the world, at a time convenient.

Mrs. Mar. I am sorry to see you so passionate, madam. More temper would look more like innocence—But I have done. I am sorry my zeal to serve your ladyship and family should admit of misconstruction, or make me liable to affronts. You will pardon me, madam, if I meddle no more with an affair, in which I am not personally concerned.

Lady W. Oh! dear friend, I am so ashamed that you should meet with such returns; you ought to ask pardon on your knees, ungrateful creature! she deserves more from you, than all your life can accomplish. Oh! don't leave me destitute in this perplexity; no, stick to me, my good genius.

Mrs. F. I tell you, madam, you're abused.—Stick to you! ay, like a leech, to suck your best blood: she'll drop off, when she's full. Madam,

you sha'n't pawn a bodkin, nor part with a brass counter, in composition for me. Let 'em prove their aspersions; I know my own innocence, and dare stand a trial.

Lady W. Why, if she should be innocent; if she should be wronged after all, eh? I don't know what to think; and I promise you, her education has been very unexceptionable; I may say it; for I chiefly made it my own care to initiate her very infancy in the rudiments of virtue, and to impress upon her tender years a young odium and aversion to the very night of men; ay, friend, she would ha' shrieked if she had but seen a man, till she was in her teens. As I'm a person, 'tis true. She was never suffered to play with a male child, though but in coats; nay, her very babies were of the feminine gender. Oh! she never looked a man in the face, but her own father, or the chaplain; and him we made a shift to put upon her for a woman, by the help of his long garments and his sleek face, till she was going in her fifteen.

Mrs. Mar. 'Twas much she should be deceived so long.

Lady W. I warrant you, or she would never have borne to be catechized by him, and have heard his long lectures against singing and dancing, and such debaucheries, and going to filthy plays, and profane music-meetings. Oh! she would have swooned at the sight or name of an obscene play-book: and can I think, after all this, that my daughter can be naughty! and thought it excommunication to set her foot within the door of a playhouse. Oh! dear friend, I can't believe it. No, no; as she says, let him prove it, let him prove it!

Mrs. Mar. Prove it, madam! what, and have your name prostituted in a public court; yours and your daughter's reputation worried at the bar by a pack of hawling lawyers! to be ushered in with an O-yes of scandal; and have your case opened by an old fumbler, in a coil like a man-midwife, to bring your daughter's infamy to light; to be a scheme for legal punsters and quibblers by the statute; and become a jest, against a rule of court, where there is no precedent for a jest in any record; not even in Doomsday-book; to discompose the gravity of the bench, and provoke naughty interrogatories in more naughty law Latin.

Lady W. Oh! 'tis very hard!

Mrs. Mar. And, then, to have my young revelers of the Temple take notes, like prentices at a conventicle; and after talk it over again in commons, or before drawers in an eating-house.

Lady W. Worse and worse!

Mrs. Mar. Nay, this is nothing; if it would end here, 'twere well. But it must after this be assigned by the short-hand writers to the public press, and from thence be transferred to the hands, nay, into the throats and lungs of hawkers, with voices more licentious than the loud flounder-man's; and this you must hear till you are stunned; nay, you must hear nothing else for some days.

Lady W. Oh! 'tis insupportable. No, no, dear friend; make it up, make it up! ay, ay, I'll compound. I'll give up all, myself and my all, my niece and her all; anything, everything, for composition.

Mrs. Mar. Nay, madam, I advise nothing; I only lay before you, as a friend, the inconveniences which perhaps you have overseen. Here comes Mr. Fainall; if he will be satisfied to huddle up all in silence, I shall be glad. You must think I would rather congratulate than condole with you.

Enter FAINALL.

Lady W. Ay, ay, I do not doubt it, dear Marwood: no, no, I do not doubt it.

Fain. Well, madam, I have suffered myself to be overcome by the importunity of this lady, your friend; and am content you shall enjoy your own proper estate during life, on condition you oblige

yourself never to marry, under such penalty as I think convenient.

Lady W. Never to marry!

Fain. No more Sir Rowlands; the next imposture may not be so timely detected.

Mrs. Mar. That condition, I dare answer, my lady will consent to without difficulty; she has already but too much experienced the perfidiousness of men. Besides, madam, when we retire to our pastoral solitude, we shall bid adieu to all other thoughts.

Lady W. Ay, that's true.

Fain. Next, my wife shall settle on me the remainder of her fortune, not made over already; and for her maintenance depend entirely on my discretion.

Lady W. This is most inhumanly savage; exceeding the barbarity of a Muscovite husband.

Fain. I learned it from his czarish majesty's retinue, in a winter evening's conference over brandy and pepper, amongst other secrets of matrimony and policy, as they are at present practised in the northern hemisphere. But this must be agreed unto, and that positively. Lastly, I will be endowed, in right of my wife, with that six thousand pounds, which is the moiety of Mrs. Millamant's fortune in your possession, and which she has forfeited (as will appear by the last will and testament of your deceased husband, Sir Jonathan Wialfort) by her disobedience in contracting herself against your consent or knowledge; and by refusing the offered match with Sir Wifal Witwoud, which you, like a careful aunt, had provided for her.

Lady W. My nephew was *non compos*, and could not make his addresses.

Fain. I come to make demands; I'll hear no objections.

Lady W. You will grant me time to consider!

Fain. Yes, while the instrument is drawing, to which you must set your hand till more sufficient deeds can be perfected, which I will take care shall be done with all possible speed; in the meanwhile, I will go for the said instrument, and, till my return, you may balance this matter in your own discretion.

[Exit.]

Lady W. This insolence is beyond all precedent, all parallel. Must I be subject to this merciless villain?

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis severe, indeed, madam, that you should smart for your daughter's failings.

Lady W. 'Twas against my consent that she married this barbarian; but she would have him, though her year was not out. Ah! her first husband, my son Languish, would not have carried it thus. Well, that was my choice, this is hers; she is matched now with a witness: I shall be mad, dear friend. Is there no comfort for me? Must I live to be confiscated at this rebel-rate? Here come two more of my Egyptian plagues, too.

Enter MRS. MILLAMANT and SIR WITWOLD.

Sir W. Aunt, your servant.

Lady W. Out, caterpillar! call not me 'aunt; I know thee not.

Sir W. I confess I have been a little in disguise, as they say—'Sheart! and I'm sorry for't. What would you have? I hope I committed no offence, aunt; and if I did, I am willing to make satisfaction; and what can a man say fairer? If I have broken anything, I'll pay for't, an it cost a pound; and so let that content for what's past, and make no more words. For what's to come, to please you, I'm willing to marry my cousin: so, pray, let's all be friends; she and I are agreed upon the matter before a witness.

Lady W. How's this, dear niece? Have I any comfort? Can this be true?

Mrs. Mill. I am content to be a sacrifice to your repose, madam; and to convince you that I had no

hand in the plot, as you were misinformed, I have laid my commands on Mirabell to come in person, and be a witness that I give my hand to this flower of knighthood; and for the contract that passed between Mirabell and me, I have obliged him to make a resignation of it in your ladyship's presence: he is without, and waits your leave for admittance.

Lady W. Well, I'll swear I am something revived at this testimony of your obedience; but I cannot admit that traitor: I fear I cannot fortify myself to support his appearance. He is as terrible to me as a Gorgon; if I see him, I fear I shall turn to stone, and petrify incessantly.

Mrs. Mill. If you disoblige him, he may resent your refusal, and insist upon the contract still. Then 'tis the last time he will be offensive to you.

Lady W. Are you sure it will be the last time? If I were sure of that—Shall I never see him again?

Mrs. Mill. Sir Wilful, you and he are to travel together, are you not?

Sir W. 'Sheart! the gentleman's a civil gentleman, aunt; let him come in: why we are sworn brothers, and fellow-travellers. We are to be Py-lades and Orestes, he and I; he is to be my interpreter in foreign parts. He has been over seas once already; and with proviso that I marry my cousin, will cross 'em once again, only to bear me company. 'Sheart! I'll call him in; and I set on't once, he shall come in, and see who'll hinder him. *(Goes to the door, and hems.)*

Mrs. Mar. This is precious fooling, if it would pass; but I'll know the bottom of it.

Lady W. Oh! dear Marwood, you are not going?

Mrs. Mar. Not far, madam; I'll return immediately. *[Exit.]*

Enter MIRABELL.

Sir W. Look up, man, I'll stand by you. 'Shud! an she do frown, she can't kill you; besides, bark-ye! she dare not frown desperately, because her face is none of her own: 'sheart! and she should, her forehead would wrinkle like the coat of a cream-cheese; but mum for that, fellow-traveller.

Mir. If a deep sense of the many injuries I have offered to so good a lady, with a sincere remorse, and a hearty contrition, can but obtain the least glance of compassion, I am too happy. Ah! madam, there was a time, but let it be forgotten; I confess I have deservedly forfeited the high place I once held, of sighing at your feet! nay, kill me not, by turning from me in disdain, I come not to plead for favour; nay, not for pardon; I am a suppliant only for pity; I am going where I never shall behold you more. *[yourself, then.]*

Sir W. How, fellow-traveller! you shall go by

Mir. Let me be pitied first, and afterwards forgotten: I ask no more.

Sir W. By'r lady, a very reasonable request, and will cost you nothing, aunt. Come, come, forgive and forget, aunt; why you must, an you are a Christian.

Mir. Consider, madam, in reality, you could not receive much prejudice; it was an innocent device, though I confess it had a face of guiltiness; it was at most, an artifice which love contrived; and errors which love produces, have ever been accounted venial. At least, think it is punishment enough, that I have lost what in my heart I hold most dear; that to your cruel indignation I have offered up this beauty, and with her, my peace and quiet; nay, all my hopes of future comfort.

Sir W. An he does not move me, would I may never be o'the quorum. An it were not as good a deed as to drink, to give her to him again, I would I might never take shipping. Aunt, if you don't forgive quickly, I shall melt; I can tell you that. My contract went no further than a little mouth-glue, and that's hardly dry; one doleful sigh more from my fellow-traveller, and 'tis dissolved.

Lady W. Well, nephew, upon your account—Ah! he has a false, insinuating tongue. Well, sir, I will stifle my just resentment, at my nephew's request; I will endeavour what I can to forget, but on proviso that you resign the contract with my niece immediately.

Mir. It is in writing, and with papers of concern; but I have sent my servant for it, and will deliver it to you with all acknowledgments for your transcendent goodness.

Lady W. Oh! he has witchcraft in his eyes and tongue. When I did not see him, I could have bribed a villain to his assassination; but his appearance rakes the embers which have so long lain smothered in my breast. *(Aside.)*

Enter FAINALL and Mrs. MARWOOD.

Fain. Your debate of deliberation, madam, is expired. Here is the instrument, are you prepared to sign?

Lady W. If I were prepared, I am not empowered. My niece exerts a lawful claim, having matched herself, by my direction, to Sir Wilful.

Fain. That sham is too gross to pass on me; though 'tis imposed on you, madam.

Mrs. Mill. Sir, I have given my consent.

Mir. And, sir, I have resigned my pretensions.

Sir W. And, sir, I assert my right; and will maintain it in defiance of you, sir, and of your instrument. 'Sheart! an you talk of an instrument, sir, I have an old fox by my thigh shall hack your instrument of ram vellum to shreds, sir: it shall not be sufficient for a mittimus, or a tailor's measure; therefore, withdraw your instrument, or by'r lady, I shall draw mine.

Lady W. Hold, nephew, hold!

Mrs. Mill. Good Sir Wilful, respite your valour.

Fain. Indeed! Are you provided of your guard, with your single beef-eater there? But I am prepared for you; and insist upon my first proposal. You shall submit your own estate to my management, and absolutely make over my wife's to my sole use, as pursuant to the purport and tenor of this other covenant. I suppose, madam, your consent is not requisite in this case; nor, Mr. Mirabell, your resignation; nor, Sir Wilful, your right. You may draw your fox, if you please, sir, and make a bear-garden flourish somewhere else; for here it will not avail. This, my Lady Wishfort, must be subscribed, or your darling daughter's turned adrift, to sink or swim, as she and the current of this lowly town can agree.

Lady W. Is there no means, no remedy, to stop my ruin! Ungrateful wretch! dost thou not owe thy being, thy subsistence to my daughter's fortune?

Fain. I'll answer you when I have the rest of it in my possession.

Mir. But that you would not accept of a remedy from my hands—I own I have not deserved you should owe any obligation to me; or else, perhaps, I could advise.

Lady W. Oh! what, what! to save me and my child from ruin, from want, I'll forgive all that's past; nay, I'll consent to anything to come, to be delivered from this tyranny.

Mir. Ay, madam; but that is too late; my reward is intercepted. You have disposed of her, who only could have made me a compensation for all my services; but be it as it may, I am resolved I'll serve you; you shall not be wronged in this savage manner.

Lady W. How, dear Mr. Mirabell, can you be so generous at last! But it is not possible. Bark-ye! I'll break my nephew's match; you shall have my niece yet, and all her fortune, if you can but save me from this imminent danger.

Mir. Will you? I take you at your word. I ask no more. I must have leave for two criminals to appear.

Lady W. Ay, ay; anybody, anybody!

Mir. Foible is one, and a penitent.

Enter MRS. FAINALL, FOIBLE, and MINING.

Mrs. Mar. Oh! my shame! (*Mirabell and Lady W. go to Mrs. F. and Foible.*) these corrupt things are brought hither to expose me. (*To Fainall.*)

Fain. If it must all come out, why let 'em know it; 'tis but the way of the world: that shall not urge me to relinquish one tittle of my terms; no, I will insist the more. (*of it.*)

Foi. Yes, indeed, madam, I'll take my Bible oath *Min.* And so will I, mem.

Lady W. Oh! Marwood, Marwood, art thou false? My friend deceive me! Hast thou been a wicked accomplice with that profligate man?

Mrs. Mar. Have you so much ingratitude and injustice to give credit against your friend, to the aspersions of two such mercenary trulls?

Min. Mercenary, mem! I scorn your words. 'Tis true we found you and Mr. Fainall in the blue garret; by the same token, you swore us to secrecy upon Messalina's poems. Mercenary! no, if we would have been mercenary, we should have held our tongues; you would have bribed us sufficiently.

Fain. Go, you are an insignificant thing. Well, what are you the better for this? Is this Mr. Mirabell's expedient? I'll be put off no longer, you, thing, that was a wife, shall start for this.

Mrs. F. I despise you, and defy your malice; you have aspersed me wrongfully. I have proved your falsehood: go, you and your treacherous—I will not blame it, but starve together; perish.

Fain. Not while you are worth a groat, indeed, my dear; madam, I'll be fooled no longer.

Lady W. Ah! Mr. Mirabell, this is small comfort, the detection of this affair!

Mir. Oh! in good time. Your leave for the other offender and penitent to appear, madam.

Enter WAITWELL, with a box of writings.

Lady W. Oh! Sir Rowland—Well, rascal.

Wait. What your ladyship pleases. I have brought the black box at last, madam. [*promise.*]

Mir. Give it me, madam; you remember your

Lady W. Ay, dear sir.

Mir. Where are the gentlemen?

Wait. At hand, sir, rubbing their eyes; just risen from sleep.

Fain. 'Sdeath! what's this to me? I'll not wait your private concerns.

Enter PETULANT and WITWOUND.

Pet. How now, what's the matter? whose hand's out!

Wait. Heyday! what, are you all together, like players at the end of the last act?

Mir. You may remember, gentlemen, I once requested your hands as witnesses to a certain parchment. [*set his mark.*]

Wait. Ay, I do, my hand I remember; Petulant

Mir. You wrong him, his name is fairly written, as shall appear. You do not remember, gentlemen, anything of what that parchment contained. (*Undoing the box.*)

Wait. No.

Pet. Not I. I writ, I read nothing. [*promise.*]

Mir. Very well, now you shall know. Madam, your

Lady W. Ay, ay, sir, upon my honour.

Mir. Mr. Fainall, it is now time that you should know, that your lady, while she was 't her own disposal, and before you had, by your insinuations, wheedled her out of a pretended settlement of the greatest part of her fortune—

Fain. Sir, pretended!

Mir. Yes, sir; I say, that this lady, while a widow, having it seems received some cautions respecting your inconstancy and tyranny of temper, which, from her own partial opinion and fondness of you, she could never have suspected; she did, I say, by the wholesome advice of friends, and of sages settled in the laws of this land, deliver this same as her act and deed to me in trust, and to the uses within mentioned. You may read if you please,

(*holding out the parchment*) though, perhaps, what is written on the back may serve your occasions.

Fain. Very likely, sir. What's here? D—n! (*Reads.*) "A deed of conveyance of the whole estate real of Arabella Languish, widow, in trust to Edward Mirabell." Confusion!

Mir. Even so, sir; 'tis the way of the world, sir; of the widows of the world. I suppose this deed may bear an elder date than what you have obtained from your lady.

Fain. Perfidious fiend! then thus I'll be revenged. (*Offers to run at Mrs. Fainall.*)

Sir W. Hold, sir; now you may make your bearing flourish somewhere else, sir.

Fain. Mirabell, you shall hear of this, sir; be sure you shall. Let me pass, oaf! [*Exit.*]

Mrs. F. Madam, you seem to stifle your resentment: you had better give it vent.

Mrs. Mar. Yes, it shall have vent, and to your confusion, or I'll perish in the attempt. [*Exit.*]

Lady W. Oh! daughter, daughter; 'tis plain thou hast inherited thy mother's prudence.

Mrs. F. Thank Mr. Mirabell, a cautious friend, to whose advice all is owing

Lady W. Well, Mr. Mirabell, you have kept your promise, and I must perform mine. First, I pardon, for your sake, Sir Rowland there and Foible; the next thing is to break the matter to my nephew, and how to do that—

Mir. For that, madam, give yourself no trouble. Let me have your consent; Sir Wilful is my friend; he has had compassion upon lovers, and generously engaged a volunteer in this action for our service, and now designs to prosecute his travels.

Sir W. 'Sheart, aunt, I have no mind to marry. My cousin's a fine lady, and the gentleman loves her, and she loves him, and they deserve one another. My resolution is to see foreign parts; I have set out; and when I'm set out, I must do't. And if these two gentlemen would travel, too, I think they may be spared.

Pet. For my part, I say little; I think things are best, off or on.

Wait. Egad! I understand nothing of the matter; I'm in a maze yet, like a dog in a dancing-school.

Lady W. Well, sir, take her, and with her all the joy I can give you.

Mrs. Mill. Why does not that man take me? Would you have me give myself to you over again?

Mir. Ay, and over and over again. (*Kisses her hand.*) I would have you as often as I possibly can. Well, heaven grant I love you not too well, that's all my fear

Sir W. 'Sheart! you'll have time enough to toy after you're married; or if you will toy now, let us have a dance in the meantime; that we who are not lovers may have some other employment, besides looking on.

Mir. With all my heart, dear Sir Wilful. What shall we do for music?

Foi. Oh! sir, some that were provided for Sir Rowland's entertainment are within call. (*A dances.*)

Lady W. As I'm a person, I can hold out no longer; I have wasted my spirits so long already, that I am ready to sink under the fatigue; and I cannot but have some fears upon me yet, that my son Fainall will pursue some desperate course.

Mir. Madam, disquiet not yourself on that account; to my knowledge, his circumstances are such, he must of force comply. For my part, I will contribute all that in me lies to a re-union; in the meantime, madam, (*to Mrs. Fainall*) let me before these witnesses, restore to you this deed of trust; it may be a means, well managed, to make you live easily together.

From hence, let those be warn'd, who mean to wed,

Last mutual falsehood stain the bridal-bed:

For each deceiver to his cost may find,

That marriage frauds too oft are paid in kind.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE PANEL;

A COMEDY, IN THREE ACTS;

ALTERED FROM BICKERSTAFF'S COMEDY OF "TIS WELL IT'S NO WORSE,"

BY J. P. KEMBLE.



Act I.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

DON GUZMAN DE RIBBLRA
DON CARLOS DE PIMENTEL
DON PEDRO PACHECO
DON FERDINAND

LAZARILIO
MUSKATO
OCTAVIO
SERVANTS

MARCLLLA
BEATRICE
AURORA
LEONARDA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Room in Aurora's house.

Enter AURORA, followed by LEONARDA.

Aur. Undone, ruined and undone, past redemption!

Leon. Well, madam, I can't help applauding my own sagacity, for I always thought your writing to Don Carlos would come to no good.

Aur. And why did you not say so, pray! I'm sure it was chiefly by your advice I did it.

Leon. Do you think, ma'am, Don Carlos will be here to-night?

Aur. I expected him last night, you know, and shall expect every moment till I hear farther from him.

Leon. And, bless us all, what do you intend to do?

Aur. Softly, here is my brother.

Enter DON PEDRO PACHECO, who throws himself into a chair.

Leon. (*Apart to Aurora.*) Mercy on us, how cross he looks!

Don P. Leonarda, leave the room.

Leon. (*Aside.*) With all my heart, I am very glad to be out of the way. [*Exit.*]

Don P. You know, sister, when our father died, a very considerable succession devolved to me: however, being then with my regiment at Naples, I did not come to take possession, but left everything to your care and management.

Aur. I hope, sir, you have had no reason to repent—

Don P. Pray, hear me out. A particular friend writ me word, that in the month of April last, you left your lodgings, with Don Alonzo de Ribbera; and that while you were walking together on the Prado, another cavalier came up, charged him sword in hand, and killed him on the spot. In a word, it is this intelligence that has brought me here to Madrid.

Enter LEONARDA.

Leon. Don Ferdinand, sir, the nephew of Don Guzman, is below, and desires to be admitted to you.

Don P. Don Ferdinand! Shew him up.

Leon. (*Calling at the door.*) Shew the gentleman up, Lopez.

Don P. Sister, retire into the next room for a few minutes; and I desire that what has just now passed between us, may go no farther to any one.

Leon. (*Apart to Aurora.*) Well, ma'am, what was it he had to tell you?

Aur. (*Apart to Leon.*) Oh! Leonarda, he knows all.

Leon. (*Apart.*) What, ma'am, does he know the history of the wainscot?

Aur. (*Apart.*) Hush! not that, thank heaven; but everything else. [*Exit with Leon.*]

Enter DON FERDINAND.

Don F. Don Pedro, I rejoice to find you.

Don P. Your air speaks a mind in agitation; what's the matter?

Don F. Don Carlos is at this moment in Madrid.

Don P. You are positive you saw Don Carlos?

Don F. I am as positive it was him as that I this moment see you. Now, as I am shortly to be married to my cousin, it is highly incumbent upon me to render myself acceptable to my uncle; and, I am certain I can do nothing more likely to please him, than taking vengeance on the man who killed his son. I, therefore, expect that you will lend me your assistance upon so interesting an occasion, and accompany me to the place where the servant is ready to lead us.

Don P. I will most willingly do what you desire. Lopen, my sword; tell my sister, I shall be in again presently. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter AURORA and LEONARDA.

Aur. Oh! too sure, too sure he is come; and they are gone to destroy him.

Leon. (*A bell rings.*) Hist, ma'am, hist!

Aur. What ails you?

Leon. Hark!

Aur. How now!

Leon. (*Bell rings again.*) As I hope to be saved, I heard the little bell ring below; he's come here, and is now at the garden-door.

Enter DON CARLOS DE PIMENTEL and MUSKATO.

Don C. Beautiful Aurora!

Aur. You cannot think how rejoiced I am to see you at this moment: yet, I fear, the asylum I have to offer you will not prove so much to our wishes as my letters to Portugal made you hope; for my brother arrived here from Italy, yesterday.

Don C. Your brother!

Aur. I had no notice of his coming; otherwise, you may be sure, I should have apprized you, that you might have deferred your journey, at least, for some time.

Don C. It will be impossible for me to stay in your house, then.

Aur. Why so? I have prepared a retreat for you, where his utmost cunning will never be able to find you.

Musk. Ay, ma'am, but the constables—

Leon. Nor they, neither; hear my lady out.

Aur. This house consists, like many others in Madrid, but of two stories: the upper, I occupy myself; the lower, which, on my father's death, I found I had no occasion for, I let to one Octavio, a wine-merchant; on this division of the building, a back staircase, which made the communication between the two stories, with a small closet adjoining, became useless; and, by mutual consent, was stopped up, by a partition on the side of the apartment below, as well as on this. When I had

thoughts of bringing you back to Madrid, it occurred to me that the partition on my side might again be secretly opened, and prepared in such a manner as would effectually screen you from any search, should it ever be suspected that you were in the house: accordingly, the thing is done; (*going to the back-scene, she pushes back a panel, which discovers the head of a staircase*) and this moveable panel will, when you please, admit you into a place of security; and, when fastened on the inside—

Don C. Excuse me, ma'am, I have too grateful a sense of your kindness, to avail myself of a retreat which must expose you. In this emergency, the most simple way is to return to the place from whence I came.

Musk. That's my advice, sir; let us go to the inn directly, take our mules, o'God's name, and set off. Ladies, my master and I have the honour of wishing you all health and happiness.

Aur. You have, by some accident or other, been seen since you came to Madrid by young Ferdinand, the nephew of Don Guzman de Ribbera. His servant dogged you to your inn; and he and my brother are just gone in search of you.

Don C. Don't be alarmed; we have arms to defend ourselves.

Musk. (*Getting behind his master.*) No, no, ladies, don't be alarmed.

Aur. Talk not of defence, I beseech you; but, in pity to me, and out of regard to yourself, go into the place I have shewn you for this night: my brother will certainly go out early in the morning; and we will then consult together for your better and safer accommodation.

Musk. What the lady says, sir, is just and reasonable: I have considered the matter; and if you don't do it, I'll give myself up to justice immediately, and try to be admitted king's evidence.

Don C. I'll do anything for your safety.

Aur. For my safety be it, then.

Leon. Here, here, get you in. The closet's on the left hand, where you'll find a bed and a pallet; we'll be sure to come to you early in the morning; and, in the meantime, for your lives, don't come out upon any account whatsoever.

Aur. No, upon no account. Come, let us go into the next room.

Musk. H!p! Signora Leonarda, won't you leave us a bottle and a crust?

Leon. Feel in the closet. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter DON PEDRO PACHECO, sheathing his sword, followed by DON FERDINAND.

Don P. So, at length we are got into, at least, a temporary shelter. Who is the person we have wounded?

Don F. I think some one said, the secretary of the Duke of Medina.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, Signor Octavio, the wine-merchant below, desires to speak to you.

Enter OCTAVIO.

Oct. I understand, Don Pedro, you have had a scuffle in the street; you are known; and the person you have wounded is the Duke of Medina himself.

Don P. Fatal accident! the Duke himself!

Don F. Why do you stand like one confounded? Do you not hear what Signor Octavio says? You and your family must be gone from hence; I will

stay behind and see your goods removed with all possible diligence.

Oct. What is most valuable may be put into my warehouse in half-an-hour; and if Don Pedro will commit the key of his apartments to my charge, I will do my utmost to quash whatever inquiries may be made after him.

Don P. Get a coach to the door, and call hither my sister and her maid; I must dispose of them in safety, the first thing I do.

[*Exeunt Don Ferdinand and Octavio.*]

Enter AURORA and LEONARDA.

Aur. What are your commands, sir?

Don P. Don Ferdinand came hither just now, to desire I would accompany him on an affair of honour; but we have missed the person we went in search of, and, by mistake, assaulted another, who proves to be the Duke of Medina.

Aur. Well, sir, and what—

Don P. I must withdraw immediately to a place of safety; and, before we part, I will see you and your maid lodged in a nunnery.

Leon. I am sure I'll not go into a nunnery.

Don P. Then I'm sure you shall go into the street. Come, give me both your hands: (*seizing a hand of each*) nay, no struggling. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter OCTAVIO and several Officers.

Oct. Come in, gentlemen; come in, and welcome; but why force the door? I had the key in my possession, and would have willingly opened it for you.

1 Off. I want a gentleman called Don Pedro; my people understand these are his lodgings.

Oct. Don Pedro?

1 Off. Ay, ay; you know him well enough.

Oct. I know a sister of his who had these lodgings; but, as you may see, she has been gone from them some time.

1 Off. (*To his people.*) Well, have you found any one?

Oct. That Don Pedro you look for is not here, I assure you, gentlemen; you may credit what I say. (*Gives money.*)

1 Off. To be sure, Don Guzman, since you say the gentleman is not here, we'll take your word. Come along, comrades. [*Exeunt Officers.*]

Enter DON GUZMAN DE RIBBERA.

Don G. My nephew has told me all, and I suppose you would give this tenement a bargain to any one that would take it off your hands?

Oct. To be sure, sir, on an occasion like this—

Don G. You would be glad to take anything you could get; isn't that what you were going to say? so, if twenty dollars a month will be sufficient, I'll e'en hire the premises for my own use, and take possession directly.

Oct. Surely, sir, twenty dollars are too little.

Don G. Well, but consider, it's doing the young man a favour; and, belike, seeing my family in the house would satisfy the police, and prevent further inquiries.

Oct. I really think, sir, that as your chief motive for taking the apartment is to serve Don Pedro, the sooner you and your family come into it the better.

Don G. I am of that opinion too; and as, very luckily, my time is just up where I now lodge, and I want some larger rooms, in consequence of my daughter's marriage, which I shall shortly celebrate, I shall send to you for the key within this half hour.

Oct. You will oblige me, Don Guzman, by charging yourself with the key now; for having a small vineyard near town, I have shut up my place below, and sent all my servants, men and women, to work there.

Don G. And you want to go yourself, is it not so?

Oct. I thought of setting off before this, and staying for the remainder of the week, had not Don Pedro's affairs detained me.

Don G. Well, well, go your ways, and mind your business; I'll take the key from you. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter DON CARLOS DE PIMENTEL and MUSKATO.

Musk. They are gone out again, and have looked the door upon us.

Don C. Did you hear all that has passed, Muskato?

Musk. Yes, sir, every word of it; but don't grow desperate upon that account, things are not so bad as we expected; this is a respite, at least, if not a reprieve.

Don C. A respite! Has not Don Guzman taken this house over my head, and am I not by that means in the hands of my most cruel and avowed enemy?

Musk. Yes, sir, but he does not know you are in his hands; and by some fortunate means or other, you may, perhaps, contrive to slip through his fingers.

Don C. To complete my misfortune, too, the merchant below is gone out with his family, and has shut up his doors; so that my retreat is stopped that way. By forcing the lock of the door, we may get out before our enemy returns; I know the danger of shewing myself at this hour in the streets, but—

Musk. Oh! sir, nothing is so dangerous as staying here, if we can get out; so, pray, let us force the door; I have broken a lock before now upon a less justifiable occasion; and, if you'll lend me your assistance, I'll do my endeavour to master this. (*Goes to the door, and returns in a fright.*) Quick, sir, quick; get back to the staircase.

Don C. What's the matter?

Musk. Don Guzman's people are in the house; come here, and hide yourself, and ask no questions. [*Exeunt behind the panel.*]

Enter BEATRICE and LAZARILLO.

Beat. And so, these are the lodgings we are in such a hurry to leave our old ones for!

Laz. Ay; how do you like them?

Beat. Like them, not at all; I never saw such a battered barrack in my days. Who could build the dog-hole! In the first place, that door has not common sense in it; then the stairs are the wrong way; and the windows, mercy on us! what pigeon-holes! and a mile and a half from the ground.

Laz. Ay, there's the fault; you want to be gaping and staring into the street.

Beat. Lazafillo, run to the old gentleman, and tell him if he has not already signed the agreement, he must by no means take this house. I hear a coach; sure, it is not my lady already?

Laz. But it is though; you had better tell her you don't like the house.

Beat. So I shall, I promise you.

Enter MARCELLA.

La! ma'am, you are in great haste; I did not expect to see you these three hours.

Mar. I set out to oblige my father; nothing

would satisfy him but I must come directly to see the apartments, and dispose of the furniture according to my own fancy.

Beat. Furniture, ma'am! I'm sure it's a pity to put any into them; if the kennel were mine I should think of nothing but pulling it down, and selling the rubbish to the best bidder.

Laz. Mrs. Beatrice is difficult to please, ma'am.

Mar. My father tells me, Lazarillo, that it is to please your master he takes these lodgings; and I suppose it is by his desire that we come to them so suddenly. Do you know the reason of Don Ferdinand's extraordinary attachment?

Laz. Why, ma'am, I am generally pretty well acquainted with my master's secrets.

Mar. I beg your pardon; I did not know it was any secret, or I should not have asked.

Laz. Oh! ma'am, there's no secret; that is to say, no absolute secret; but as far as this here, ma'am, the air and situation, I believe—

Beat. In short, ma'am, Signor Lazarillo is a person who seldom chooses to seem ignorant of anything. Did your master ever tell you why he liked these lodgings?

Laz. I can't say he ever did.

Beat. Then you can give my lady no satisfaction as to her question.

Laz. Well, Mrs. Beatrice, I did not speak to you.

Mar. Never mind her, Lazarillo, but go and take care of those things I brought in the coach. [*Exit Lazarillo.*] Ah, Beatrice!

Beat. Ay, ma'am, here I am.

Mar. I feel myself very unhappy.

Beat. Oh, fie! ma'am, to tell me so, on the eve of your marriage, as it were.

Mar. 'Tis the thought of that makes me melancholy.

Beat. Is it, indeed? I'm sure, then, ma'am, you and I are of very different dispositions. I wish I were going to be married; the deuce a thing should I think of but what would make me very glad.

Mar. How, Beatrice! suppose you were going to set out upon a journey, which presented you with the most beautiful prospect; but on the first advances you made, you found yourself on the brink of a precipice, what would you do?

Beat. A very great precipice, do you mean; or only a little sort of a declivity?

Mar. Psha! I'm not in a jesting humour.

Beat. Well, but, ma'am, let me understand you. You ask me, if I were going to set out on a journey which presented me with the most beautiful prospect, and on the first advances I made I found myself on the brink of a precipice, what I would do?

Mar. Ay.

Beat. Why, then, ma'am, I'll tell you: in case it was not a very ugly precipice indeed, I would gather up all my strength, shut my eyes, so, and give a great jump.

Mar. In short, Beatrice, my cousin, Don Ferdinand—

Beat. (*Stopping her mistress.*) He's here, ma'am.

Enter DON FERDINAND.

Don F. How happy am I to arrive at a moment when you pronounce my name!

Mar. I had just begun to talk to Beatrice, when your coming into the room interrupted me. I will take up the discourse again, if you please; and finish what I was going to say to her.

Don F. I am content.

Beat. Stand there, then, sir; and we'll proceed in our discourse as if you were fifty miles off. Come, ma'am, begin.

Mar. I say, then, Beatrice, my cousin, Don Fer-

dinand, no doubt, imagines that marriage is a dispensation from the subaltern duties exacted by complaisance, since he already begins to fail in those marks of tenderness and regard I expected to find from him: he forgets that love is nourished by attention; and that the slightest negligence kills it.

Don F. Ah! dear Marcella, did you know how uneasy you make me by this kind of discourse.

Mar. And why uneasy? what I spoke was said to Beatrice; and you need take no notice of it, as you need not be supposed to overhear.

Beat. That's right, ma'am; and to let you know another thing, sir, you are not to take the words out of my mouth; my lady spoke to me, and it's my part to answer; and here's the way I do it:—I suppose, ma'am, Don Ferdinand is like the rest of his sex; who, for the most part, follow women as they hunt hares and foxes; when the animal's caught, the sport is over. I once had a sweetheart myself, ma'am, that used to call me his queen, and his goddess; and made verses, and repeated such moving lines as these to me:

*"When first I attempted your pity to move,
You seem'd deaf to my sighs and my prayers;
Perhaps it was right to dissemble your love,
But why did you kick me down stairs?"*

Come, ma'am, give him your hand to kiss, and tell him you are friends with him. Look you there, sir, I knew it. There's nothing does with us like a little coaxing.

Don F. (*Kissing Marcella's hand.*) Your father, my dear, is determined to have our wedding a public one; and Saturday next, he assures me shall be the happy day. Just as I left home, a good many of your things were brought, which I have ordered to be sent here, with some boxes of rich wine and foreign sweetmeats, for the ball I intend to give a select number of our friends, to-morrow night. In the meantime, I'll step back to the old lodgings to see things properly taken care of. Lazarillo, bring up those parcels. And you, Mrs. Beatrice, will not find yourself forgotten.

Beat. Oh! then, there's something for me. I suppose it's the new gown he promised to give me; and that your mantua-maker took measure of me for. I long to see it. Lazarillo, I say, will you be all day?

Laz. (*Without.*) Coming, Mrs. Beatrice, coming.

Beat. Why don't you make haste, then?

Laz. (*Without.*) It's impossible to make haste enough for impatient people.

Enter LAZARILLO, followed by other Servants, laden with boxes, cases of wine, &c.

Beat. Have not you something that your master gave you for me, pray?

Laz. I have something for everybody, but that's your bundle, I believe. (*Gives her a parcel, which she immediately opens.*) Here, comrades, bring in the table, and set it yonder, that I may put these things upon it; quick, quick.

Beat. (*Having displayed her gown on a chair.*) Dear madam, look here; upon my life, it's very pretty. I have a good mind to try it on now. (*Going to unpin herself.*) Do you think it will become me, ma'am?

Mar. Your head runs upon nothing but your dress. Follow me, to see the condition of the other rooms.

Laz. We are going back for more things, Mrs. Beatrice; you'll please to take care of what we leave behind.

Beat. Oh! stay, then, till I shut the doors. (*Shuts the opposite door; returning, she stops a mo-*

ment to admire the gown.) Well, I swear and vow, it's one of the gentleest things I ever saw in my life. I wish, however, there had been a little more puffing upon the sleeves. *[Exeunt.]*

Enter DON CARLOS DE PIMENTEL and MUSKATO.

Musk. *(Speaking as he pushes back the panel.)* I will go out.

Don C. Muskato—

Musk. Zounds! sir, don't tell me; as good be hanged as famished. *(Perceiving the table that has been put against the panel, which prevents his coming forward.)* Heyday! what have we here? They have raised a buttress against our wooden wall. *(Puts his hands among the things on the table, and throws some of them down.)*

Don C. What are you doing?

Musk. Making a noise. How shall I remove these impediments? *(Attempting to push the table from him, he overturns it.)* Oh Lord! oh Lord!

Don C. Death and hell! are you bent on our ruin?

Musk. For heaven's sake, sir, don't swear. D—n the table! I did but just touch it. However, nobody has heard. *(Taking up and opening a box.)* What have we here? Sweetmeats! *(Eating a piece.)* Excellent, i'faith! and here are cakes. *(Opening one of the cases.)* Wine, wine, wine! *(Falling upon his knees, and looking back on his master.)* Sir, my service to you. *(Drinks.)* Will you pledge me?

Don C. They'll certainly come upon us.

Musk. *(Speaking with his mouth full.)* Lord! what an admirable blessing did Nature bestow upon man, when she gave him a good stomach! If your friends and family could be apprized of your situation and design—but as the matter stands, sir, I don't think we shall be able to make our escape by violence.

Don C. We can't pick our way through the walls, then?

Musk. No, sir; I wish we could; but I'll tell you, sir, I think one of us might get out unnoticed, by means of a disguise: now suppose I take upon me this disguise, make my escape, inform your friends where you are, and have 'em ready—

Don C. But how?

Musk. You see that gown there, and the veil and things along with it; I'll carry it into your repository, dress myself a-la-demoiselle, watch my opportunity when it is dark, and, I warrant, get clear without any suspicion.

Don C. 'Sdeath! here is somebody coming.

Musk. Is there? *(Gathering the clothes under his arm.)* Let me lay hold of that bottle, then.

Enter BEATRICE.

Beat. *(Singing.)* Fal, la, la, la, la, la. *(Seeing the condition the room is in, she turns her song, by degrees, into a scream.)* Oh, oh! ma'am, ma'am, come here and see what has happened!

Enter MARCELLA.

Mar. What's the matter?

Beat. The devil's the matter.

Mar. Who has been in the room?

Beat. I don't know, ma'am.

Mar. This seems to have been done on purpose.

Beat. *(Looking about, screams.)* Ah!

Mar. How now!

Beat. My new gown, ma'am, where's my new gown? Lazarillo! Lopez! Sancho!

Mar. This is very odd.

Beat. Lazarillo! I will have my gown.

Enter DON GUZMAN DE RIBBERA and LAZARILLO.

Don G. There's always a rout, and a racket, wherever this girl is. What are you after now, Mrs. Fidget?

Beat. Lazarillo, did not you give me my things in this room, and did you not see me leave them here when you went out again?

Laz. Ay; well, what then, suppose I did?

Beat. Well, and you must answer for them.

Don G. And who is to answer for all this pretty work, I would be glad to know? Why, you silly baggage you, did you think your frippery was stuffed into the boxes and wine-cases, that you have broken them to pieces?

Beat. It was not I.

Don G. Who then?

Beat. Old Nick, I believe.

Don G. 'Gad! I have a good mind to lay my cane across your shoulders.

Beat. Speak to him, ma'am, will you?

Mar. Upon my word, sir, it is something very extraordinary; we left the things here in good order, a little while ago, and this moment that we came into the room again, we found them in the condition you see.

Laz. Some dog got in I suppose, sir.

Beat. Ay, some dog upon two legs. Dogs in Spain don't drink wine and eat sweetmeats, nor steal gowns; indeed, sir, you ought to pay me for my things.

Don G. I pay for them, hussy! do you think I stole your dab of a gown?

Beat. Some of your servants did.

Laz. Do you suspect me, Mrs. Beatrice?

Don G. Heyday! do you know where you are?

Beat. I will have my gown.

Don G. Come, child, you shall go with me to the other lodgings, where we will dine, and after dinner return hither, by which time most of the furniture will be moved; and, do you hear? let those things be taken away, and this room set to rights immediately; and if you find this slattern's trumpery in any hole or corner, lay them by for her.

Beat. Lazarillo, you certainly stole my things.

Laz. I stole your things! d—e, if you say so again—

Beat. Take that, you impudent jackanapes. *(Gives him a box on the ear.)*

Don G. Ay, ay, before my face, and behind my back, too; no respect to me on either side.

[Beating them out before him with his cane.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The same.

LAZARILLO and BEATRICE discovered.

Laz. Pray, Mrs. Beatrice, how soon is my master and your lady to be married?

Beat. *(Viewing herself in the glass.)* If you want to know, it's a question you ought to ask them.

Laz. I must, i'faith! for it will be necessary for me to get my things and look a little about me.

Beat. What! and so you don't intend to stay with Don Ferdinand?

Laz. Oh! d—n it, no; it would not do for me at all. Service with a single gentleman, well and good; but married families are hell and the devil.

Beat. Do you intend to list for a soldier, then; or turn barber; or what? 'Tis dangerous being

out of place; I have known several of your fraternity come to an untimely end by it.

Laz. To tell you the truth, I am afraid to stay with Don Ferdinand, lest, as valets are apt to ape their masters, I should be tempted to imitate him; and, as he has married your mistress, the devil might put it into my head to marry you.

Beat. (*Turning round, and surveying him with an air of contempt.*) What is the matter with this glass? it always makes me look browner than any other in the house. (*Wiping it with her handkerchief, and going from it in a minute step.*) We shall have a ball here to-morrow evening; I suppose the company will desire to see me dance an allemande, or a fanfango, or something.

Laz. Come, you have enjoyed it long enough; now let me look at myself a little.

Beat. Lazarillo, give me the glass.

Laz. (*Viewing himself.*) D—e, if I don't think people look very well in it.

Beat. Give me the glass, I say.

Laz. Come and kiss me for it.

Beat. I'll see you hanged first.

Laz. Then you sha'n't have it. Tol de rol, lol lol.

Beat. Come, let us dance then. Lord! here's Don Guzman and your master! [*Runs out.*]

Laz. The devil!

Enter DON GUZMAN DE RIBBERA and DON FERDINAND.

Don F. I have been at the Duke of Medina's; and I find his wounds are not so bad as I at first apprehended. The report, however, of Don Pedro being the person who assaulted him, rather gains ground.

Don G. Like enough.

Don F. Some officers have, as I understand, been, within these two hours, walking backwards and forwards before this house, and looking at it very inquisitively.

Don G. Then, belike, they still suspect that Don Pedro is in it.

Don F. So it would seem.

Don G. And we may have a visit from them in the night, perhaps, when we least desire their company. I'll strive to prevent them. Come hither, you sir. Go to the Conde de Lemos, governor of Madrid; his palace is hard by; give my respects, and tell his excellency, I shall be much obliged to him, if he will order me, directly, a couple of sentinels to stand at my door. Tell him I shall want them for two or three days, till I have married my daughter. [*Exit Lazarillo.*]

Don F. I have not seen Don Pedro since yesterday, sir; and, as he has given me an intimation where he is concealed, I will now, with your permission, step to him for a few minutes.

Don G. Well, well, go then; you'll be back to supper? [*Exit Don F.*] And now that we have got pretty well over the hurry of moving, let me see what I have to do to-morrow. In the first place, early in the morning, to go my lawyers, to desire them to be here precisely at eleven o'clock, to settle the business of my daughter's marriage. Secondly, to go to Father Bartolin, our parish priest.

Enter BEATRICE and LAZARILLO, on opposite sides.

Beat. (*Calls loudly.*) Lazarillo!

Laz. (*Answering loudly.*) Here!

Don G. (*Clapping his fingers to his ears.*) How now! What the plague's the matter with you both, have you a mind to break the drums of my ears?

Laz. What do you scream so for, Beatrice?

Don G. Scream! One and the other of you have screamed me almost deaf. What do you want, turbulence?

Beat. Lord, sir, I'm surprised at you. How can you have the idea of making the best room in your house a bed-chamber.

Don G. Because I like it.

Beat. Why, sir, it will be shocking.

Don G. What's that to you?

Beat. Besides, I suppose Don Ferdinand will remove to my lady's chamber in a night or two.

Don G. Ha! now you have got that in your head; and who bid you suppose about it?

Beat. Nay, sir, it's no business of mine, to be sure, if you have a mind to turn the house upside down, only I love to set people right, and see things done properly.

Don G. Well, but my nephew chose that room particularly.

Laz. Why, so I told Mrs. Beatrice, sir. I said my master had made particular choice of that room.

Beat. Very well then, let his bed be put in it; but remember, sir, it's done by no order of mine.

Don G. I believe there never was your fellow for impertinence, since the world begun. ~~But~~ why should I be surprised at this, when I am told, you give out all over the neighbourhood, that I am going to marry you?

Laz. Ha, ha, ha!

Don G. Ay, you may well laugh.

Beat. I never gave out any such thing.

Don G. Don't lie, for I can prove it upon you.

Beat. I say then, sir, I never did; for the thing was first mentioned to me; and isn't it common enough, when a genteel likely girl lives in the house with a gentleman, for people to talk?

Don G. Well, I sha'n't dispute the matter with you now. Go, take the coach, and fetch your young lady home: she's at her aunt's. Why don't you go where I bid you?

Beat. I'm settling myself, sir.

Laz. (*Going out.*) Ha, ha, ha! marry!

Beat. What's the matter with you? I promise you I don't know whether I would take the old fellow, if he would have me; so he need not make himself uneasy. [*Exit Laz. and Beat.*]

Enter AURORA, veiled.

Don G. A paltry, dirty baggage! to give out that I was going to marry her; there never was such a thought entered into my head. (*Seeing Aurora.*) Who is it that comes into the house this way without knocking? Is there nobody in the way to shew people?

Aur. Don't be offended, Signor, at the liberty an unfortunate woman has taken, upon seeing your door open; I implore a moment's refuge.

Don G. Explain yourself.

Aur. I have the misfortune to be the wife of the most jealous and suspicious of mankind, who is, at the same time, the most cruel. Upon a person's looking after me in the street, just now, he took something into his head, drew his poniard, and was going to strike me.

Don G. Oh! for shame.

Aur. I got from him, and made my escape in hither; but he is lurking about, and I am afraid, when I go out again—

Don G. What can I do for you?

Aur. I entreat you to go down into the street, and speak to him not to misuse me; you will easily know him, he is in a red cloak, and wears a gold laced hat, with a black feather.

Don G. I'll go down, madam.

Aur. In the meantime, sir, permit me to re-

main here; and, as I am a person of some distinction in the world, I beg you will not suffer your people to come about me, till your humanity has rescued me from the danger—

Don G. Step into that chamber, madam, where you will find a light, and nobody shall molest you. I warrant I'll give a good account of your jealous pate, and if words won't do, rougher means shall. (*Don Guzman leads Aurora to the door, and then taking up the candle, goes out on the opposite side, which leaves the stage dark. Don Carlos immediately pushes back the moveable panel, and comes out with Muskato, who is disguised in woman's clothes.*)

Don C. It is now quite dark; and you may, if ever, escape without being seen; as for myself, I'll wait with patience, determined to brave everything till your return.

Musk. I don't know what's the matter with me, sir, I am d—y frightened.

Don C. As soon as you have brought my friends together in the street, the signal is to be a pistol; which, when I hear discharged, I will instantly rush out, and force my passage to you.

Musk. Ay, sir; but the grand matter is my getting out.

Don C. Farewell; at any rate don't let your apprehensions confound you. [*Exit.*]

AURORA appears at the door of the room into which she had been conducted by Don Guzman.

Aur. Don Guzman's gone; and all is dark; this is the moment to find Don Carlos. Assist me, love; and, if he be yet here—

Musk. Eh, eh, eh! (*Coughing.*)

Aur. Ha! what figure's that!

Musk. This is a cursed scheme of mine; I wish I had never thought of it; it will bring me to the gallows, I'm sure; then they'll hang me in woman's clothes. (*Aside.*)

Aur. It moves this way; was ever anything so unlucky! I must retire a while. [*Exit.*]

Musk. Come, courage; it is but making the effort; if I can but get down stairs, I am safe enough; (*going towards the door, sees Don Guzman*) then there's an end of me; tried, condemned, and executed. The old man!

Re-enter DON GUZMAN DE RIBBERA, with the candle; and, seeing Muskato veiled, and in woman's clothes, takes him for Aurora, whom he had left.

Don G. Come, madam, you may take your way, without the least apprehension; I have looked all about the door, and no such person you describe was to be found.

Aur. (*Aside.*) What is he talking of?

Don G. Give me your hand, ma'am, I am going abroad myself, and will lead you to whatever place of safety you think proper.

Musk. What's all this?

Don G. Poor soul, how she trembles; fear nothing, ma'am; in committing yourself to my charge, you are perfectly secure.

Musk. (*Curtsying, and in a squeaking voice.*) I am much obliged to you, sir.

Don G. Her tears almost choke her voice. (*Aside.*)—Will you have any cordial to refresh you?

Musk. No, I thank you, sir.

Don G. Come along, don't be frightened, madam.

Musk. Sure, if ever there was an angel with a beard, this is he. (*Aside.*) [*Eseunt.*]

Enter AURORA and DON CARLOS DE PIMENTEL.

Aur. Now is my time. Good heaven! how I tremble. I am almost afraid to approach the place. (*Knocking at the panel, Don Carlos pushes*

it back.) Sir, Don Carlos, sir. Merciful heaven! he's here still.

Don C. Donna Aurora!

Aur. I was obliged to leave you here last night.

Don C. Obligated to leave me!

Aur. It is too long a story to tell you now. I have escaped from a convent, where my brother placed me, resolved to make my way to you through all impediments; there is the key, let yourself out in the dead of night. Farewell.

Don C. Stay, madam.

Aur. Oh! unfortunate, here comes Marcella, the daughter of Don Guzman; I would not for the world be known by her. Get in, get in, there's another woman with her. What shall I do? Anything's better than meeting them. (*She retires, and Don Carlos goes behind the panel.*)

Enter MARCELLA and BEATRICE, with lights.

Mar. What was it you asked Lazarillo, Beatrice?

Beat. Why, ma'am, whether his master was at home.

Mar. And what did he say?

Beat. What you heard, ma'am, that he was not.

Mar. That he had been gone about half an hour; was it not?

Beat. Yes, ma'am.

Mar. Well, take my fan, and my veil, and see that my things are got ready in the dressing-room. (*Beatrice goes out with the things.*) A strange unseasonable hour for Don Ferdinand to leave the house, methinks; and just at a time when he knew I was coming home too.

Re-enter BEATRICE.

Beat. (*In agitation.*) Ma'am, ma'am!

Mar. Well, what now?

Beat. Don't make a noise. I have seen such a thing in Don Ferdinand's chamber; and, I believe, I have found out the thief, too, for I dare swear she stole my gown.

Mar. She! what she?

Beat. A woman, ma'am.

Mar. In Don Ferdinand's chamber?

Beat. Yes; as I was going along the passage, I observed the door pushed to; so I popped my head in; and there I saw a woman in a veil. I did not say a word, but came back directly.

Mar. We'll see who she is; take the candles.

Beat. Yes, ma'am; she can't escape us.

[*They go out.*]

Mar. (*Behind.*) We will know who you are.

Aur. That's as I please.

Mar. What brings you here?

Aur. I came here to a gentleman.

Beat. Pull off her veil, ma'am.

Aur. Nay, then—

Beat. Stop there, a thief!

DON CARLOS DE PIMENTEL pushes back the panel, comes out, and afterwards AURORA runs in.

Don C. What noise was that! Sure it was Aurora's voice; somebody molests her.

Aur. (*Running in.*) Save me, Carlos; they pursue me; I shall be discovered, and undone.

Enter DON FERDINAND. Don Carlos and Aurora retire behind the panel.

Don F. (*Stamping.*) Lights! here, lights! Lights, I say.

Enter BEATRICE, LAZARILLO, and other Servants.

Where is this assassin, this housebreaker?

Mar. Where is this shame to her sex?

Laz. Sir, madam, what's the matter?

Don F. There has been a man here, masked; search about.

Laz. Where shall we search, sir?

Don F. Call to the sentinels to let nobody out of the house; he can't have made his escape.

Beat. Oh! ma'am, you have let the woman go.

Mar. I let her go!

Beat. Yes, ma'am, it was certainly she that was here this morning. How did she get away?

Mar. Don Ferdinand let her pass; but how did she get in here, Beatrice?

Enter DON GUZMAN DE RIBBERA, with a Lawyer and a Notary.

Don G. Come, gentlemen, give me leave to bring you into this chamber; I have ordered things to be got ready for our business—Daughter, good morning to you! Heyday! What's the matter, child? Come, let us take our places. You, gentlemen, at that table, with your parchments; and you, children, seat yourselves here on each side.

Don F. (Sits.) Ugh!

Don G. So, so! what ails you? Have you got the melancholias? Caught the dumps of your cousin?

Don F. Dumps, sir? I don't know what you mean; I never was merrier in my life.

Don G. Come, gentlemen, have you got everything ready?

Las. Yes, Don Guzman, everything is ready?

Don G. Daughter, why don't you sit down here when I desire it?

Mar. Sir, I choose—

Beat. Dear ma'am, pray sit down.

Mar. Why, it will be the same thing.

Notary. These you say, Don Guzman, are the parties?

Don G. Ay; you'll take notice, I give ten thousand pistoles to my daughters, for the present, and the rest of my fortune at my death.

Notary. Ten thousand pistoles; the residue of your fortune at your death; 'tis so set down, Don Guzman.

Don G. Let me see—

Don F. Shall we suffer them to go on with this farce, ma'am?

Mar. Don't talk to me, sir; I desire to have no manner of conversation with you.

Don F. Oh! very well, ma'am; I am as willing to avoid anything of that kind as you can be.

Don G. What, what, what are you saying to one another?

Don F. I was not speaking at all, sir.

Don G. Were you not speaking neither?

Mar. No, sir, I did not say a word.

Don G. I'm sure you did though.

Beat. (Behind Marcella's chair.) No, sir, my lady did not speak, indeed.

Don G. I'm not speaking to you, take notice.

Las. (Behind Don Ferdinand's chair.) Put in your word again.

Don G. Well, before we go any farther, let us fix the day for the marriage; I have thought of Saturday; however, please yourselves; what say you, nephew?

Don F. Why, sir, if I must give my opinion, I think we had better defer it a little.

Don G. Defer it! How long?

Don F. For ever, sir.

Mar. And that's my opinion, too, sir.

Don G. Is it so, indeed. And why is it your opinion, pray?

Mar. Don Ferdinand will tell you, sir. *[Exit.]*

Don G. Come back, child. Marcella! *(Turning to Don Ferdinand.)* Don Ferdinand!

Don F. Inquire of your daughter, sir, she can best inform you. *[Exit all but Don G. and Beat.]*

Don G. Gone! she one way, and he the other, and I am left in the clouds. Pray, ma'am, can you solve this riddle? What has happened between your mistress and her cousin to occasion this sudden—I know not what to call it; Satan has possessed them both, I believe.

Beat. Don't ask me anything about it, sir.

Don G. Not ask you?

Beat. No, sir, I had rather you would not.

Don G. What are you whimpering for?

Beat. I don't know, sir, I can't help it.

Don G. I desire you will tell me whatever has come to your knowledge.

Beat. Well, sir, all I know about it, is this: Don Ferdinand brought a creature into the house here—

Don G. A creature! When?

Beat. Just now, sir.

Don G. Well, don't cry. And what creature was it?

Beat. Sir, I'm ashamed to tell you what it was.

Don G. Ashamed!

Beat. Besides, I don't know how you name them.

Don G. No! It must be some strange monster, sure, or you are grown devilish mealy-mouthed of a sudden; was it a lion, a tiger, a bear, a rhinoceros, a crocodile, or a porcupine?

Beat. No, sir, it was not a porcupine, but it was a concubine; one of your creatures that run after the men.

Don G. Oh, ho! In short, Don Ferdinand brought a strumpet into my house last night?

Beat. Yes, sir, I believe that's one of the names gentlemen give them.

Don G. And how do you know he did this?

Beat. Because I saw her, sir.

Don G. Very well, that's all I want with you.

Beat. Sir, your humble servant. *[Exit.]*

Don G. Gentlemen, you see there is something wrong in my family; I really don't know what it is at present; but as it must be settled before we conclude matters, I will endeavour to get at the bottom of it, and let you know this evening, when we will trouble you again. *[Exit.]*

DON CARLOS DE PIMENTEL opens the panel, and enters with AURORA leaning on his arm.

Aur. Only get me a little into the air, and I shall be well again presently.

Don C. How do you find yourself?

Aur. Better already.

Don C. (Drawing her a chair.) Sit down here a little.

Aur. Heigho!

Don C. Aurora! she faints again; the heat of that place has overcome her so that I shall never be able to fetch her to herself.

Aur. 'Tis nothing but the sudden effects of the air. I assure you I am greatly recovered, and shall be able to go in again immediately.

Don C. If I can see Beatrice, I think I may venture to tell her my story, and commit Aurora to her care; 'tis the only thing I have for it, and the worst come to the worst, my mask and my sword shall defend me from everybody else. *[Exit.]*

Aur. What woman can say she will make but one false step? Alas! we tread upon ice, and in making one, through want of caution, we make a thousand.

Mar. (Within.) Beatrice!

Aur. Heaven and earth! what do I hear? Is not that Marcella's voice? Should she find me in this place, should she know where I have been, what would she think of me! I am entangled so on every side, that it is impossible for me to extricate myself. Must then the retreat I contrived for another, be my own destruction. *[Exit.]*

Enter MARCELLA and BEATRICE.

Mar. Where's my father?

Beat. I don't know, ma'am; but I've told him all.

Mar. Told him! What have you told him?

Beat. Why, about the woman, ma'am.

Mar. I'm sorry for it.

Beat. Are you? I'm sorry, too, then. But you would not have had me told him a lie, and he asked me.

Mar. In short, Beatrice, Don Ferdinand's behaviour betrays no marks of guilt; and, after all, if we should be mistaken—

Beat. Nay, ma'am, if there be any mistake, you led me into it, I'm sure; for I said at first, the woman was only a thief.

Mar. Go, and desire my father to come to me here.

Beat. Yes, ma'am; but, pray, now take care what you say to him, and don't let him lay all the blame upon me. *[Exit.]*

MARCELLA sits down in the chair which AURORA had just left. DON CARLOS DE PIMENTEL enters behind.

Don C. I have ventured as far as my apprehensions would give me leave, but without being able to meet Beatrice; however, it is so far well, that I have met nobody else. Perhaps her weakness may now have left her. *(Approaching Marcella.)* Dearest creature, how is it with you?

Mar. *(Starting up with a scream.)* Ah!

Don C. Confusion, what's this?

Mar. Who are you—Help!

Don C. My head turns round—I shall drop.

Mar. Don Carlos.

Don C. That wretch.

Mar. Whence come you, sir? How got you here?
Don C. Hold, ma'am! my life is not worth preserving—But where is the lady I left here just now?

Mar. The lady, sir, just now! Lord, what lady, and what are you talking of? I saw no lady.

Don C. *(Aside.)* Aurora, then, has recovered, and gone back to our retreat: Marcella has not seen her, so I had better say nothing.

Mar. On reflection, I find myself in the most critical situation; my honour is at stake as well as your life.

Enter BEATRICE.

Beat. Your father and Don Ferdinand are both gone.—*(Seeing Don Carlos.)* Ah! madam, here is a man, then, after all; and you would not venture to trust me.

Mar. The man is Don Carlos—

Beat. We shall every one be hanged.

Mar. How he got in, or his reason for coming, I cannot prevail on him to discover.

Beat. How long has he been here, ma'am?

Mar. I never saw him till this moment, that he surprised me.

Beat. Upon your word?

Mar. For my part, I believe he is mad; for he talks in the strangest, wild, incoherent manner.

Beat. His eyes look very ugly, I assure you. Stand further from him, ma'am. *(Keeping at a distance, with her mistress by the arm.)* What do you want here, sir? and which of our people let you in?

Don C. None of your people let me in.

Beat. I suppose, then, you were the man Don Ferdinand saw last night?

Don C. I was.

Beat. We must get him out, ma'am, while your father and Don Ferdinand are abroad; it will be better than calling the servants to take him, for reasons—

Mar. But how shall we get him out? He is subject to be seen by all the servants in the house, every one of whom know him; and, at last, perhaps, he may be stopped by the sentinels at the door.

Beat. The sentinels! I never thought of them. Lord, lord! how shall we contrive! One can't think of hanging the wretch. Stay, there's a thought come into my head: There is in my room, a mili-

tary hat and cloak of your late brother's; let him put them on; the sentinels will take him for an officer—

Mar. At any rate, Beatrice, carry him up into your chamber for the present.

Beat. I will, ma'am. Come, sir. There is something that puzzles me in this business, notwithstanding; for, I can hardly believe the man would come into this house, merely for the sake of being hanged, let my lady say what she pleases. *(Aside.)* *[Exeunt.]*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Street, with a view of Don Gusman's house.

Enter DON FERDINAND with DON PEDRO PACHECO.

Don F. The Duke of Medina, then, is entirely out of danger?

Don P. His physicians pronounced him so this morning. His grace took the blame of the whole affair upon himself; and assured me, upon his honour, he would not suffer me in any way to be troubled or molested about it.

Don F. It speaks the generosity which ought always to distinguish the nobleman. You may believe, being, in a great measure, the instrument of your misfortune, I more than participated in the uneasiness it gave you. Hold! Don Pedro, stand back a little: do you see the fellow that creeps yonder under the wall, looking behind him every moment?

Don P. Ay, what of him?

Don F. He comes this way. I have my reasons for it: let us stand a little under that piazza, and observe him. *[Exeunt.]*

Enter MUSKATO.

Musk. What a thing is a life of apprehension! I wish I may never stir if my fear has not almost melted me into a jelly. *(Clapping his hands behind him, between his waistcoat and coat.)* Well, I am out of the house, that's one comfort; and, in some measure, the way is paved for my master; for I have been among his friends, and six of them, brave, sturdy, young fellows, armed with swords and pistols, will be ready to favour his escape, when our Dons are taking their digestive naps after dinner. I only wait their arrival, to give Don Carlos the signal from this little popper; *(shows a pistol)* but I must first take a view of the house, in order to determine on which side I had best stand, when I give the alarm, that it may be sure to come to my master's ears. *(Going off, he suddenly starts back, and turns.)* Who do you want? It is not I! Lord have mercy upon me! I thought some one had touched my shoulder. I'll shoot the first man who assaults me. *[Exit.]*

Enter DON FERDINAND and DON PEDRO PACHECO.

Don F. 'Tis he, I'm positive.

Don P. I think so, too.

Don F. Hold a little. *(Ringing at Don Gusman's door.)*

Enter LAZARILLO.

Come this way, you sir! Do you see the man that goes along yonder, with his hat flapped over his face? Pass by him, and try if you know who he is.—*[Exit Lazarillo.]*—The fellow's not at home, who I sent to dog Don Carlos, or he could tell directly whether this is the same person that was with him.

Don P. Your man has taken a thorough survey of his whole person.

Re-enter LAZARILLO.

Don F. *(To Las.)* Well, sir, do you know him? *Las.* Why, sir, I think I have seen his face before.

Don F. Is he the servant of Don Carlos?

Laz. The very man.

Don F. Then let us go and seize him directly.

Don F. Hold! Don Ferdinand, you and your servant will be sufficient to deal with him; and it is absolutely necessary for me to pay the compliment of calling at the Duke of Medina's immediately; however, I'll be with you, at your house, in less than half-an-hour.

Don F. Lazarillo, follow me. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*Don Gusman's House.*

Enter BEATRICE.

Beat. (Looking about.) Come, ma'am, he may venture.

Mar. (Within.) Is the coast quite clear, Beatrice?

Beat. Yes, ma'am; but let him make haste.

Mar. (Within.) I'll fetch him.

Beat. The dickens take him! he has put me in such a tremble, as I have not been in this twelve-month: and frights ruin one's complexion, too: I dare swear, I shall look pale for a week.

Enter MARCELLA and DON CARLOS DE PIMENTEL.

Don C. I beg your pardon. Will you permit me to say a few words to Mrs. Beatrice in private?

Beat. In private to me! Mercy on us! What?

Don C. Don't be alarmed; it's only a little commission I have to charge you with. (Taking her aside.) In the first place, my dear girl, there is my purse, and ten thousand thanks for the kind interest you have taken in my misfortunes.

Beat. I am always ready and willing to assist any one in distress; and I wish you may get safe out of Madrid, with all my heart.

Don C. Well, but this is not all I have to say to you.

Beat. No, sir?

Don C. No. There is another person still in this house; for whom I must entreat your good offices; and should there be occasion and opportunity, I beg you will convey that person out unseen by your mistress.

Beat. Well, but I don't understand you; explain this matter to me a little more.

Don C. I can't explain it farther, at present.

Beat. Another person still in the house, that I must endeavour to get out unknown to my lady! Who is it?

Don C. What signifies: you'll see.

Beat. Well, but you've set me quite on the fidgets.

Mar. Upon my word, Beatrice, we shall delay so long—

Beat. We are ready, ma'am. Come, sir, you must be cautious not to shew any confusion. Come along the hall with a strut; and, in passing by, look impudent; more impudent still; you'll not look half impudent enough.

Don C. Never fear me.

Beat. I wish you would tell me what you meant, by the thing you said to me just now.

Don C. Once more, ma'am; and, for the last time, I take my leave of you.

Beat. Pray, sir, is the person a man or a woman?

Don C. Beatrice, farewell.

Mar. Have a moment's patience. I am a little uneasy: I think I see a crowd of people coming towards our door; and, if I be not mistaken, Don Ferdinand is among them.

Beat. I don't know. Don Ferdinand, and Lazarillo, and two or three more, have laid hold of a man, and are dragging him along; and I wish I may die, Don Carlos, if the person they have got, is not very like your servant Muskatato.

Don C. Then the work of my destruction is complete.

Beat. They are bringing him into the house.—

Quick, quick, let us get back to my chamber; as fast as we can. [Exeunt.]

Enter DON FERDINAND, attended by LAZARILLO and other Servants, with MUSKATO, who they have got by the collar.

Don F. Pull the rascal in here; pull him in! and if he attempt to struggle, knock him down.

Musk. Well, but gentlemen, good, dear gentlemen, as you are men of honour, and catholic Christians, don't do me any hurt. I am a poor, miserable young fellow, but just turned of four and twenty, that have an old mother and two lame sisters—

Don F. Are you not a villain, sirrah?

Musk. You are pleased to say so, sir; and I sha'n't be so unmannerly as to contradict any gentleman, with a sword at my throat.

Don F. Are you not the servant of that assassin, Don Carlos?

Musk. Upon my word, sir, I can't say; perhaps I may, and perhaps I mayn't. You have frightened everything quite out of my head.

Laz. He is his servant, sir.

Musk. Well, sir—yes, I am his servant, if that will content you.

Don F. Where's your master?

Musk. (Laughing.) Ha, ha, ha!

Don F. Do you make a jest of us?

Musk. No, sir, no; but I am ticklish, and your maff has got his fingers in my collar: bid him take them away, and I'll speak.

Don F. Let him go. Well, now, sir, where is Don Carlos?

Musk. He's in a place—(Looking towards the panel.)

Don F. In a place! what place? Answer my question directly, or torture shall make you.

Musk. Propose it again, good sir.

Don F. Where is Don Carlos?

Musk. Not a great way off.

Don F. So we suppose, by your being here.

Musk. He is, at present, I believe—Pray, sir, will you do me the favour to tell me what o'clock it is?

Don F. What a clock?

Musk. Yes, sir; because I would be as precise as possible in answering your question: and, if it be now about half-an-hour after one, (as I partly conjecture,) Don Carlos is, at this moment, picking his teeth, after dinner, in the city of Lisbon.

Don F. 'Tis false, sirrah! I know he is, at this moment hid somewhere in Madrid. Lay hold of him again.

Enter MARCELLA and BEATRICE.

Mar. What is the matter here?

Musk. Only some men, madam, that have got a poor criminal in their clutches, and are going to play the devil with him.

Don F. This is the servant of Don Carlos; I caught him just now in the street, measuring the outside of our house, with his eyes, from top to bottom. I know his master is at present in Madrid; and I suspect this emissary of his was not lurking about this neighbourhood for any good purpose: rather, perhaps, in meditation of some farther destruction of our family; for, searching his pockets, we found a pistol.

Musk. You found a pistol! Do you say you found a pistol in my pocket?

Laz. There it is.

Musk. Oh! do you call that a pistol?

Laz. Ay, what do you call it?

Musk. I keep it to light my pipe.

Beat. Well, but, sir, let me look at this person; because I was very well acquainted with Don Carlos, and his servant, too, if this be the same he had before he left Madrid.

Musk. Do look at me, ma'am; did you ever see my face before?

Beat. Never, upon my honour.

Musk. See there, gentlemen.

Las. Why you yourself said but now, that you belonged to Don Carlos.

Musk. Did I?

Don F. Yes, this moment.

Musk. I don't think I said any such thing; and I am almost sure I did not.

Beat. Indeed, sir, you are mistaken here: he that lived with Don Carlos, used to make love to me; a good, genteel, personable fellow; whereas, this is one of the worst-looking, ugly hounds I ever saw in my life.

Las. Sir, believe what I say to you: this is the servant that lived with Don Carlos, when he was last in Madrid; and he was always just as ugly as he is now. I even recollect his name; it begins with juss, or fuss, or—

Musk. There is neither juss nor fuss in my name; so you may give me my liberty.

Mar. Indeed, sir, I think you had better turn him about his business.

Don F. I think the contrary. Pray, ma'am, you and your maid return to your chamber. Lazarrillo, look that door, and give me the key. *(To Muskato, who endeavours to steal away.)—* 'Tis in vain to strive to escape, sir; I shall leave you locked up here; till I come back with proper officers.

Musk. *(Pulling Lazarrillo by the sleeve.)* Young man, I find myself a little indisposed; if you have any such thing as a drop of spirits in the house, I would be obliged to you for—

Las. Oh! you'll be in greater want of spirits presently; you had better keep them for a more pressing occasion. *[Exeunt all but Muskato.]*

Musk. *(Knocking at the wainscot.)* Open! 'tis I.

Aur. *(Coming out, veiled.)* Well!

Musk. Heyday! have you got into petticoats, too? 'Gad! I don't know but you are much in the right of it; for there is an old gentleman hereabouts, who conducts ladies out of his house with an admirable politeness. But, joking apart, I suppose you have heard what has happened.

Aur. I endeavoured to listen; but the noise was so great, I could hear nothing distinctly.

Musk. You could hear nothing distinctly?—*(Squeaking to mimic her.)—* What the devil! have you put your voice into petticoats, too? I left you a double bass; and, I find you a treble.

Aur. *(Shewing her face.)* Come, a truce with these impertinences.

Musk. Donna Aurora! For heaven's sake, young gentlewoman, how came you here?

Aur. 'Tis a long story to tell: however, make yourself easy, your master has escaped. He came here just now, and offered to stay with me, or make me the companion of his escape: the former, you may be sure, I would not hear of; and, in the latter case, I thought I should only be an impediment to him.

Beat. *(Through the key-hole.)* Muskato!

Musk. Who's there?

Beat. 'Tis I, Beatrice. Have they locked you up?

Musk. Ay, double-locked me up; I am locked up on both sides.

Beat. I wish I could let you out.

Musk. I wish you could. How did you get out my master?

Beat. We have him here within; and he says he won't go without you.

Musk. I am very much obliged to him. But what good will that do me? However, at any rate, I should be glad to take my leave of him, before we part. I wish you would strive to put back the lock of the door.

Beat. It's impossible; but comfort yourself; my lady and I have been both crying for you; and, I dare swear, we shall cry a great deal more.

Musk. You think we shall suffer, then.

Beat. Take care of yourself; Don Ferdinand is coming up the other way with the alguazils.

Musk. *(Running to the panel.)* Is he! by gad, then I will take all the care I can.

Aur. Stay, Muskato—*(Her foot slips as she is going to follow him.)* Oh, gracious heaven! I have hurt myself, and they are opening the door.

Musk. *(Shutting the panel.)* Nay, if you won't come—charity begins at home.

Aur. *(On the outside.)* Muskato!

Enter DON FERDINAND, LAZARRILLO, and Alguazils.

Don F. *(Without.)* Yes, yes; Lazarrillo and I seized him; and we have him here under lock and key. Here, gentlemen, is the corrigidor's warrant, and there's your prisoner Lazarrillo.

Las. Sir!

Don F. Where's the servant of Don Carlos?

Las. Is not he there, sir?

Don F. And what woman's this? By heavens, I left him locked up here, and have had the key in my pocket ever since.

Don P. See who the woman is?

Las. *(Approaching Aurora.)* I'll see that.

Don F. *(Aurora making a motion with her hand.)* Stand off!

Las. She beckons to speak with you.

Don F. I desire, gentlemen, you won't leave the house yet.—*[Exeunt Lazarrillo and Alguazils.]*—Well, now, ma'am, who and what are you?

Aur. Answer these questions yourself, sir; *(lifting up her veil;)* for the rest, my sex and my misfortunes give me claim to your protection.

Don F. Aurora, the sister of Don Pedro!—Where is the man I left here; and by what unaccountable accident—

Aur. A time will come for satisfying you in everything. Consider, at present, but the peril of my situation; my brother is here, I am a woman, and you are a gentleman.

Don G. *(Behind.)* Alguazils in my house again! this is really monstrous! How came the sentinels to let these people up?

Don F. Was ever man so embarrassed as I am! Here's my uncle now: if he find a woman with me, and I refuse to give an account how she came, he will believe the story Marcella told him concerning last night; if I discover her, I shall involve myself in a quarrel with her brother, besides breaking my word given to her.

Enter DON PEDRO PACHECO.

My dear Don Pedro, don't be surprised at what I am going to say to you: it stands me upon to keep this lady from my uncle's sight; I beg, therefore, you will not mention anything about her; and pray! ma'am, do you step into this cabinet. *[Exit Aurora.]*

Don P. Shall I shut myself up with her?

Don F. No; stay where you are.

Enter DON GUZMAN DE RIBBERA, speaking to LAZARRILLO; afterwards, enter MARCELLA and BEATRICE.

Don G. Go you, sir, and desire my daughter to come to me immediately. Nephew, I am very angry with you.

Don F. I am sorry for that, sir.

Don G. A fig for your sorrow.

Don P. Don Guzman, I kiss your hand.

Don G. I am glad to see you out of your trouble.

Mar. Here I am, sir: what's your pleasure?

Don G. What, you won't let me enjoy ease and quietness?—*(To Don Ferd.)* They tell me, nephew, you have seized the servant of Don Carlos de Pimentel.

Don F. Yes, sir; but he has escaped.

Don G. How has he escaped?

Don F. That's more than I am able to say. I left him looked up here; and, when I came back again, I could not find him.

Don G. Oh! very well; I warrant you I'll find him. I hear tales of a very ugly nature from one side and the other, of men and women being concealed in the house.

Don F. 'Tis most certain, sir, that I met a strange man in the house last night; but I don't pretend to determine how he got in.

Don G. My daughter says there was a strange woman; and, for anything that appears to the contrary, both the lurking toads may be in the house still; and, if somebody does not ferret them out, we may have our throats out one of these nights, when we are asleep in our beds, and dreaming of no such matter; and, therefore, I am determined to hunt every hole and corner: and first, I'll begin to examine this. (*Going towards the closet where Aurora is.*)—Perhaps they may have hidden themselves—

Don F. (*Placing himself before the closet.*) Hold, sir! you must not go in here.

Don G. No! And why not, pray?

Mar. Do go in, sir.

Don G. Nephew, I will go into that place.

Don F. Pardon me, sir, I have the greatest respect for you; but here my honour is engaged, and, by heaven! I will defend this door with my life.

Don G. This is very pretty behaviour, I protest; however, sir, since you are so violent, I will not contend with you at present: I'll take this room in my way back. And will you, Don Pedro, be so obliging as to accompany me, while I search the rest of the apartments.

Mar. Hold! pray, sir, stay a moment.

Don G. What mischief's in the wind now?

Mar. You must not go this way, sir.

Don G. Must not! By my faith, but I will, though.

Don F. I say, sir, do go in.

Mar. Pray, sir, don't think of it.

Don G. Then I'll go in there.

Don F. No, sir; that must not be.

Don G. Why now, did ever any one see the like of this? I say, nephew—daughter—

AURORA throwing open the doors of the cabinet, comes out, and discovers herself.

Aur. Rain I see must overtake me; therefore, I'll meet it.

Don F. Fury and death, my sister! Villain, draw your sword.

Don G. Nay, now, Don Pedro, you're out of your wits.

Don F. Hear me, will you?

Don F. I'll hear nothing.

Mar. Nor I.

Don G. I'll leave it to all the world, now, if ever there was a poor old fellow so hampered and plagued, by a set of young rascals and hussies, as I am.

Enter LAZARILLO.

Las. Where's Don Guzman—where's my master? Oh! gentlemen, gentlemen!

Don G. (*Stopping them.*) Pray, hold a little—What ails this fellow?

Beat. Lazarillo, have you seen a ghost?

Las. You have hit it; the house is haunted.

Don G. Yes, with a pack of mad people.

Las. Spirits, sir, spirits! As I am a living man, your son, Don Alonso, appeared to me this instant. His face was as long as my arm, and as pale as a piece of chalk; his eyes glared like two coals of fire, and he had a flambeau in his hand.

Don G. I won't believe a word of this; it's all a monstrous lie: a ghost and a piece of chalk, and

a flambeau and stuff. Draw all your swords, and follow me.

Mar. (*Sinks into Ferdinand's arms.*) Oh!

Don G. Here! you, man, ghost, devil, or whatever you are, make your appearance: I protest before heaven, I'll do you no harm, but let you go quietly about your business.

Enter DON CARLOS DE PIMENTEL, with his mask on, and his sword drawn; after advancing some paces, he discovers himself.

Don C. Don Guzman, I take you at your word.

All. Don Carlos!

Don F. Call in the alguazils.

Don G. No, come back. How have you the audaciousness, Don Carlos, to appear in this place? And what do you think must be the consequence of my seeing you?

Don C. I have delivered myself into your hands, Don Guzman, on the faith of your promise, that the memory of all past acts should be cancelled between us; but conscious of my innocence, I disdain to owe my safety to an undesigned clemency; recall what you have said, I release you from your word, if you can have more pleasure in satisfying an unjust revenge than in sacrificing it to a point of honour.

Don G. Go away, and never let me see you more.

Don P. This may do for you, Don Guzman, but I am to be answered in another manner. The death of a son may be forgiven, but not the ruin of a sister.

Don C. Don Pedro, I never wronged you. I honour, I esteem, I admire your sister; but not out of fear of your anger, but in regard to her virtue; and as a debt due to her reputation, brought into danger by her attention to me, I am willing to make her my wife.

Aur. (*Going apart with Don P.*) Brother—

Don F. There is one circumstance in this dark affair which surprises me more than anything else. Where is your servant, Don Carlos, whom I seized just now in the street? I left him looked up here, and in less than a quarter of an hour—

Musk. (*Within.*) Heigho!

Don G. Who have we bricked up in the wall, youder?

Enter MUSKATO from behind the panel.

Musk. Are we all friends? is it peace and good fellowship without respect of persons?

Don G. Sirrah, I desire to know—

Musk. I am included in the treaty, sir.

Beat. This brings things into my head. Hark you! rogue's face, was it not you that stole my new gown?

Musk. Yes, ma'am.

Beat. Well, and where is it?

Musk. Why, you must know, I put it on.

Beat. Put on my gown!

Musk. Oh, Lord! yes; I make one of the gentlest ladies you ever laid your eyes on; ask Don Guzman else. Being somewhat more corpulent than you, indeed, your gown has suffered a little in the seams; but don't make yourself uneasy; to recompense the damage, I'll throw myself and fortune at your feet. (*Falling on his knees.*)

Don P. What you tell me is very odd; however, that is not a sufficient reason for my doubting the truth of it. Don Carlos, we have no leisure now to enter into discussions and explanations; your family and fortune are unexceptionable; you say you are willing to marry my sister; take her, and may you be happy together.

Musk. My dear master, I wish you joy from the bottom of my heart, of being released from all your troubles, by the generosity of this good old gentleman: his behaviour has been that of a noble Spaniard; and I hope our friends will testify their satisfaction, by joining to applaud it. [*Exeunt.*]

THOMAS AND SALLY;

OR, THE SAILOR'S RETURN:

A MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT, IN TWO ACTS.



Act I—Scene 1

CHARACTERS.

THE 'SQUIRE
THOMAS

SALLY
DORCAS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Village at the foot of a hill, with a cottage more advanced than the rest, on one side.

SALLY discovered spinning at the door.

AIR.—SALLY.

*My time how happy once, and gay!
Oh! blithe I was as blithe could be.
But now I'm sad, ah, well-a-day!
For my true love is gone to sea.*

*The lads pursue, I strive to shun,
Though all their arts are lost on me;
For I can never love but one,
And he, alas! is gone to sea.*

*They bid me to the wake, the fair,
To dancers on the neighb'ring lea;
But how can I in pleasure share,
While my true love is out at sea?*

*The flowers droop till light's return,
The pigeon mourns its absent she;
So will I droop, so will I moorn,
Till my true love comes back from sea.*

Enter DORCAS.

Dorcas. What, will you never quit this idle trade?

Still, still in tears? Ah! you're a foolish maid!

In time, have prudence, your own int'rest see;
Youth lasts not always, be advis'd by me.

AIR.—DORCAS.

*That May-day of life is for pleasure,
For singing, for dancing, and shew;
Then why will you waste such a treasure
In sighing, and crying heigho?
Let's copy the bird in the meadows,
By her's tune your pipe when 'tis low;
Fly round, and coquet it as she does,
And never sit crying heigho!*

*Though when in the arms of a lover,
It sometimes may happen, I know,
That, e'er all our toying is over,
We cannot help crying heigho!
In age ev'ry one a new part takes,
I find, to my sorrow, 'tis so;
When old, you may cry till your heart aches,
But no one will mind you—heigho!*

Sally. Leave me.

Dorcas. Go to. I come to make you glad,
Odzooks! what's here? this folly sets me mad.
You're grieving, and for whom? 'tis pretty sport!
For one that gets a wife at ev'ry port.

Sally. Dorcas, for shame! how can you be so base?

Or after this, look Thomas in the face?
His ship's expected—

Dorcas. Tell not me. The 'Squire—
As Tom is your's, you are his heart's desire.
Then why so peevish, and so froward still?
He'll make your fortune; let him have his will.

AIR.—SALLY.

*Were I as poor as wretch can be,
As great as any monarch he,
Ere on such terms I'd mount his throne,
I'd work my fingers to the bone.*

*Grant me, ye Pow'rs, (I ask not wealth,)
Grant me but innocence and health.
Ah! what is grandeur link'd to vice?
'Tis only virtue gives it price.*

[Exit.

Dorcas. Well, go your ways. I cannot choose
but smile:
Would I were young again! alas, the while!
But what are wishes? wishes will not do:
One cannot eat one's cake and have it too.

AIR.—DORCAS,

*When I was a young one, what girl was like me?
So wanton, so airy, and brisk as a bee:
I tattled, I rambled, I laugh'd, and where'er
A fiddle was heard, to be sure I was there.
To all that came near I had something to say;
'Twas this, sir, and that, sir, but scarce ever nay;
And Sundays, dress'd out in my silks and my laces,
I warrant I stood by the best in the place.*

*At twenty, I got me a husband—poor man!
Well, rest him, we all are as good as we can;
Yet he was so peevish, he'd quarrel for straws;
And jealous—though, truly, I gave him some cause.
He snubb'd me and huff'd me; but let me alone,
Egad! I've a tongue and I paid him his own.
Ye wives, take the hint, and when spouse is untow'rd,
Stand firm to our charter, and have the last word.*

*But now I'm quite alter'd, the more to my woe;
I'm not what I was forty summers ago;
This time's a sore foe, there's no shunning his dart;
However, I keep up a pretty good heart.
Grown old, yet I hate to be sitting munched;
I still love a tune, though unable to dance;
And books of devotion laid by on my shelf,
I teach that to others I once did myself.*

[Exit.

*The 'Squire appears, descending the hill, with
Huntsmen.*

AIR.—The 'Squire.

*Hark, hark! the shrill horn calls the sportsmen
abroad;*

*To horse, my brave boys, and away;
The morning is up, and the cry of the hounds
Upbraids our too tedious delay.
What pleasure we feel in pursuing the fox!
O'er hill and o'er valley he flies;
Then follow, we'll soon overtake him—Huzza!
The traitor is seiz'd on, and dies.*

*Triumphant returning at night with the spo'il,
Like Bacchanals, shouting and gazing;
How sweet with a bottle and lass to refresh,
And lose the fatigues of the day!
With sport, love, and wine, fickle fortune defy;
Dull wisdom all happiness sours:
Since life is no more than a passage at best,
Let's strew the way over with flow'rs.*

[Exit Huntmen. The 'Squire knocks at
the door of the cottage.

Enter SALLY.

Sally. Ah! whither have my heedless steps be-
tray'd?

'Squire. Where would you fly? of who are you
afraid?

Here's neither spectre, ghost, nor goblin nigh;
Nor any one but Cupid, you, and I.

Sally. Unlucky!

(Aside.)

'Squire. 'Sdeath! she sets me all on fire.
Bewitching girl! I languish with desire.
But wherefore do you shrink, and trembling stand,
So coy, so silly?

Sally. Pray, sir, loose my hand.

AIR.—The 'Squire.

*When late I wander'd o'er the plain,
From nymph to nymph I strove in vain
My wild desires to rally;
But now they're of themselves come home,
And, strange, no longer seek to roam:
They centre all in Sally.*

*Yet she, unkind one, damps my joy;
And cries I court but to destroy:
Can love with ruin tally?
By those dear lips, those eyes, I swear,
I would oft deaths, all torments bear,
Rather than injure Sally.*

*Come, then, oh! come, thou sweeter far
Than jasmine and roses are,
Or lilies of the valley;
Oh! follow love, and quit your fear,
He'll guide you to these arms, my dear,
And make me bless'd in Sally.*

Sally. Sir, you bemean yourself; and, to be
free,

Some lady you should choose of fit degree:

I am too low, too vulgar—

'Squire. Rather say,

There's some more favour'd rival in the way:

Some happy sweetheart in your thoughts taken
place;

For him you keep your favours; that's the case.

Sally. Well, if it be, 'tis neither shame nor
sin;

An honest lad he is, of honest kin:
No higher than my equal I pretend:

You have your answer, sir, and there's an end.

DUETT.—The 'Squire and SALLY.

'Squire. Come, come, my dear girl, I must not be
deny'd;

*Fine clothes you shall flash in, and rant it
away.*

*I'll give you this purse, too; and, hark you!
beside,*

*We'll kiss and we'll toy all the long sum-
mer's day.*

Sally. Of kissing and toying you soon would be
tir'd,

*Oh! should hapless Sally consent to be
naught.*

*Besides, sir, believe me, I scorn to be hir'd;
The heart's not worth gaining which is to
be bought.*

'Squire. Perhaps you're afraid of the world's busy
tongue;

*But know, above scandal you then shall
be put;*

*And laugh, as you roll in your chariot
along,*

At dragg'd-tail chastity walking a-foot.

Sally. If only thro' fear of the world I were shy,
My coyness and modesty were but ill
shewn;

*Its pardon 'twere easy with money to buy;
But hark, tell me how, I should purchase
my own?*

'Squire. *Leave morals to grey-beards, those lips were design'd
For better employment—*

Sally. *I will not endure—*

'Squire. *Oh fie! child, love bids you be rich, and be kind—*

Sally. *But virtue commands me be honest and poor.* [Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Sea-side.*

Enter THOMAS, with Sailors in a boat, from which they land.

Thomas. Avast! my boys, avast! all hands ashore.

Messmates, what cheer? Old England, eh! once more.

I'm thinking how the wenches will rejoice; Out with your presents, boys, and take your choice.

I've an old sweetheart—but look, there's the town; Weigh anchor, tack about, and let's bear down.

AIR and CHORUS.—THOMAS and Sailors.

*How happy is the sailor's life,
From coast to coast to roam;
In every port he finds a wife,
In every land a home.*

*He loves to range,
He's no where strange;
He ne'er will turn his back,
To friend or foe;
No, masters, no;
My life for honest Jack.*

Cho. *He loves to range, &c.*

*If saucy foes dare make a noise,
And to the sword appeal;
We out, and quickly larn 'em, boys,
With whom 'hey have to deal.
We know no craft,
But 'fore and aft'
Lay on our strokes again;
Then, if they're stout,
For t'other bout,
We drub 'em o'er again.*

Cho. *We know no craft, &c.*

*Or fair or foul, let Fortune blow,
Our hearts are never dull;
The pocket that to-day ebbs low,
To-morrow shall be full;
For if so be,
We want, d'ye see?
A pluck of this here stuff;
In Indi—a,
And Americ—a,
We're sure to find enough.*

Chb. *For if so be, &c.*

*Then bless the king, and bless the state,
And bless our captains all;
And ne'er may chance unfortunate,
The British fleet befall.
But prosp'rous gales,
Where'er she sails,
And ever may she ride,
Of sea and shore,
Till time's no more,
The terror and the pride.*

Cho. *But prosp'rous gales, &c.* [Exeunt.]

Enter the 'Squire and DORCAS.

'Squire. In vain I've ev'ry wily art assay'd,
Nor promises can tempt, nor vows persuade;
No prospect of success is left me now:
How shall I gain her?

Dorcas. Why, I'll tell you how.
This way she comes; the wench is full of pride,
Lay oaths, and vows, and promises aside:
Often, when regular approaches fail,
Besiegers storm a place, and so prevail.

AIR.—DORCAS.

*All you would wish to succeed with a lass,
Learn how the affair's to be done;
For if you stand fooling, and shy, like an ass,
You'll lose her as sure as a gun.*

*With whining, and sighing, and vows, and all that,
As far as you please you may run;
She'll hear you, and jeer you, and give you a pat,
But jilt you, as sure as a gun.*

*To worship, and call her bright goddess, is fine;
But mark you the consequence, mum—
The baggage will think herself really divine,
And scorn you as sure as a gun.*

*Then be with a maiden, bold, frolic, and stout,
And no opportunity shun;
She'll tell you she hates you, and swear she'll cry out,
But mum—she's as sure as a gun.* [Exeunt.]

Enter SALLY, with a milking-pail.

Sally. How cruel those who, with ungen'rous aim,
Strive to seduce, and bring poor maids to shame!
That brutish 'squire! but wherefore should I fear?
I ne'er can turn false-hearted to my dear.
No, when he came his last farewell to take,
He bid me wear this token for his sake;
He shall not prove me fickle and unkind;
Or say, that—out of sight was out of mind.

AIR.—SALLY.

*Auspicious spirits guard my love,
In time of danger near him bide;
With out-spread wings around him move,
And turn each random ball aside.
And you his foes, though hearts of steel,
Oh! may you then with me accord;
A sympathetic passion feel,
Behold his face, and drop the sword.*

*Ye winds, your blust'ring fury leave;
Like airs that o'er the garden sweep;
Breathe soft in sighs, and gently heave
The calm, smooth bosom of the deep.
Till halcyon peace return'd, once more,
From blasts secure, and hostile harms,
My sailor views his native shore,
And harbours safe in these fond arms.*

• *Enter the 'Squire.*

DUETT.—*The 'Squire and SALLY.*

'Squire. *Well met, pretty maid;
Nay, don't be afraid;
I mean you no mischief, I vow;
Psha! what is't you ail?
Come, give me your pail,
And I'll carry it up to your cow.*

Sally. *Pray let it alone,
I've hands of my own,
Nor need your's to help me—forbear!*

*How can you persist?
I won't, sir, be kiss'd,
Nor teas'd thus—go trifle elsewhere.*

'Squire. *In yon lonely grove,
I saw an alcove,
All round the sweet violet springs;
And there was a thrush,
Hard by in a bush,
'Twould charm you to hear how he sings.*

Sally. *But hark! pr'ythee, hark!
Look, yonder's a lark,
It warbles and pleases me so;
To hear the soft tale,
O th' sweetest nightingale,
I would not be tempted to go.*

'Squire. *Then here we'll sit down;
Come, come, never frown,
No longer my bliss I'll retard;
Kind Venus shall spread,
Her veil over head,
And the little rogue, Cupid, keep guard.*

Enter THOMAS.

Thomas. What's this I see? May I believe my eyes?

A pirate just about to board my prize!
'Tis well I this way chanc'd my course to steer—
Sal, what's the matter?

Sally. Thomas!

'Squire. 'Sdeath! who's here?

Fellow, begone, or—

Thomas. Larn your phrase to mend:
Do you sheer off, or else I'll make you, friend.
Let go the wench, I claim her for my share,
And now lay hands upon her—if you dare.

TRIO.—*The 'Squire, THOMAS, and SALLY.*

'Squire. *Saucy rascal, this intrusion
You shall answer to your cost:
Bully'd!—scandaliz'd!—confusion!
All my schemes and wishes cross'd.*

Thomas. *Hark you, master, keep your distance;
'Sblood! take notice what I say:
There's the channel, no resistance,
Tuck about, and bear away.*

Sally. *Would you wrest our freedom from us?
Now my heart has lost its fear:
Oh! my best, my dearest Thomas,
Sure some angel brought you here.*

'Squire. *Since her paltry inclination,
Steeps to such a thing as you;
Thus I make a recantation,
Wretched, foolish girl, adieu!* [Exit,

Sally. Oh! welcome, welcome! How shall I impart

The joy this happy meeting gives my heart?

Now, Tom, in safety stay at home with me,

And never trust again that treach'rous sea.

Thomas. Excuse me, Sal, while mighty George

has fess,

On land and main, their malice I'll oppose.

But hang this talking, my desires are keen;

You see yon steeple, and know what I mean.

DUETT.—*THOMAS and SALLY.*

Thomas. *Let fops pretend in flames to melt,
And talk of pangs they never felt;
I speak without disguise or art,
And with my hand bestow my heart.*

Sally. *Let ladies prudishly deny,
Look cold, and give their thoughts the lie;
I own the passion in my breast,
And long to make my lover blest.*

Thomas. *For this the sailor on the mast,
Endures the cold and cutting blast;
All dripping wet, wears out the night,
And braves the fury of the fight.*

Sally. *For this the virgin pines and sighs,
With throbbing heart, and streaming eyes;
Till sweet reverse of joy she proves,
And clasps the faithful lad she loves.*

Both. *Ye British youths, be brave, you'll find,
The British virgins will be kind:
Protect their beauty from alarms,
And they'll repay you with its charms.*

[Exeunt.]

DUPLICITY;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.



Act III.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

SIR HORNET ARMSTRONG
SIR HARRY PORTLAND
SQUIRE TURNBULL

VANDERVILT
OSBORNE
TIMID

SCRIP
SERVANTS
CLARA

MELISSA
MISS TURNBULL
MRS. TRIP

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Sir Harry Portland's House.*

CLARA and MELISSA discovered.

Clara. Well, my dear Melissa, you will be a happy woman.

Mel. I have no doubt of it. The attention which Mr. Osborne has shewn me, was not that of a man eager to gain the affection of his mistress by humouring her caprices, praising her beauty, and flattering her follies. He is obliging and well-bred, but sincere, yet his disapprobation is delivered with a delicacy that makes it more agreeable than some people's compliments.

Clara. If time, instead of mellowing the strokes, should wear away this smooth varnish, and discover a harsh outline, should you not be offended at the severity of his manner, think you?

Mel. Believe me, dear Clara, there is no danger; for if there be one man on earth more capable of making a woman happy than another, it is Mr. Osborne.

Clara. It would be heresy in you, my dear, to hold any other opinion; and I have no doubt but you will continue orthodox after marriage.

Mel. Yes; I shall certainly die in that faith.

Clara. Your brother, Sir Harry, I believe, is of your religion, too.

Mel. Entirely. The friendship of Mr. Osborne and my brother is as sincere as the commencement of it was remarkable. Have you ever heard their story?

Clara. Never. You know my acquaintance with your family is but just begun; but I hope you will not think them words of course when I assure you that, short as it is, I feel myself interested in its happiness.

Mel. Oh! I am sure you are sincere; I know it

by sympathy. Well, then, I'll tell you: Harry and Osborne happened to be both abroad at the same time. As my brother was going to Italy, and passing through the mountainous part of Savoy, he came to a hollow way, among the rocks, surrounded by trees and caverns; all on a sudden, at a turning in the road, he beheld Osborne and his servants, attacked by six banditti, and ready to sink under their wounds.

Clara. Was Sir Harry alone? (*Alarmed.*)

Mel. He had his governor, two servants, and the postillion. My brother instantly leaped from his carriage, snatched up his sword and pistols, and flew to the place of action.

Clara. I declare you terrify me.

Mel. He was not seen by the combatants, and took care to advance so near before he fired, that he could not fail to do execution. He laid two of the banditti dead, and their companions, who had discharged their fire-arms, and beheld Sir Harry's people running to the attack, and levelling their pistols, fled.

Clara. Thank you for that, my dear; you have given me breath.

Mel. The intrepidity with which Sir Harry saw Osborne defend himself, and the fortitude he discovered when he was informed, as it was at first believed, that his wounds were mortal, attached my brother so powerfully to him, that he resolved not to leave him in the hands of strangers, but anxiously waited while he was under cure.

Clara. This was a noble generosity.

Mel. It was; and Osborne was so sensible of it, that, though he was going the other way, he would return with Sir Harry into Italy; and their friendship has continued ever since.

Clara. But is it not strange, my dear, that he cannot detach his friend from the gaming-table?

Mel. My brother is infatuated. It is his greatest, almost his only weakness.

Clara. But the report is, that Mr. Osborne takes advantage of this weakness; and, in fact, has half ruined Sir Harry himself.

Mel. The report of malice, my dear.

Enter SIR HARRY PORTLAND and MR. OSBORNE.

Sir Harry. Ladies, your obedient. Pray, when did you arrive in town, madam? *(To Clara.)*

Clara. Yesterday. But how came you to quit Bath so suddenly, gentlemen?

Sir Harry. Mr. Osborne, madam, was horrible—*ment ennuyé*; dull as an alderman at church, or a fat lap-dog after dinner; thinking on marriage, Melissa, and other important matters; and so—

Osb. Come, come, Sir Harry, this is mighty ingenuous; but you were, at least, as willing to be gone as myself. The truth, madam, is, my modest friend here heard you were to set off in a day or two; and from that moment, was continually giving hints, and asking me how I, as a lover, could exist so long without a sight of my mistress; and, in short, began, all at once, to talk so sympathetically about absence and ages, that I, who had made the excursion purely to oblige him, was, I acknowledge, exceedingly happy to find I could oblige him by returning.

Clara. What say you to this, Sir Harry? But, I know your politeness: you will confess it all to be true, and begin to say civil things upon the subject, that will only put me to the trouble of blushing and curtsying; so we'll suppose them all, if you please. But come, tell me: what's the news of the day?

Mel. News! Oh! that's true. Look here, my dear. I thought I had something to tell you. *(Reads a paragraph in a newspaper.)* "We hear, from very good authority, that an hymeneal treaty is concluded between a certain beautiful ward, not a mile from St. James's-square, and her old guardian; and that the lady is expected in town from Bath, every hour, to sign and seal."

Sir Harry. What say you to this, madam?

Clara. Say! I protest I don't know what to say; except that these newsmakers are a very pleasant, ingenious kind of people.

Mel. But aren't you angry?

Clara. Angry! no, indeed. I am sure I am very much obliged to them for thinking of me: I shall be so stared at! I'll go into public continually, and my guardian shall go with me. *[My dear?]*

Mel. But is there any foundation for this report?

Clara. Nay, I am sure I can't tell. I have suspected the matter a great while, by my guardian's simpering and squeezing my hand so often. He read, the other day, in the Annual Register, of a man, at Inverness, who lived to the age of one hundred and seventeen; and he has been talking ever since of purchasing a country-seat in the Highlands.

Sir Harry. That would be pleasant.

Clara. Very. Then we should have a flock of goats, I suppose.

Sir Harry. Dorastus and Faunia. *[way.]*

Clara. Oh! yes; quite in the Damon and Philida

Osb. You are very happy in a lover, madam.

Clara. Oh! quite proud of my conquest. There is no such great miracle in bringing a young fellow, whose passions are all afloat, to die at one's feet. The thing's so natural that one does it every day. But to thaw the icy blood of a grave old gentleman; to see him simper, sigh, dance minnets, and look ridiculous for one—Oh! there is, positively, no flatter equal to it.

Sir Harry. He will make your winter evenings in the Highlands quite entertaining, with relating his wild pranks he committed, and the deeds of prowess he was guilty of in his youth; then you will be so delighted with listening to his raptures, and tasting his panado, and—

Clara. Oh! yes; yes, yes—Ha, ha!—I—I think

I see him now, with his venerable bald head, his shrivelled face, and his little pug nose, that looks as red and as bright as the best Dutch sealing-wax, rising from his chair, by the help of his crutch-headed stick, to breathe forth vows of love and everlasting fidelity. Ha, ha, ha!

Mel. It's whimsical enough.

Clara. Yes. Oh! now you talk of whimsicality, I was accosted by an old gentleman the night before I left Bath, in the rooms, who was the drollest being I ever met with. I thought he would have made love to me; swore I was an angel, and said a thousand civil things.

Osb. Oh! madam, the old men are the only polite men of this age.

Clara. Upon my word, I begin to think so.

Osb. The young ones, taught in the modern school, hold a rude familiarity to be the first principle of good breeding.

Clara. Manners, like point ruffles, are now most fashionable when they are soiled.

Sir Harry. No, no; they only hang the easier for being deprived of starch. But who was this old gentleman, pray, madam?

Clara. A relation of your's, sir.

Sir Harry. Of mine, madam?

Clara. I should suppose so, for he mentioned his nephew, Sir Harry Portland.

Mel. Our uncle, Sir Hornet Armstrong.

Sir Harry. It is. I found a letter from him when I came to town, in which he informed me he should arrive in Bath the very day we left it.—*[Enter a Servant with a letter.]*—Who brought this?

Serv. It came by the post, sir. *[Exit.]*

Clara. I die to be better acquainted with him. I must have him in my train of sighing swains.

Osb. You seem astonished, Sir Harry.

Clara. Some unkind billet from his mistress, I suppose.

Sir Harry. No, indeed; it is the most unaccountable epistle I ever received, and from my unaccountable uncle, too. There, read, read. *(To Osb.)*

Osb. *(Reads.)* "Dear Harry,—You know, you dog, how your old uncle loves you. You will say so when you are thoroughly acquainted with the occasion of this. In brief, I met with a young lady at Bath, the most extraordinary, take her altogether, I ever beheld. She is a nonpareil, a phoenix! But you will judge for yourself: she is coming up to town with her brother; who, by-the-by, is a country booby—but that's no matter. I saw her only once, and that was in the rooms; but once is sufficient. They intend coming up to London, by way of seeing the town, for they are country people, I find; though the sister has more accomplishments, ease, and good-breeding, than I ever yet saw in the drawing-room. I proposed a match to the brother, and he seemed happy at the offer. They will arrive nearly as soon as this, for they set out before it; and I shall follow, naugre the gout, as fast as I can.—HORNET ARMSTRONG. P.S. I forgot to mention their name is Turnbull." Turnbull! why, what, in the devil's name, is Sir Hornet mad?

Sir Harry. In one of his right ancient whips, I suppose. Sir Hornet has had many such in his time.

Mel. But pray, who is this miraculous lady, Mr. Osborne? for you seem to know something of her.

Osb. Do you remember, Sir Harry, a gawky girl, that stalked round the rooms, and stared prodigiously? she that was stuck to the side of a bob-wigged country squire?

Clara. Oh! what, the—the girl with her arms dangling, her chin projecting, and her mouth open, that looked as if she were afraid of being lost.

Sir Harry. Yes; or as if she dared not trust herself alone, out of her own parish, lest somebody should catch her, put her in a sack, and send her for a present to the king of the cannibals.

Osb. The same; that is the accomplished Miss Turnbull.

Sir Harry. How! [Lady.

Osborne. That is the easy, well-bred, drawing-room *Sir Harry.* Is it possible?

Clara. Ha, ha, ha! Well, (with affected gravity) and I don't doubt but she would make a sort of a—a very good wife. Understands the art of brewing, baking, pickling of pork, curing of hung beef, darning of stockings, and other branches of housewifery, in perfection. Believes in ghosts, and has got the Wandering Prince of Troy, the Babes in the Wood, and the entertaining dialogue of Death and the Lady, by heart.

Osborne. Such, and so numerous, are the wife-like properties of Miss Barbara Turnbull.

Clara. Turnbull, too! Well, that is such a delightful name for a country lady; so pastoral!

Osborne. The father was one of the greatest graziers in the west of England; and was so intent on getting money, that he bred his children in the most stupid ignorance. He is lately dead, and the son has commenced gentleman and squire, by virtue of the father's industry, and a pack of fox-hounds; and though he has scarcely knowledge enough of articulate sounds to hold a dialogue with his own geese, yet does he esteem himself a devilish shrewd fellow, and a wit. His conversation is vociferous, and patched up of proverbs, and out-of-the-way sayings, which he strings together without order or connection; and utters, upon all occasions, and in all companies, without respect to time, place, or person.

Clara. Well, well, Sir Harry, I shall have to wish you joy soon, I suppose: but I must begone; fifty visits to make this morning—time flies—but agreeable company, and all that, you know—Oh! Sir Harry, you mean to attend the spring meetings this year, at Newmarket? I am told you understand the turf; I think of sending a venture of five hundred by somebody. But I shall see you often enough before then. Adieu. [Exit with Melissa.

Sir Harry. Well, what do you think of this lady, Osborne?

Osborne. I think her a very amiable, accomplished lady; and one that, under an assumed levity, observes and understands everything about her.

Sir Harry. I am entirely of your opinion. If I may judge from an acquaintance of such short date, she is the first woman in the world.

Osborne. Except one, Sir Harry.

Sir Harry. You, Osborne, may make exceptions, if you please; I am not so captious. She has beauty without vanity, virtue without prudence, fashion without affectation, wit without malice, gaiety without coquetry, humour—

Osborne. Hold, hold! stop to breathe. How was it? Vinegar without acid, fire without heat, light without shade, motion without matter, and a likeness without a feature.

Sir Harry. "Spite, by the gods! proud spite and burning envy!"

Osborne. But did you observe her Newmarket hint, Sir Harry; and the concealed significance with which it was delivered?

Sir Harry. I did.

Osborne. Which being faithfully done into English, bears this interpretation: "I, Clara Forrester, a beautiful, elegant, sensible girl, with a fine fortune, should like to take you, Harry Portland, with youth, spirit, and certain *et ceteras*, but!"

Sir Harry. "But that I am afraid of indulging a partiality for any man who is so intolerably addicted to gaming." Is not that the conclusion of your speech?

Osborne. Oh, fie! No, no: gaming! That man has a body without a soul, that never felt an inclination to gaming.

Sir Harry. Perhaps so; but that man has the greatest soul who can best resist that inclination.

Osborne. Pshaw! Gaming is the essence of fashion, and

one of your strongest recommendations. Clara is a girl of spirit, and what girl that comes under that description, would ever place her affections on a sneaking, sober, prudent fellow? a mechanical scoundrel, that knows the day of the month, sips tea, keeps a pew in the parish church, writes memorandums, and goes to bed at eleven o'clock. Pho! absurd!

Sir Harry. Carse me, Osborne, if I know what to make of you. You are a riddle that I cannot expound. You have such an awkward way of praising gaming, that it always has the appearance of satire.

Osborne. Satire! How so! Do you think I'd satirize myself? Who sports more freely than I do?

Sir Harry. Why, there's the mystery. You are as eager, to the full, as I am. If I set a hundred on a back hand, you offer a thousand; nay, had I the fortune of a nabob, and were to stake it all, you would be the first man to cry "covered!" and be d—d mad if any one wanted to go a guinea: not because you have not generosity, but in the true and inveterate spirit of gaming.

Osborne. Certainly. Gaming! why, gaming is the best sal volatile for the spleen: it rouses the spirits, agitates the blood, quickens the pulse, and puts the whole nervous system in a continual vibration. No man ever yet died of an apoplexy, that loved a box and dice.

Sir Harry. But they have died as suddenly.

Osborne. Oh! ay, ay; but that's a fashionable disease, an influenza; that's to make your exit with éclat; that's to go out of the world with a good report.

Sir Harry. True, true; and, indeed, as to a few years, more or less, that is, in reality, a mighty insignificant circumstance.

Osborne. A bagatelle! Let us live while we do live, and die when we can't live any longer.

Sir Harry. That's my comfort, that's my comfort. Yes, yes; a pistol—a pistol is a very certain remedy for the cholera. Nobody but a pitiful scoundrel would go sighing, and whining, and teasing other people with his griefs and complaints. When a man is weary, what should he do but go to sleep?

Osborne. To be sure. Life itself is but a dream. 'Tis only sleeping a little sounder.

Sir Harry. What! live to be pitied! Ha, ha! A decayed gentleman! No, no, no. A withered branch; a firelock without a flint. And yet—heigho! this Clara—d—n it, it's provoking. Youth, beauty, affability—she's a bewitching girl!

Osborne. She is, indeed.

Sir Harry. A lovely girl!

Osborne. Ay, enough so to make any man, that might hope to be in her favour, in love with life.

Sir Harry. Any man, any man but me—no, no—Undone, undone, undone!

Osborne. Well, but, seriously, since you have such bad success, why don't you renounce play?

Sir Harry. 'Tis too late. I have sunk eighty thousand; my resources almost all exhausted, my estates all mortgaged to Jews and scoundrels.

Osborne. All?

Sir Harry. All; except the estate in Kent.

Osborne. Well, then, if you cannot content yourself with your present loss, your best way will be to make another vigorous push.

Sir Harry. That's exactly what I am determined to do; and, unless the devil possesses the dice, I think I may expect, without a miracle, that fortune should change hands.

Osborne. One would think so, indeed. Will you dine, then, at my house? There will be the Chevalier, the Baron, and the usual set. They have engaged to dine with me. They are spirited fellows, and will play for any sum.

Sir Harry. I don't know. Suspicion is a cursed meanness; and yet, I cannot help having my doubts of some among that company. Nay, had you not so

often assured me you were perfectly acquainted with them all—

Osborne. Why, I tell you again and again, so I am. I will be answerable for their conduct, and that's more than I would say for any other set of gamblers upon earth.

Sir Harry. Well, well; I'll meet you there.

Osborne. We dine early; at five.

Sir Harry. Agreed.

Osborne. And then, hey for a light heart and a heavy purse. *[Exit.]*

Sir Harry. No, no; no light heart for me: I am sunk, degraded in my own opinion. Gaming alters our very nature. Osborne used to hate it; he was then an open-hearted, generous fellow; he now appears to have contracted an insatiable love for money, and a violent desire to win, he cares not of whom, of me as soon as another. Were I in his situation, and he in mine, I think I should find an aversion to increase his distress; he knows mine, yet has no such aversion. Perhaps he thinks my ruin certain, and that he may as well profit by it as another. I know him to have the most refined and strictest sense of honour: I have lost most of my money to him, and in his company, and, therefore, have not been duped out of it. That is some comfort, however. *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.

Enter MR. OSBORNE and TIMID.

Osborne. Well, Mr. Timid, has Sir Harry sent to you for a further supply?

Timid. Lackaday! sir, yes; and a very large supply, too. He wants five thousand pounds immediately. Lackaday! I asked him how he thought it possible for me to raise such sums as he called upon me for every day; reminded him what a bad way his affairs were in, and what an usurious rate I was obliged to borrow all his money at.

Osborne. What said he?

Timid. Lackaday! not much: seemed chagrined; said it must have an end, one way or another, soon; and demanded whether I could or could not raise the money. Lackaday! I told him I was no longer master of ways and means; and he said then he must positively employ another prime minister, for supplies he must have.

Osborne. Why did you tell him that? Go to him, inform him you have met with a tender-hearted Jew, who knows nothing of the situation of his affairs, that will lend him ten thousand pounds directly, if he want it.

Timid. Ten thousand! on what terms?

Osborne. Oh! the mortgage of the Kentish estate.

Timid. The Kentish estate! Lackaday! but suppose he should go to gaming, and lose it to somebody else instead of you.

Osborne. Oh! I'll take care of that.

Timid. Lackaday! It must not be Benjamin Solomons who lends this?

Osborne. True; no—lump! Isaac Levi, agent to a private company at Amsterdam.

Timid. *(Writes in a pocket-book.)* "Isaac Levi, agent to a private company at Amsterdam." Lackaday!

Osborne. Well, go you to him, and inform him that the money shall be ready in about half-an-hour.

Timid. Lackaday! good young gentleman! Heaven pardon me, I had like to have said d—the dice! You'll be a true friend?

Osborne. Be under no apprehensions. This old fool is become suspicious, I must be sudden. *(Aside.)*

Timid. Had not we better inform him of all, before he goes any further?

Osborne. By no means; leave that to me.

Timid. Lackaday! Well, the remembrance of a good deed is grateful on a death-bed.

Osborne. Do you be expeditious; I'll instruct the Jew, and he shall meet you here. *[Exit.]*

ACT II.—SCENE I.—*The same.*

SIR HARRY PORTLAND and MELISSA discovered.

Sir Harry. Heavens! what romance! I can scarcely believe my eyes. Did you ever hear of so strange an affair?

Mel. Strange! it's miraculous. Quixotism! And our good uncle is the prince of madmen.

Sir Harry. To send a foolish, illiterate, country dowdy, and her blockhead brother, a visiting on such an errand! What can I say to them? I declare I don't know how to behave: never was so embarrassed in my life. Where are they?

Mel. He has made an acquaintance with the groom, and is gone to the mews, which seems to be his proper element, to examine the horses; and I left her with my woman, staring, like a Dutch doll, at everything she fixed her eyes on. Here she comes.

Enter MISS TURNBULL.

Miss T. My gracious! Here be a power of voice—*(staring about)*—I wonder if that be he that he to be my husband. *(Aside.)*

Sir Harry. I hope, madam, the fatigue of your journey has not injured your health.

Miss T. Zir?

Sir Harry. I hope you are pretty well after your

Miss T. Pretty well, thank you, zir. I'veck! he's a handsome man. *(Aside.)*

Mel. This is the oddest affair.

Sir Harry. *(Aside.)* I don't know what to say to her. I am afraid, Miss Turnbull, you won't find the town so agreeable as the Elysian fields of Somersetshire.

Miss T. Lysian fields! There be no such fields in our parts. There be only corn fields and hay fields.

Mel. My brother, madam, means to say, you are not so well pleased with the town as with the country, perhaps.

Miss T. Oh! yes, but I be though, and ten times better. *(They stand silent for some time.)* Pray, miss, when did you see Zekel Turnbull, my uncle?

Mel. I have not the honour to know him.

Miss T. My gracious! What, don't you know

Mel. No, indeed. *[Zekel?]*

Miss T. Why, he do come to London zity your times every year.

Sir Harry. Is he in parliament?

Miss T. Parliament!

Sir Harry. Yes.

Miss T. What, a parliament-man?

Sir Harry. Yes.

Miss T. No; he be a grazier. *(Silent again.)*

Pray, miss, have you been to see the lions and the

Mel. To-day?

Miss T. Ees.

Mel. I never saw them in my life.

Miss T. My gracious! What, never saw the kings, and the queens, and the tomb-stones?

Mel. No.

Miss T. Merciful vather! Well, let's go and

Mel. People of fashion never go to those kind of

Miss T. Never!

Mel. Never.

Miss T. My gracious! But I am sure I will go every day, while I be in London zity, if I can vind the way. Pray, be this vair-time here? Where be all those volk gwaing, and where do they all come fro?

Turn. *(Without.)* Barbara, Barbara! Where beest, Barbara?

Miss T. I be here.

Enter SQUIRE TURNBULL.

Turn. Well, Zir Harry, here we be. Madam, your zervant. I zupped wi' Zir Hornet three nights ago, an' zaid you be a vine lass: what, though I had never zeen you, but I gave you, miss, in a bumper; an' Zir Hornet swore that, except Barbara, a didn't know one to match you.

Mel. He did me great honour.

Turn. Why, to be zure a did. What, though a was wrong—I zee a was wrong; Barbara is well enough; but vor all the length of her spurs, she won't do, pitted against this vine ginger pullet.

Mel. Your compliments quite overpower me, sir.

Turn. Compliments! No, no. What, though vather be dead, an' I ha' three thousand a year, and the best pack of vox dogs in Zomeretzshire, I ha' no need make compliments; I would as soon override the hounds, or vell oak zaplings vor vire-wood. Barbara, mayhap, understands zic things, her reads kademy o' compliments; vor my part, I ha' no time vor zio trash—

Miss T. I'm zure it be a very pretty book.

Turn. Hold thy tongue, Barbara, an' then nobody will know thee beest a vool. Lookye me, miss: I do want a wife, and I should like hugely vor you an' I to zet our horses together, as the zaying is.

Mel. Sir, I don't understand—

Turn. Vor my part, I am none o' your half-bred ones. What, though shilly-shally and no thank you are always hungry—a lame tongue gets nothing, and the last wooer wins the maid—a bad hound may start a hare, but a good one will catch her.

Sir Harry. I believe, sir, you never saw my sister before.

Turn. Why, no, to be zure. What though, love and a red nose can't be hid—If you cut up the goose, I'll eat it—The hare starts when the hound least expects it.

Sir Harry. Very true, sir; but here is a disagreeable misunderstanding—

Turn. Why, to be zure, I do know it. We misunderstand the thing parfly well: it be very disagreeable, an' I be glad of it. I ha' brought Barbara to London to zee the lions, buy ribands, an' be married. But, what though, liking's liking, an' love's love; myself bevore my zister. If the mountain won't go to the man, the man mun go to the mountain—an' vaint heart never won vair lady.

Sir Harry. Don't you think, sir, that were my sister's affections totally disengaged, this abruptness were very unlikely to gain them? Is it not too violent, think you, for female delicacy?

Turn. Why, to be zure—female delicacy! I hate it; and as vor your abruptness, why, gi' me the man that speaks bolt outright: I am vor none o' your abruptness. What though, he must ha' leave to speak that can't hold his tongue.

Mel. Your proverb is quite apropos, sir.

Turn. Why, to be zure; dogs bark as they are bred.

Sir Harry and Mel. Ha, ha, ha!

Turn. I am a staunch hound, miss, and seldom at vault; an' zo, wi' your leave, I'll—*(Offers to kiss Melissa.)*

Mel. I beg, sir—

Turn. Nay, don't be bashful; I like fruit too well to play long at boh-cherry—a's a vool, indeed, that can't carve a plum-pudding. *(Offers to kiss again, and is prevented by Sir Harry.)*

Sir Harry. I am sorry to be obliged to inform you, that you are entirely mistaken, both with respect to the affections of my sister and myself. As a friend of my uncle's, sir, I shall be happy to shew you every respect, but nothing farther can possibly take place between the families.—*[Enter a Servant, and delivers a card to Melissa. Exit Melissa.]*

Serv. Mr. Timid desired me to tell you, sir, that Mr. Levi is quite tired of waiting; and says, if you can't come now, he will call again to-morrow.

Sir Harry. Oh! tell him he must not go; I beg Mr. Levi's pardon, I'll be with him in a minute. *[Exit Serv.]* Sir Hornet has been exceedingly precipitate in this business, sir: he is coming to town, and must apologize for his error. As to my sister, I have no doubt but she has every respect for your merits they deserve; but her affections are pre-engaged, the nuptials fixed, and are soon to be celebrated.

While you remain in town, however, I beg you will command my house and services. *[Exit.]*

Turn. Well, Barbara, what dost think on an?

Miss T. Why, a be well enough; but I daunt rightly know what a means.

Turn. What a means! thee beest a vool; thee dost na' know the London tongue, thee means: a zaid, in a kind o' round-about way, that it's all right.

Miss T. Did a?

Turn. Did a! why, to be zure a did; didst na' zee how zivil a were, an' what a low bow a made? But thee has no contagion in thee; thee will never learn what's what.

Miss T. Why, where be I to learn zic things? I ha' never been no where.

Turn. Never been no where! Well, what o' that? Where have I been? I ha' never been no where. What though, I do know how to ztir my broth without scalding my finger—I can zee an owl in an oven as soon as another.

Miss T. But when be us to go and zee the zights?

Turn. Oh! we'll go all together on the wedding-day.

Miss T. My gracios! I wish it were here.

Turn. Ay, ay; I daunt doubt thee: wot'st thou pigs, and poultry, be never satisfied.

Miss T. An' he you to be married as well?

Turn. Be I to be married as well! Why, to be zure I be. Isn't vather dead? an' ha' not I three thousand a-year, an' the best pack o' vox dogs in Zomeretzshire? An' didst na' hear me tell miss 'at I would marry her? What though, I do know how to catch two pigeons wi' one pea; shew a dog a bone, and he'll wag his tail; but that is born a beauty is half-married, an' like will to like.

Miss T. Well, then, take me to parliament-house, an' shew me the king, an' the queen, and the lord mayor, an' th' elephant, an' the rest o' th' royal family.

Turn. I tell thee, thee sha'n't.

Miss T. My gracios! What zignification's my coming to London zity, an' I must be moped up a thix'n! I will go, zo I will.

Turn. I tell thee, thee sha'n't.

Miss T. Why, then, an' I munnot zee the king, I'll go into next room and zee his picter, that I will. *[Exit.]*

Turn. Ahoic! Barbara, Barbara! The helve after the hatchet—He that holds a woman, mun ha' a long rope an' a strong arm—Women an' mules will go their own road in zpote of riders or ztinging-nettles. *[Exit.]*

• SCENE II.—The House of Mr. Vandervelt.

Enter VANDERVELT.

Vand. Clara is very beautiful, but mankind is very censorious. They will tell me that sixty-seven is too late in life to undertake the begetting, bringing up, and providing for a family. What of that? Must I go out of the world as I came into it, nobody to remember me? Must the name of Vandervelt be forgotten? Must I leave no pretty picture of myself? Sixty-seven is but sixty-seven. Have not we a thousand examples of longevity upon record? And, then, as to cuckolds, I cannot be persuaded that they are as common now as they were when I was a youngster. Times, men, and manners alter. Children are born wittier, and the world gets more sedate: I myself am a living proof of it: I never go to bagnios now; I never break lamps, beat watchmen, and kick constables now. I have no such wicked inclinations.

Enter CLARA.

Clara. Ah! non cher papa! What, ruminating?

Vand. Ah! turtle. But why do you always call me papa? you know I don't like that word, turtle.

Clara. And why, papa, do you always call me turtle? Have not I told you, fifty times, it puts me in mind of calipash, and aldermen, and other ugly animals.

Vand. Calipash! Thou art sweeter, more tender, delicate, delightful, and delicious, than all the calipash and calipee in the universe. A gem, a jewel, that all the sultans, grand signiors, and great moguls of the whole earth have not riches enough to purchase.

Clara. You are so gallant! You do say the most obliging things.

Vand. Say the most obliging things! Ay, and will—no matter—Deeds, title-deeds, rent-rolls, India bonds—Well, death and the day of judgment will make strange discoveries.

Clara. Oh! yes: I know you wise men often meditate on these serious subjects.

Vand. Ay, life is treacherous ground; one foot firm, and the next in a pit.

Clara. But why so melancholy, papa?

Vand. I have no friends; that is, no relations, no children; have made a great fortune by care, and labour, and anxiety, and debarring myself the pleasures and comforts of life in my youth; and why should not I sit down and enjoy it?

Clara. Very true; and why don't you?

Vand. Because men are fools, and laugh they don't know why. I hate ridicule; nobody loves to be thought ridiculous. The world has got false notions: a man of fifty is called old, and must not be in love, for fear of being pointed at; whereas, some men are older at thirty, than others at threescore.

Clara. Certainly.

Vand. What is threescore?

Clara. A handful of minutes,—

Vand. That vanish like a summer shower,—

Clara. Melt like a lump of sugar in a dish of tea—

Vand. That come you don't know how,—

Clara. And go you don't know where.

Vand. Surely, a man of sixty may walk through a church-yard without fear of tumbling into a grave?

Clara. If he can jump over it.

Vand. True; and I was once an excellent jumper. Sixty! why, Henry Jenkins, the Yorkshire fisherman, lived to a hundred and sixty-nine. So that a man of sixty, even in these degenerate days, has a chance to live at least a hundred years.

Clara. Well, I declare, papa, you are quite a blooming youth; forty years younger, in my opinion, than you were a quarter of an hour ago.

Vand. Forty?

Clara. At least.

Vand. Why, then, by dad, as thou sayest, I am a blooming youth. Ah! turtle, I could tell you something that would surprise you; I could tell you—Think what I could tell you. (*Sings.*) "If 'tis joy to wound a lover"—hem!—"how much more to give him ease."

Clara. (*Sings.*) "When his passion we discover"—

Vand. "Oh! how pleasing 'tis to please!" Oh! I could tell—but no, no; you are sniggering, laughing in your sleeve: ay, ay, I perceive it; you're a wit, and I am an old fool: sneering, ridiculing me; I hate wit and ridicule.

Clara. Me a wit! Lord! papa, I would not be such an animal for the world. A wit! Why, a wit is a kind of urchin, that every man will set his dog at, but won't touch himself, for fear of pricking his fingers. A wit is a monster with a hideous long tongue and no brains; a dealer in paradoxes; one that is blind through a profusion of light; walks upon metaphor, is always seen in a simile, vanishes if you come too near him, and is only to be laid by a cudgel.

Vand. Frightful, indeed! Thank heaven, nobody can say I am a wit.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. Codicil, the attorney, desires to speak with you, sir.

Vand. Very well; I am coming.

Serv. Mrs. Trip, madam, is in the housekeeper's room, and says she hopes your ladyship is well.

Clara. Desire her to walk up.

Vand. Who is Mrs. Trip, turtle?

Clara. A person that lived several years in our family. She is, at present, lady's-maid to Melissa, Sir Harry Portland's sister. She will divert me with her fine language; besides that, I wish to ask her how she likes Sir Harry's family.

Vand. I know Sir Harry's uncle, Sir Horast Armstrong, very well; an old friend.

Clara. Indeed! I never saw him here.

Vand. Why, no, I don't know how it has happened, but I have not seen him above twice these two years myself; he's an odd mortal; a whimsical old gentleman. Well, b'ye, b'ye!

Clara. Adieu!

Vand. B'ye, b'ye!

Clara. This Sir Harry runs continually in my head; ay, and I am afraid has found a place in my heart: yes, yes; there's no denying that: but that friend, that Mr. Osborne—if I have any penetration, that man wears a most suspicious, hypocritical face.—[*Enter MRS. TRIP.*]—So, Mrs. Trip, how have you done this long time?

Mrs. T. Pretty well, thank you, madam, except that I am subject to the historicals, and troubled with the vapours; being, as I am, of a dilikit nervous system, whereof I am so giddy, that my poor head is sometimes quite in a whirlpool; and if I did not bathe with my lady, the doctor tells me I should decline into a liturgy, and so fall down and die, perhaps, in a fit of apostasy.

Clara. And how long have you lived in Sir Harry's family, Mrs. Trip?

Mrs. T. I came soon after my poor dear lady, your mamma, died, and was interrogated; whereof I was at her funeral. My lady is a very good lady; that is, I mean, ma'am, my future lady that I live with at present: she is to be married soon to Mr. Osborne, and may Hydra, the god of marriage, tie the gorgon knot; whereof I heard your ladyship is to be one of the ceremonials.

Clara. I am invited, and shall be there. But, pray, Mrs. Trip, what is your opinion of Mr. Osborne?

Mrs. T. Oh, lard! ma'am, consarnin Mr. Osborne—I heard a small bird sing.

Clara. A small bird sing!

Mrs. T. Yes, ma'am.

Clara. Of what feather was this fowl?

Mrs. T. Fowl! No, I assure you, your ladyship, as fair a speechified person as any in England; whereof he has a great valiation for me.

Clara. Well.

Mrs. T. And so, the secret is that Mr. Osborne has won almost all Sir Harry's estate.

Clara. Indeed!

Mrs. T. And, moreover, has pretended to be a synagogue, and a Jew, and has lent money in other people's names, on mortgages and nuptials, whereof my friend has been a party consarned.

Clara. Good heaven, what villainy! (*Aside.*) And pray, who is your friend, Mrs. Trip?

Mrs. T. Oh! ma'am, I hope your ladyship won't intoxicate me on that head, for I know Mr. Timid too well to—

Clara. Oh! it was Mr. Timid?

Mrs. T. Why—that is, ma'am—I didn't mean—Mercy! what have I said?

Clara. You may assure yourself, Mrs. Trip, I shall be careful not to do you any prejudice.

Mrs. T. I am sure, I am supinely obligated to your ladyship. [*Exit.*]

Clara. Poor Sir Harry! He has a heart that does honour to mankind, that does not merit distress; yet, if I angur right, it must shortly feel the severest pangs false friendship can inflict. Ungrateful Osborne! I must warn Melissa to beware of him, and if possible, to detach Sir Harry from the gaming-table. [*Exit.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Sir Harry Portland's House.*

Enter SIR HARRY PORTLAND, CLARA, MELISSA, and VANDERVELT.

Clara. Ha, ha, ha! Sir Harry, you are a happy man.

Vand. Ay, Sir Harry, you are a happy man.

Mel. Such an accomplished spouse!

Clara. And so kind an uncle!

Sir Harry. Upon my soul, I can't help laughing; and yet the more I reflect on the affair, the more I am amazed; Sir Hornet is whimsical, 'tis true, but no fool.

Vand. Fool, Sir Harry! no, no; he is always the readiest to spy the fooleries of other people: many a time have I laughed at his whims and jokes; an odd mortal he is.

Clara. Nay, if he be so fond of a joke, who knows but he may have sent them on this errand for the joke's sake?

Vand. By dad, turtle, thou hast hit it. As sure as can be, that's it; it is for the joke's sake.

Sir Harry. Impossible: the affair is too serious to be intentional caprice.

Mel. But I thought, when I left you, you were coming to an eclairsissement.

Sir Harry. Coming to an eclairsissement! Why, I told them, as plain as I could speak, that no alliance whatever could take place between the families.

Mel. 'Tis certain they have not understood you.

Sir Harry. Well, there the matter must rest till I can find an interpreter, for I can't make myself more intelligible.

Clara. And you have not had one tender love

Sir Harry. Not one. I am amazed at the girl's simplicity, it equals her ignorance; she speaks and looks so totally unconscious of impropriety, so void of intentional error, that I don't know how to reply.

Clara. Suppose, then, you were to practise a little. Come, I'll stand up for the young lady.

Sir Harry. I shall still find a difficulty to speak.

Clara. Surely!

Sir Harry. In very truth, ma'am. But it will be from a quite different motive.

Clara. Oh! for the love of curiosity, Sir Harry, explain your motive.

Vand. Ay, Sir Harry, explain your motive.

Sir Harry. I cannot, sir.

Vand. Cannot! Sir Harry, why so?

Sir Harry. For reasons, sir, which are far more easily imagined than described.

Vand. Nay, don't be afraid, Sir Harry. My turtle knows how to answer interrogatories; you won't find her a simpleton, I warrant.

Sir Harry. No, sir; the danger is that she might find me one.

Vand. I fancy, Sir Harry, you are a little like me: cautious with the ladies, lest you should be made ridiculous. I am very circumspect in those matters.

Sir Harry. You are very right, sir; it is not every one who has the gift of wearing a fool's-cap with a grace.

Clara. Ay, but notwithstanding all this, Sir Harry, I should like to have a love-scene with you.

Vand. How, turtle!

Clara. In the character of Miss Turnball.

Vand. Oh! ay, do, Sir Harry, have a love-scene with my turtle.

Sir Harry. Anything to oblige you, sir.

Vand. Come, then, begin. (*Clara sets herself in an awkward, silly attitude.*) Ha, ha, ha! Look, look at my Turtle lovey-dovey.

Sir Harry. (*Addressing Clara.*) My uncle, Sir Hornet Armstrong, madam, is desirous that I should gain the inestimable blessing of your hand.

Clara. Anan!

Vand. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Harry. And give me leave to say, madam, however unworthy I may be of the happiness and honour intended me, no person can be more sensible of them.

Clara. What! that be as much as to say you want ha' me, I suppose. (*Whispers.*)

Vand. Ha, ha, ha! Nay, but don't cry in earnest, lovey-dovey.

Sir Harry. Oh! dry those heavenly eyes, madam, and believe me, when I call every sacred power to witness my affection, I love, I adore, I die for you. Suffer me to wipe away those pearly tears that hide the beauties of your cheek. (*Offering to salute her.*)

Clara. Hold, hold, Sir Harry!

Vand. Ay, hold, hold, Sir Harry.

Sir Harry. Why so, sir? 'Tis quite in character.

Clara. Deuce take you, Sir Harry, you—you are too passionate in your feigned addresses; so warm and pressing—

Vand. Ay, so warm and pressing.

Clara. One was not aware.

Sir Harry. I was taken by surprise myself, madam. The bounteous god of love kindly contrived an opportunity which my profound adoration, and a conscious want of merit, had totally deprived me of. Pardon me, if, for a moment, I forgot that respect which every one, who beholds you, cannot help feeling.

Vand. Why, what's this, Sir Harry? You are not in downright earnest, are you?

Sir Harry. Sincere as dying sinners imploring mercy.

Vand. What, in love with my turtle?

Clara. Pooh! Why, no, to be sure. We were only acting a supposed scene.

Vand. Supposed! By dad, I think it was devilishly like a real scene. You both did your parts very naturally.

Sir Harry. Oh! sir, no actor who feels as forcibly as I do, can ever mistake his character.

Vand. Feels forcibly! Your feelings are forcible, indeed.

Mel. Come, come, let us adjourn to the drawing-room; I want to have your opinions on a painting of Coreggio's that my brother has made me a present of.

Vand. Favour me with your hand, young lady; and, Sir Harry, do you take my turtle's; but don't you let your feelings be too forcible. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Hall in Sir Harry Portland's house.*

Enter SIR HORNET ARMSTRONG and Servant.

Sir Hor. Are the trunks, safe, sirrah, George?

Serv. Yes, sir.

Sir Hor. And did you order that dog of a postillion to take care of the poor devils the horses?

Serv. I did, sir.

Sir Hor. And of himself?

Serv. I did, sir.

Sir Hor. You did, sir? Why, then, do you go and take care of yourself, you rascal.

Serv. I will, sir.

Sir Hor. And do you hear, George?

Serv. Sir?

[*break your bones.*]

Sir Hor. If I find you disobey my orders, I'll

Serv. I'll be very careful, sir, I assure you. [*Exit.*]

Enter TIMID and SCRIP.

Timid. Brokerage comes rather heavy, Mr. Scrip, when the sum is large.

Scrip. Heavy! no, no; a d—d paltry pittance; five-and-twenty pounds only, you see, for selling out twenty thousand. Get more by one lucky hit than fifty of these would produce.

Timid. Ay!

Scrip. Oh! yes; jobbing—stock-jobbing, between you and I, is the high road to wealth.

Timid. Lookaday! may be so. Well, good day. (*Scrip is going, but seeing Sir Hornet, stops to listen.*)

Sir Hor. What, old Lackaday!

Timid. Ah! Sir Hornet.

Sir Hor. What's the best news with you?

Timid. Ah, lackaday! the best news I know is scarcely worth relating.

Scrip. Beg pardon, sir, (to *Sir Hor.*) beg pardon—bad news in town, did you say?

Sir Hor. Bad! sir; not that I have heard.

Scrip. Exceedingly sorry for it.

Sir Hor. Sir?

Scrip. Never was more distressed for bad news.

Sir Hor. Distressed for bad news!

Scrip. Excessively! The reduction of Gibraltar, the taking of Jamaica, or the destruction of the grand fleet, one of the three would make me a happy man for life. [you happy for life?]

Sir Hor. The destruction of the grand fleet make

Scrip. Completely.

Sir Hor. Here's a precious scoundrel!

Scrip. No great reason to complain, to be sure; do more business than any three doctors of the college; generally of the sure side; made a large fortune, if this does not give me a twinge; rather overdone it; but any severe stroke, any great national misfortune would exactly close my account.

Sir Hor. Hark you, sir!

Scrip. Sir?

Sir Hor. It is to be hoped—

Scrip. Yes, sir, it is to be hoped. [account.

Sir Hor. That a halter will exactly close your

Scrip. Sir?

Sir Hor. You raven-faced rascal! Rejoice at national misfortunes! Zounds! I thought such language was nowhere to be heard from the mouth of an Englishman, unless he were a member of parliament.

Scrip. Lord! sir, you don't consider that I am a bear for almost half a million.

Sir Hor. You are an impudent villain! Rejoice at the distress of your country!

Scrip. Why, Lord! sir, to be sure; when I am a bear. There's not a bear in the Alley but would do the same. Were I a bull, indeed, the case would be

Sir Hor. A bull! [altered.

Scrip. For instance, at the taking of Charles-Town, no man was merrier, no man more elate, no man in better spirits.

Sir Hor. How so, gentle sir?

Scrip. Oh! dear sir, at that time I was a bull to a vast amount, when, very fortunately for me, the news arrived; the guns fired, the bells clattered, the stocks mounted, and I made ten thousand pounds. Enough to make a man merry. Never spent a happier night in my life.

Sir Hor. Aha! then, according to that arithmetic, you would be as merry and as happy to-night, could you accomplish the destruction of this said British fleet.

Scrip. Happier, happier by half! for I should realize at least twice the sum—twice the sum.

Sir Hor. Twice the sum!

Scrip. Ay, twice the sum. Oh! that would be a glorious event, indeed. Never prayed so earnestly for anything since I was born; and who knows—who knows what a little time may do for us?

Sir Hor. Zounds! how my elbow aches! (*Aside.*)

Scrip. I shall call on some leading people—men of intelligence—of the right stamp.

Sir Hor. You shall?

Scrip. Yes, sir.

Sir Hor. Why, then, perhaps you will be able to destroy the British fleet between you.

Scrip. I hope so, I hope so—do everything in my power. Oh! it would be a glorious event.

Sir Hor. Hark you! sir, do you see that door?

Scrip. Sir?

Sir Hor. And this cane?

Scrip. Why, but, sir—

Sir Hor. Make your exit, you imp!

Scrip. But, sir—

Sir Hor. Get out of the house, you vile rascal, you diabolical—[*Drives Scrip off.*] A son's son of a scoundrel! Who is he? What business had he here?

Timid. Lackaday! sir, he is a stock-broker, that Sir Harry employed, at his sister's request, to sell out for her; because she chooses to have her fortune in her own possession against to-morrow. I have been paying him the brokerage, and receiving the money, which I shall deliver to madam Melissa directly.

Sir Hor. An incomprehensible dog! Pray for the reduction of Gibraltar, the taking of Jamaica, or the destruction of the British fleet!

Timid. Lackaday! sir, it is his trade.

Sir Hor. Trade! a nation will never flourish that encourages traders to thrive by her misfortunes. But come, tell me something of my own affairs: where is Harry? how does he go on?

Timid. Ah, lackaday!

Sir Hor. What, is he a wild young dog? Does he get into thy books?

Timid. Ah, lackaday!

Sir Hor. Ah, lackaday! Zounds! don't sigh, man: he won't die in thy debt.

Timid. Ah, lackaday! Sir Hornet, he should be welcome to the last farthing I have in the world.

Sir Hor. Should he, old Truepenny? then give me thy hand; thou shalt be remembered in my codicil: but, what, he shakes his elbow, I suppose, eh? Seven's the main?

Timid. Ah, lackaday! Sir Hornet, what between main and chance he has been sadly nicked.

Sir Hor. Has he? I'll score his losses upon his pate, a dog—that is, if he will let me. But where is Miss Turnbull? she'll soon reform him; her angelic smiles will teach him—

Timid. Sir?

Sir Hor. Sir! Zounds! you stare like the wooden heads of the twelve Cæsars. Miss Turnbull's charms I say, will find employment for all his virtues and wean him from all his vices.

Timid. Will they, sir?

Sir Hor. Will they, sir! Yes, they will, sir.

Timid. Lackaday!

Sir Hor. Lackaday! What ails you?

Timid. Nothing, sir, nothing; only that I am afraid my eyes begin to grow dim.

Sir Hor. Your head, I believe, begins to grow very thick.

Timid. Ah, lackaday! sir, like enough, like enough.

Sir Hor. Be kind enough to answer me a few questions: is not Miss Turnbull a beautiful girl?

Timid. May I speak truth? [may.

Sir Hor. May you speak truth! to be sure you

Timid. Then I answer no, sir.

Sir Hor. No!

Timid. No.

Sir Hor. Is she not an elegant girl?

Timid. No.

Sir Hor. Nor a witty girl?

Timid. No.

[*aside, in your opinion?*]
Sir Hor. Tol de rol lol! tititum! Pray, what is

Timid. A silly, ignorant, ill-bred, country girl, and very unfit for Sir Harry's wife.

Sir Hor. Tol de rol lol! laditum! Let me look in your face. Yes, yes; he has it; the moon's almost at full. Poor Lackaday! which is your right hand? (*Timid holds it up.*) Indeed! wonderful!

And are you really in your sober senses?

Timid. Why, indeed, sir, I begin to be rather in doubt: I believe so; but lest I should lose them, I will wish your honour a good morning. [*Exit.*]

Sir Hor. Lackaday! Ha, ha! Not beautiful, nor witty, nor—tol de rol lol! The old fool has a mind to set up for a wit and has begun by hantering me. Zounds! I was neither drunk nor mad; and to the best of my knowledge, I am not now in a dream.

The brother, indeed, is a booby; and does not appear to be of the same family—hardly of the same species; though he had sense enough to snap at the offer immediately. I remarked he did not stand on ceremony. Surely, I have made no mistake in the business—'Sblood! if it prove so! Parson Adams the second! I shall—Eh! who's this? No, no, no—it is; 'tis she herself, in *propria persona*—[Enter CLARA.]—Miss Turnbull, I most heartily rejoice to
Clara. Miss Turnbull! (*Aside.*) [see you.
Sir Hor. Your presence has relieved me from one of the oddest qualms—but the sight of you has given me a cordial.

Clara. What do you mean, Sir Hornet?

Sir Hor. Mean, my angel! why, here has been a pantering, lying, enigmatical son of a scoundrel, with a bundle of ironical, diabolical tales, railing at your beauty and accomplishments, till, egad! I began to fancy my fine-flavoured pine-apple a crab.

Clara. This is delightful! But I cannot find in my heart to undeceive him. (*Aside.*) There is no answering for the difference of taste, sir.

Sir Hor. True. Asses prefer thistles to nettles; but yet he must be an ass, indeed, who could not distinguish St. Paul's from the pillory.

Clara. Taste, Sir Hornet, is a sort of shot silk, and has a variety of shades: one says 'tis blue, another black, and a third is positive 'tis yellow. It would be a vain attempt, therefore, for Miss Turnbull to endeavour to please the whole world.

Sir Hor. An old booby! I would not give a hair of the pope's beard to please him. But how is it with Sir Harry? is he in raptures? is he dying for you?

Clara. No, sir; he eats and drinks as usual, and is, for aught I can discover, in tolerably good health.

Sir Hor. Is he? an audacious dog! in good health! If I find him in good health I'll pistol him. But you mistake the matter, perhaps: the rascal's proud, and not willing you should see his sufferings; he is a stricken deer, and sheds his tears in solitude and silence, mayhap. Do you discover no symptoms of the sighing swain? Does he never cut his fingers? or scald himself? or run against a post, and beg its pardon?

Clara. No, sir.

Sir Hor. I doubt he is a sad dog. But no, no; I am certain he adores you; 'tis impossible he should do otherwise. But there is another material point, about which I am not quite so certain.

Clara. What is that, sir?

Sir Hor. Has he found any place in your affections? 'Tis true, he's a fine fellow. I don't mean by that, one that is pickled in cosmetics; preserved in musk and marchal powder; and that will melt away, like Lot's wife, in the first hard shower: none of your fellows that are too valiant to give a woman the wall, and too witty to let her have the last word; but one that is—in short, his own manner will best describe what he is. [so short.

Clara. True, Sir Hornet, but the time has been

Sir Hor. Short! Ah! madam, if he did not do the business with a *coup d'œil*, at once, I would not give a feather of a goose-wing for all the arrows his Cupid has in his quiver. But come, Miss Turnbull, I know you are above the silly prejudices that ordinary minds are swayed by; tell me sincerely, has he made any impression on your heart? Is he the man?

Clara. To speak ingenuously, Sir Hornet, that is a point entirely undetermined, at present.

Sir Hor. Undetermined! why, what—

Clara. Sir Harry's person is engaging, his manners delightful, and his understanding unexceptionable. [hear you say so.

Sir Hor. Bravo! my dear girl! you charm me to
Clara. I will say more, Sir Hornet. I find my heart interested in his behalf, and sincerely believe I shall never see another man with whom I could be half so happy.

Sir Hor. My dear Miss Turnbull!

Clara. But yet I have too many reasons to fear it will be impossible we should ever be united.

Sir Hor. Impossible!

Clara. I firmly believe, Sir Harry possesses a thousand virtues, but they are all discoloured by a failing, which, if not as erroneous as some other vices, is more destructive than any.

Sir Hor. I understand you.

Clara. This will for ever deter a woman, who values her own peace, from cherishing a passion that must, in its consequences, be so fatal.

Sir Hor. But you, my angel, will soon cure him of this: it is not a rooted vice—

Clara. Permanently, or my intelligence says false.

Sir Hor. Well, but we have hopes that Mr. Osborne will find means to reclaim him; he is continually with him, continually warning him, and—

Clara. Mr. Osborne, Sir Hornet, is an interested physician, and would rather encourage than cure the disease. [of this?

Sir Hor. Heaven forbid! But who informs you

Clara. Those who are in the secret, I assure you, sir. I am afraid Mr. Osborne is a wicked man; he is—what I dare not speak.

Sir Hor. I confess you alarm me, though I hope without cause. Osborne assumes every appearance of rigid virtue; and, if this were true, he would be the worst of villains. However, suspend your opinion awhile; I'll soon sift the affair: and in the meantime, let me beg of you to think as well of Sir Harry as your doubts will permit you.

Clara. I shall do that, Sir Hornet, without an effort. [Exit.

Enter VANDERVELT.

Vand. (*Sees Clara going off.*) Why, turtle, why—Ah! Sir Hornet, I am glad to see you.

Sir Hor. Ah, ha! friend Vand! why, you look tolerably well. [should I not?

Vand. Tolerably well! Ay, to be sure. Why

Sir Hor. Why should you not! Let me see: there are, as near as I can guess, about seventy reasons why you should not.

Vand. Humph! Oh! what, my age? No, no; let me tell you, Sir Hornet, I—I am not an old man.

Sir Hor. No!

Vand. No; nor you neither.

Sir Hor. Indeed! I am exceedingly glad of that: and, pray, when did you make this discovery?

Vand. Make it! why, I have been making it these twenty years and upwards.

Sir Hor. Oh, ho! And how do you prove it?

Vand. By comparison and reflection. I'll tell you—hold! first, I'll shew you what I call my list of worthies: there, look at that. (*Gives a commonplace book.*)

Sir Hor. What the devil have we here? (*Reads.*)

"Patrick O'Neal, married, for the seventh time, at the age of one hundred and thirteen; walks without a cane, never idle; children and great-grand-children to the number of one hundred and twenty-three."

Vand. There's a fellow! I warrant that man is alive and hearty at this moment.

Sir Hor. Humph! And, pray, do you think to imitate this worthy, as you call him? Will you be married seven times, and have a hundred and twenty-three children?

Vand. That's more than I can tell.

Sir Hor. Ha! (*Reads.*) "*Thomas Parr, being aged one hundred and twenty, fell in love with Catherine Milton.*" [the church-door.

Vand. Ay, and did penance in a white sheet at

Sir Hor. Humph! (*Reads.*) "*Henry Jenkins*"—

Vand. Ay, there's another: corrected his great grandson, a youth of seventy, with his own hand, for being idle.

Sir Hor. (*Reads.*) "*Johannes de Temporibus, or John of Times, armour-bearer to the emperor Charlemagne, died, aged three hundred threescore and one year.*"

Vand. Very well; now tell me, when you compare me to Johannes Temporibus, that is, when you compare sixty-seven to three hundred threescore and one, can you say I am an old man?

Sir Hor. An old man! By the beard of Methusalem, thou art scarce an infant; it will be, perhaps, these five years yet before thou art perfectly a child.

Vand. Nay, Sir Hornet, let me beg of you to be serious; you are an old friend, and know the world; I shall be glad of your advice: I ruminate on these things by myself, till I am quite melancholy; now, if I had but somebody to bear half my griefs, I should suppose they would be lessened. [so.]

Sir Hor. Why, true, as you say, one would imagine

Vand. Don't you think, then, if I were to take a handsome, young wife, I should, perhaps, find a cure for all my ills?

Sir Hor. An infallible one.

Vand. And this is, seriously, your opinion.

Sir Hor. Seriously.

Vand. Then tell me—you were talking with the young lady that went out as I entered—

Sir Hor. Well, what of her?

Vand. Is she not very beautiful?

Sir Hor. A divinity.

Vand. Finely accomplished?

Sir Hor. Beyond description.

Vand. That's right. You are a sensible, discerning man, Sir Hornet; and I am delighted to find you approve my choice.

Sir Hor. Your choice!

Vand. My choice. That is the young lady, you must know, to whom I intend to pay my addresses.

Sir Hor. Your what!

Vand. The lady I mean to marry.

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha!

Vand. Nay, Sir Hornet—

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha! all mad; every soul.

Vand. I don't understand.

Sir Hor. Most reverend youth, I beg your pardon. Ha, ha, ha!

Vand. You see things in a mighty strange light, Sir Hornet. Is it any miracle that a man should love a beautiful woman?

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha! Love! why thou'rt another *Etna*—Cupid's burning mountain. Your nose has taken fire at your fancy, and become a beacon to warn all young gentlemen of three-score and ten, of the rocks and quicksands hidden in the sea of amorous desires.

Vand. Upon my word, Sir Hornet, this is exceedingly strange.

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha! You must excuse me. What a rosy youth! Harkye! friend Vanderveldt, it's my opinion you have been bantering me.

Vand. Od! that's a good thought. (*Aside.*)—Bantering you! why, ay, to be sure I have. Ha, ha, ha! (*Forces a laugh.*)

Sir Hor. Oh! you have?

Vand. Certainly. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha! (*With the same tone.*)

Vand. Didn't you perceive that before? Ha, ha!

Sir Hor. No, faith! Ha, ha, ha!

Vand. That's a good joke. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. Excellent! Ha, ha, ha! (*During the laugh, Sir H. imitates Vanderveldt.*)—Now let us be serious.

Vand. With all my heart.

Sir Hor. And I'll tell you a story.

Vand. Do.

Sir Hor. There was a certain antient personage of my acquaintance, called Andrew Vandervelt—

Vand. What, is your story about me?

Sir Hor. Give me leave, young gentleman, and you shall hear.—Everybody imagined him to be a prudent, valiant, grave person, with a moderate share of common sense—

Vand. Well!

Sir H. And, as it was evident his beard was

grey, his limbs palsied, his skin shrivelled, and his sinews shrank—

Vand. How, Sir Hornet?

Sir H. They naturally concluded, he had made his will, wrote his epitaph, and bespoke his coffin—
Vand. Meroy upon me!

Sir Hor. But instead of meditating, like a pious Christian, on the last four things, a crotchety takes him in the head, he buys a three-penny fiddle, scrapes a matrimonial jig, claps a pair of horns upon his head, and curvets through the town, the sport of the mob, derided by the young, pitted by the old, and laughed at by all the world.

Vand. Heaven deliver me, what a picture!—But you forget, Sir Hornet; didn't I explain to you that it was only a joke?

Sir Hor. Oh! true. Ah! witty rogue! Well, adieu. I'll remember the joke. Ha, ha, ha!

Vand. Ay do. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. Oh! for a song to the tune of "Room for Cookolds!" [Exit.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Chamber at Sir Harry Portland's.

Enter SIR HARRY PORTLAND.

Sir Harry. (*Much agitated.*) May the everlasting curse of heaven consume those implements of hell, those deceitful, infernal fiends! I'll never touch, never look on cards or dice again. If I ever make another bet, may all the horrors of a ruined fortune haunt me, sleeping and waking; may I be pointed at by children, and pitied by sharpers. Distraction! May I be—I am already ruined, past redemption.

Enter a Servant, who delivers a letter to Sir Harry.

Sir Harry. (*Breaks open the letter hastily.*) Um—Um—Stay, sir. (*To the Servant.*) D——n! Is it possible! In league with sharpers. Who brought this letter, sir?

Servant. A porter, sir.

Sir Harry. Where is he?

Servant. Gone, sir; he ran off round the corner

Sir Harry. You may go, sir. [Exit Servant.]

Enter OSBORNE.

Osborne. You seem moved, Sir Harry; may I enquire the cause?

Sir Harry. You are the cause, sir.

Osborne. I!

Sir Harry. Yes, you. There, read, sir.

Osborne. (*Reads.*) "Beware of a false friend; the person who gives you this caution, would sacrifice a life to preserve you from the destruction that threatens you. Mr. Osborne is in league with Jews and sharpers, and you are a victim to his covice and duplicity." So, so. Well, Sir Harry, do you give any credit to this epistle?

Sir Harry. Nay, sir, you are to tell me how much or how little credit it deserves.

Osborne. Why, look you, Sir Harry, I cannot, nor I will not, enter into explanations.

Sir Harry. Sir! Cannot, nor will not, enter into explanations!

Osborne. No, sir.

Sir Harry. But I say, sir, you shall.

Osborne. Shall!

Sir Harry. Yes, sir, shall.

Osborne. Ay, sir? Who is he that shall make me?

Sir Harry. I am he, sir.

Osborne. Indeed!

Sir Harry. Friendship, honour, honesty, ought to make you; but present appearances declare you void of these.

Osborne. Present appearances declare you void of reason, sir, otherwise you would remember me for one of those who are not to be terrified by a loud tongue, or an angry brow. I repeat it, I will not now enter into explanations. I have played

with you, I have staked my money, and won yours. Would it have been dishonourable had you won mine? I have disposed of that money as I thought proper. No matter whether with Jews or Christians; and, I should have supposed, your passion and suspicion would have required better proof, than the malevolent aspersion of an anonymous letter, ere they ought to have incited you to a quarrel with your friend.

Sir Harry. I beg your pardon, dear Osborne; I am to blame; nothing but the severity of my late losses can plead for me; I know you to be a noble-hearted, worthy fellow, and explanations, on such an accusation, are as much beneath you to give, as me to demand. Forget my silly warmth: it is my weakness.

Os. Do you forget the cause of it, Harry, and it is forgot.

Sir Harry. It was madness—I am above suspicion—'tis ungenerous—'tis damnable—pray excuse—pray forgive me.

Os. Well, well, think no more on't; only guard against suspicion for the future. [*Exit.*]

Sir Harry. No, no, it cannot be; there is an open fortitude in his manner, a boldness that can only result from innocence.

Enter MELISSA.

Mel. Oh! brother, I am glad I have found you. Why did you send these troublesome things to me? Why did not you take care of them for me? Trust a giddy girl, indeed, with a parcel of bank bills. Here, here, here they are, take 'em, take 'em, they will be safe with you; I have been in a panic, ever since they were in my possession, lest they should take wing, and fly through the key-hole, or in some other unaccountable way. I am unused to such large sums, and don't feel happy while they are about me.

Sir Harry. But what am I to do with them?

Mel. Keep them till to-morrow, and then, you know, when you give my hand to your friend; you may give them too, to make it the more acceptable; there are just twenty, of one thousand each. So, now I am easy—good-b'ye: I am going to purchase a few knick-knacks. [*Exit.*]

Sir Harry. Well, but, sister! Melissa! She's gone, flown on the light wings of innocence and happiness, while I, depressed by folly, feel a weight upon my heart, that hope itself cannot remove. What is a ruined gamester? An idiot, who begins for his amusement, who continues hoping to retrieve, and who is ruined before he can recollect himself; a wretch, deserted, solitary, forlorn; ashamed of society, yet miserable when alone; shunned by the prosperous; despised by the prudent; deservedly exposed to the poisoned shafts of insolence and envy; a by-word to the vulgar, and a jest to the fortunate; haunted by duns, preyed upon by usurers, persecuted and carst by creditors. Inexplicable infatuation! [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—Another Apartment.

Enter CLARA, MELISSA, and 'SQUIRE TURNBULL.

Mel. Mr. Turnbull, I must beg, sir, you'll desist.

Turn. Desist, why, to be sure; I'll go and buy license out o' hand, make hay while the sun do shine, and don't lose the sheep for a ha'porth o' tar; what tho', the pepper-box must ha' a lid; a bushel o' words want vill a basket; when the owl goes a hunting, 'tis time to light the candle.

Clara. Ha, ha, ha! If you'll permit me, my dear, I think I can relieve you from this embarrassment.

Mel. Permit you! I am sure if you can, you shall be canonized, and have churches erected to your memory.

Clara. I'll talk to him in his own language, he can comprehend no other.

Turn. Well, vair lady.

Clara. Well, sir.

Turn. You do see how the nail do drive. Be you to be one at bridal!

Clara. No.

Turn. No! Why so? you'st be bride-maid.

Clara. No, but I wunt.

Turn. Wunt you?

Clara. No; nor you'st not be bridegroom, nother.

Turn. No!

Clara. No.

Turn. How so!

Clara. Because you've zold the zkin afore you've catshed the vox. You've reckoned your chickens bevore they be hatched.

Turn. Nay, nay; stop at the dike; zure I do know my own mind, an miss be agreed.

Clara. But miss ben't agreed.

Turn. No! That's a good joke; but she be,

Clara. But she ben't, though. [*though.*]

Turn. But I'm zure she be.

Clara. But I'm zure she ben't.

Turn. No! Why, miss, ben't you agreed?

Mel. No, sir.

Turn. No!

Clara. You may gape, but the cherry won't drop; too much mettle is dangerous in a blind horse; misreckoning is no payment; John would ha' wed, but Mary war na willing.

Mel. You seem surprised, sir; I can only say, it is without reason; you have deceived yourself, in supposing such an alliance possible, and I hope your own good sense will inform you, that, after this declaration, any renewal of your addresses to me must be considered an insult.

Turn. An' zo, then, the meaning of all this vine speech, I suppose, is, that you wunt ha' me?

Mel. It is.

Clara. "Make hay while the sun do shine; don't lose the zheep for a ha'porth of tar; a bushel of words wunt vill a basket; when the owl goes a hunting, 'tis time to light the candle." Your most obedient, gentle squire. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit, with Clara.*]

Turn. Zo, then, it zeems I ha' been reckoning without my host here. Well, what though, soon hot soon cold; soon got soon gone; care's no cure; zorrow won't pay a man's debts; he wanted a zinging-bird, that gave a groat for a cuckoo; an' he that loses a wife and zixpence, has lost a taster. —[*Enter MISS TURNBULL.*—] Why, Barbara, what be's the matter wi' thee? Where hast thee been?

Miss T. Been! Why I ha' bin wildered.

Turn. What, lost!

Miss T. Ees; an' if I had na' by good hap met wi' John, who has got direction in written hand, it were five golden guineas to a brass vurthin I'd been kidnapp'd an' zent to America, among the Turks.

Turn. Zerve thee right, thee must be gadding; but I ha' news vor thee, the cow has kicked down the milk; it's all off 'tween miss and I.

Miss T. Zure! rabbit me an I didn't guess as much.

Turn. Ees, the nail's clenched; zhe and I ha' zhook hands, an' parted.

Miss T. My gracious! What, won't yo' ha' zhe?

Turn. No, I wunt: her may whittle, but I zha'n't hear; her may beckon, but I zha'n't come; catch me an' ha' me, I'm no fool; zo, do you see, an' you be minded to wed, zay grace an' vall to; vor I don't like your London tricks, an' zo I'st leave it as vast as I can.

Miss T. An' when be I to be wed?

Turn. Why, I do vind Zir Harnet be come; zo, when yo' do zee Zir Harry, yo' may settle't; an', d'y'e hear, Barbara, don't let me vind yo' at any o'these skittish off an' on freaks; I ha' zeen too

much on 'um lately. Oh! here be Zir Harry coming, an' so I 'at leave you to make love your own way; I 'at not play my ace o' trumps out yet. [*Exit.*]

Enter SIR HARRY PORTLAND.

Sir Harry. So, here's my good whimsical uncle's nonpareil, as he calls her—his phoenix. All alone, Miss Turnbull?

Miss T. Ees; brother be just gone; a's vallen out wi' miss, an' a's plaguily frumped.

Sir Harry. Sure!

[*make love.*]

Miss T. Ees; a zaid, too, 'at yo' an' I be to

Sir Harry. He did!

Miss T. Ees; and I do know his tricks; a'll be in a woundy rage, an I don't do as he bids me.

Sir Harry. What, will he be surly?

Miss T. Zurly! a'll snarl worse than our great dog, Jowler, at a beggar.

Sir Harry. He is ill-tempered, then?

Miss T. Oh! a'll zulk vor a vortnight round, an' when a comes about again, a'll make a believe to romp; an' then a' lumps, an' gripes, an' pinches, till I am quite a weary on't.

Sir Harry. Well you may, I think. Poor thing. (*Aside.*) And which way are we to make love?

Miss T. My gracious! don't you know?

Sir Harry. I believe I can give a guess; you, I suppose, are to hang down your head and titter.

Miss T. Ees.

Sir Harry. I—hem! and look sheepish.

Miss T. Ees. [thumbs.

Sir Harry. You gnaw your apron; I twirl my

Miss T. He, he! Ees.

Sir Harry. You say—it's a very fine day, sir, and I answer, yes, ma'am, only it rains.

Miss T. He, he, he! Ees, iverck, that be vor all the world the very moral of our country vashion. Oh! but here be zomebody coming.

Enter SIR HORNET ARMSTRONG, CLARA, and VANDERVELT.

Sir Hor. Why, Harry, you dog, what, have you hid yourself, because you would not see me?

Sir Harry. Dear sir, I am exceedingly glad to see you, but it is not a quarter of an hour since I heard of your being in town; and I suppose, sir, you will scarcely be angry at finding me in this company. (*Vand., Sir Harry, and Miss T. retires.*)

Sir Hor. Finding you in—Zounds! what awkward cargo of rusticity has he got there? (*To Clara.*)

Clara. A young lady from Somersetshire, with a tolerably good fortune, that Sir Harry, it is thought by some, intends to marry.

Sir Hor. Marry! He should as soon marry the mummy of queen Semiramis.

Clara. She has been strongly recommended to the family, sir.

Sir Hor. Recommended! By whom?

Clara. By one you are very intimate with, and who has very great influence with Sir Harry, as well as with yourself.

Sir Hor. Ay! Who is that?

Clara. Pardon me there, Sir Hornet.

Sir Hor. Certainly the fellow cannot be foolish enough to admire her; but I shall soon discover that, by what he thinks of you. Harke ye, Harry!

Sir Harry. Sir.

Sir Hor. I cannot, upon the whole, tell very well what to make of you. Are you thoroughly convinced that you are, at this instant, legally capable of making your will?

Sir Harry. My will, sir!

Sir Hor. Ay, are you of sound mind?

Sir Harry. I believe so, sir.

Sir Hor. Then pray tell me, now, we have you face to face, what is your opinion of Miss Turnbull?

Sir Harry. Sir, that is by no means a question proper to be answered in this company.

Sir Hor. Paha! D—n your delicacy. Make your panegyric, and I'll blush for her and you, too.

Sir Harry. Sir, I have no panegyric to make.

Sir Hor. Sir!

Sir Harry. Even so.

Sir Hor. Why you impudent, confounded—Have you the barefaced effrontery, with such a picture before your eyes, to—

Sir Harry. You have applied the torture, and my own ease requires confession.

Sir Hor. Humph! And so you—Now, pray, all be attentive, for Bacon's brazen head is going to utter. So you do not think Miss Turnbull a most engaging—(*Sir Harry smiles.*)—Why, you intolerable—

Sir Harry. I am concerned to see you so serious on the subject. I must acknowledge, that in this case, sir, I have either a most perverse or stupid imagination, and, cannot, for the soul of me, discover the latent wonders in the young lady, which your better sight has so distinct a view of.

Sir Hor. Ha!

Sir Harry. I am, however, exceedingly willing to try the utmost strength of my faith, to believe as much as I can, and take the rest for granted; provided you will not inflict the punishment of a wife upon my superstition.

Sir Hor. Obliging youth! (*Bows.*) Inflict the punishment of a wife upon your superstition! And so you think, no doubt, a wife a burthen much too heavy for the back of so fine and pretty a town-made gentleman as yourself.

Sir Harry. With the addition of Miss Turnbull's accomplishments, I most undoubtedly do, sir.

Sir Hor. You do! Humph! Pray, most civil sir, permit me to ask—perhaps there may be some other lady in this good company, to whom your profound penetration would give the preference?

Sir Harry. If such preference could, in the least, make me deserving of her, I have no scruple to say there in.

Sir Hor. Miracle of modesty! There is?

Sir Harry. Most assuredly. But, though to possess the lady you hint at, would make me blessed beyond description, I have never dared to declare so much before, because I am conscious of being unworthy of such a profusion of charms and accomplishments.

Clara. Generous diffidence! (*Aside.*)

Sir Hor. Charms and—What the devil is all this? Where am I, at sea, or on shore? Have I a calcutrine in my brain, or is this my nose! They—they call you Sir Harry Portland, don't they, sir?

Sir Harry. And your nephew, sir.

Sir Hor. No; that's rather dubious. Well, then, Mr. Harry, or Sir Harry, or what you please, you are pretty well convinced, I suppose, that I have had some slight regard for you.

Sir Harry. Perfectly, sir, and remember it with gratitude.

Sir Hor. That remains to be proved, friend. Ever since your father's death, if I don't mistake, I have been tolerably busy, a little active, or so, in forming your mind and manners, and moulding you into a sort of being, a man might behold without blushing.

Sir Harry. It is impossible, sir, I should ever forget your goodness, though I am happy to be reminded of it.

Sir Hor. That's a lie, I believe. However, sir, among the rest of my cares, I was anxious to find a woman worthy of you; nay, so solicitous was I about adjusting preliminaries, that though the gout had laid an embargo upon a parcel of my fingers and toes, I resolved to forego my own ease, and set sail immediately, that I might convey you safe into the harbour of happiness.

Sir Harry. I am very sensible of the benevo-

lence of your intentions, sir, and only wish you had done me the honour to—

Sir Hor. Well, I have only a word or two more to say on the subject: I have been an enthusiastic old blockhead, 'tis true, and was fool enough to think all men had eyes; however, if you have not either the complaisance, the wit, or the love, to hit upon some expedient to make your peace with Miss Turnbull, I will never see, never know, never speak to you again. And now, sir, you will act as your great wisdom shall direct.

Sir Harry. Indeed, sir, I am distressed to see you so intent upon this business; I am exceedingly unhappy to do the least thing to incur your displeasure, at this moment especially: I have a thousand reasons to be dissatisfied with myself, and am grieved to add your anger to the list. I would do anything in my power to preserve your friendship and affection; but this is too severe a task; I cannot totally forget common sense: I cannot entirely command so delicate a passion as that of love. A little time will discover whether I am ever to think of love or happiness again! of this, however, I am certain, I never can possess either with Miss Turnbull. *[Exit.]*

Sir Hor. Indeed, youngster! so resolute!

Clara. What a noble fortitude! *(Aside.)*

Sir Hor. We shall see who will first read their recantation. An insensible, blind puppy! I'll be a greater torment to him, than a beadle to a beggar, a cat to a rat, or a candle to a moth: I'll singe his wings; I'll plague him worse than Moses did the Egyptians. *[her opinion.]*

Clara. Oh! Sir Hornet, you'll soon be of ano—

Sir Hor. Never, never, never!—*[Enter 'SQUIRE TURNBULL, unperceived.]*—However, let him act as he will, Miss Turnbull shall have no cause to repent her coming to London. *[sighs?]*

Miss T. What! will yo' take me to see the

Turn. Who the devil bade that goose cackle?

Sir Hor. A cursed idiot, or I have no skill in physiognomy.

Turn. What, Barbara! Ees, that her be, though no wool, neather: her do know better than to thatch her house wi' pancakes.

Sir Hor. Psha! Miss Turnbull! *(To Clara.)*

Miss T. Ees, I be here.

Sir Hor. Again! *(Takes Clara by the hand.)* Give me leave, I say, dear Miss Turnbull, to—

Vand. Eh! Sir Hornet!

Clara. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. Why, what— *[bull, sure?]*

Vand. You don't take my turtle for Miss Turn—

Sir Hor. Your turtle! I don't know what you mean by your turtle; but I take this young lady for Miss Turnbull, sure.

Vand. You do!

Sir Hor. Yes, I do. *(Vand. and Clara laugh.)* Why, what the devil—Eh!—why, sure—

Vand. Ha, ha, ha! This is a good joke.

Sir Hor. A good joke! Why, madam—'Squire—*Zounds!*—

Vand. Ha, ha, ha! I would not have missed this for a thousand pounds in new coined guineas.

Sir Hor. Mr. Turnbull, sir, is not this your *Turn. Zister!* *[sister, sir?]*

Sir Hor. Yes.

Turn. What thic!

Sir Hor. Yes.

Turn. Thic Barbara!

Sir Hor. Zounds! yes, I tell you.

Turn. Why, no, to be sure. Thic be Barbara!

Clara. Ha, ha, ha! *[fleeced.]*

Vand. Ha, ha, ha! the biter bit; the fleecer

Sir Hor. *(Whistles.)* Thic be Barbara!

Turn. Ees, thic be Barbara!

Miss T. Ees, I be Barbara.

Vand. Why, what a numskull your nephew is, Sir Hornet.

Sir Hor. Do you think so?

Vand. A blind, insensible puppy!

Sir Hor. Is he?

Vand. But you'll torment him; you'll singe his wings; you'll plague him worse than Moses did the Egyptians. What a discovery!

Sir Hor. Oh! yes; I have made more disco—

Vand. Ay, what are they? *[veries.]*

Sir Hor. Why the first is, you're an old fool; the next is, I am another; and the third is, that we are not the only fools in company.

[Exit, followed by Clara and Vand.]

Turn. Barbara.

Miss T. Ees.

Turn. How does thee like London?

Miss T. I knaw not; it do seem a strange place.

Turn. A strange place!

Miss T. Ees, I do think it be.

Turn. Thee dost?

Miss T. Ees.

Turn. An' zo do I; whereby, dost zee? I'll get out on't as vast as I can. A pretty chace, as the man said that rode vifty miles a'ter a wild goose. London! An thic be London, the devil take London. Come, pack up thy ribands an' vlappets, an' make thyzel ready.

Miss T. Neea, zure; you want go zo zoon.

Turn. Wunt I? An' I stay in thic town to-night, I'll eat it vor breakvast to-morrow.

Miss T. My gracious!

Turn. Come, come, don't stand manxing and dawdling, but make thyzel ready.

Miss T. Lard! why I a' zeen nothing yet.

Turn. No, nor nothing thee shalt zee, that I promise thee; zo stir thy stumps, I tell thee.

Miss T. My gracious! Mun I go down into t' country again like a vool, an' ha' nothing to say vor myzel?

Turn. Why, look thee, Barbara; come along; vor thee have come up like a vool, zo there can be no harm in thy going down like a vool. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Library in Sir Harry Portland's house.

SIR HARRY PORTLAND and TIMID discovered.

Timid. Indeed, sir, you have always been the best of masters to me.

Sir Harry. No, Timid, no; I have been a very weak, idle, fellow; and have put it out of my power to be a good master to any one.

Timid. Lackaday! Sir, don't say so; I am afraid I have been a bad servant; a very bad servant.

Sir Harry. Never.

Timid. Lackaday! sir, you don't know, you don't know! Lackaday! I thought all for the best.

Sir Harry. You have only done what I commanded.

Timid. To be sure, sir. But, lackaday! I wish I dared to open my mind to him. I am terrified; he will never believe me innocent. *(Aside.)*

Sir Harry. My ruin is all my own work. Here, Mr. Timid, take this ring and remember me; it may be the last present I shall ever make you.

Timid. Pray don't say so, sir. I am terrified.

Sir Harry. I am going to Mr. Osborne's.

Timid. To Mr. Osborne's!

Sir Harry. Yes, if you should not see me to-morrow morning; if any accident should happen—

Timid. Lackaday!

Sir Harry. Give the state of my affairs, which I ordered you to draw up, to my uncle, and this picture to Clara, the young lady that is with him.

Timid. Sir! What do you mean?

Sir Harry. Oh! nothing, nothing; I'm not very well. I—a slight swimming in my head, that's all; but there is no knowing what may happen.

Timid. Lackaday! Sir, you terrify me, you talk like a dying man making his will.

Sir Harry. No, no, not so; I have nothing to leave: and, as to dying, men must die; live as long as they can, they must all die at last.

Timid. Shall I go for Sir Hornet, or your sister, or the young lady?

Sir Harry. No; no young ladies for—Oh!

Timid. Lackaday! my heart aches.

Sir Harry. I am going to Mr. Osborne's presently.

Timid. Lackaday! I wish he knew—I'll take the mortgage of the Kentish estate; Mr. Osborne ordered me to bring it: I'll lay it open on Mr. Osborne's table. I hope my dear master will see it; I hope he will discover all. (*Aside.*)

Sir Harry. Heigho!

Timid. Dear sir, don't sigh so; don't look so: tell me what I can do to serve you, to oblige you, to make you happier?

Sir Harry. Nothing, nothing; past hope, past cure; quite, quite—

Timid. Lackaday!

Sir Harry. A thoughtless, profligate, idle, dissipated fellow. Oh! my head, my head!

Timid. I cannot bear to see him so. I'll hurry to Mr. Osborne's; I'll try if I can yet persuade him to be a true friend; I'll beg, I'll pray, I'll go down on my knees; I'll do anything. (*Exit.*)

Sir Harry. Clara! an angel! a cherub! And what am I? Well, well, it will soon be all over; there will be a sudden stop—a speedy end. (*Laughing without.*) So happy—Heaven—Heaven increase your joys! mine are for ever fled—light laughter, innocent smiles, and social mirth are fled for ever, for ever. Oh, folly! Oh, madness! (*Exit.*)

Enter SIR HORNET, VANDERVELT, and CLARA,
(*Laughing.*)

Sir Hor. Ay, ay, pray laugh, laugh heartily, I beseech you; I deserve, and I desire no mercy.

Clara. It is one of the oddest adventures.

Vand. How the deuce could you mistake that Miss Isabel, Miss Turnbull, for my turtle?

Sir Hor. Why, true, as you say, friend Van; but that happens to be a blunder which I never did, nor ever could make. I should as soon take myself for a king, or you for a conjuror. I only mistook this lady to be Miss Turnbull, not Miss Turnbull to be this lady.

Vand. Mistook Miss Turnbull and this lady, and—I don't understand it.

Clara. Be kind enough, Sir Hornet, to explain the matter.

Sir Hor. You remember, madam, I had some conversation with you in the rooms at Bath.

Clara. Perfectly.

Sir Hor. And you could not but perceive how forcibly I was struck with your wit, beauty, and accomplishments.

Clara. I recollect you were very polite, sir, and were pleased to say abundance of obliging things.

Sir Hor. Not half so many as I thought, I assure you, madam.

Vand. Well said, Sir Hornet. My old friend is quite enamoured with you, turtle.

Sir Hor. Yes, sir, so I am; though I do not intend to marry the lady.

Vand. Hem!

Sir Hor. My grand object, the thing that, of all others, I have most at heart, is to see my nephew, Sir Harry, happy; as for myself, I feel I am growing old apace, and am almost tired of the farce of life.

Vand. Why so, Sir Hornet? I am sure you play your part excellently.

Sir Hor. No, no; I am rolling down hill apace, and as the first steep declivity may precipitate me to the bottom, there are certain affairs I wish to see finished, one of which is the marriage of Sir Harry.

Clara. So the person you asked concerning me, when I went out of the rooms, mistook the question, and thought you meant Miss Turnbull?

Sir Hor. So it appears, madam; and I was too much enraptured to stay to rectify mistakes. When I negotiated the affair with 'Squire Turnbull, I studiously avoided an interview with his supposed sister, for fear the business should wear a face of precipitate indelicacy; and I thought if I could once bring you and Sir Harry together, I would leave the contingent possibilities to love, and the superior good qualities and penetration of the parties, which I, rationally enough, concluded could not fail to produce the desired effect.

Clara. But, Sir Hornet, how did it happen that you did not enquire of me myself who I was?

Sir Hor. Why, 'faith! madam, I had been so particular with you, and had spoken so freely on the subjects of love and matrimony, that I was afraid, if I made those kind of inquiries, you would mistake the matter, perhaps, and think I wanted to make love to you in my own proper person. Hey! young Van. (*Aside.*)

Vand. Heigho!

Clara. Oh! no, Sir Hornet, I assure you, I had a better opinion of your understanding.

Vand. Hem!

Sir Hor. Certainly, had I been capable of such a whim, I should have made myself cursedly ridiculous. Hey! young Van. (*Aside.*)

Clara. Beyond dispute!

Vand. Heigho!

Enter TIMID, looking wild and frightened.

Sir Hor. Heyday! What's the matter with you, old Lackaday?

Timid. I'm terrified; I'm terrified, I'm terrified!

Sir Hor. Terrified! What's the matter? Zounds! why don't you speak?

Timid. Lackaday! I can't, I can't speak.

Sir Hor. Make signs then.

Timid. I'm a miserable old man; I ran all the way to tell you—

Sir Hor. What?

Timid. Mr. Osborne!

Sir Hor. Mr. Osborne! What of him?

Timid. Lackaday! Sir Harry!

Clara. Heavens! A duel.

Timid. I have put my trust in man, and am deceived; I have lean'd upon a reed, and am fallen; I have seen the shadow of friendship and—

Sir Hor. Curse light on your metaphors; come to facts: What of Osborne? What of Sir Harry? Where are they? What have they done? What are they doing?

Timid. Gambling!

Sir Hor. How!

Timid. I was at Mr. Osborne's when Sir Harry came; I was there with the mortgage of the Kentish estate. Of what?

Timid. It was executed this very day; I am a miserable old man—all lost!

Sir Hor. Lost!

Timid. Lackaday! that's not all; I went into the next room and heard Sir Harry go to gaming with a gang of sharpers that were there on purpose; Sir Harry had lost everything he had in the world; Mr. Osborne has got all, all the mortgages of all his estates, I saw 'em, left 'em all in a box on his table.

Sir Hor. Mortgages of all his estates! Perdition! How did he get them? How came you to know?

Timid. Lackaday! I am terrified, I dare not tell; I am an accomplice! A wicked, innocent, miserable old man.

Sir Hor. D—n! Order the coach, there; I'll tear him to atoms; I'll rend him piecemeal—my poor boy—an intolerable villain! Dear madam, you don't know what I feel.

Clara. Pardon me, Sir Hornet, if you knew my heart, you would not say so; I detest the treachery of Mr. Osborne as much as you do; and, woman as I am, would risk my life to see it properly punished.

Sir Hor. A smooth-tongued, hypocritical villain, that owes his life to my boy.

Clara. Dear Sir Hornet, excuse my weakness; I am in the utmost terror—in dread of consequences still more fatal.

Timid. Lackaday! sir, so am I; I am terrified. Sir Harry gave me this ring for a remembrance, and bade me deliver this picture to you, madam.

Clara. (*Bursts into tears.*) It is his own.

Timid. He looked so melancholy, and so furious; he had his pistols.

Clara. His pistols! Oh! for pity's sake, Sir Hornet, let us fly.

Sir Hor. Instantly.

Timid. I'm a miserable old man. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—*Mr. Osborne's House.*

Enter SIR HARRY PORTLAND excessively agitated, followed by Osborne with a brace of pistols that he had wrested from him.

Osborne. How now, Sir Harry; what is the cause of this sudden phrenzy? Why expose your want of temper and fortitude thus to the company? You have driven them away, they are all going—

Sir Harry. Oh! horror!

Osborne. If you must wreak vengeance on yourself, let it be a becoming one at least.

Sir Harry. Insupportable horror!

Osborne. Fie, fie, recover your temper; be, or seem to be a man. What—You knew you were ruined before this event.

Sir Harry. Oh, Osborne! Oh, Melissa! I cannot speak—I cannot utter it; I'm a wretch—a villain, the meanest, the worst of villains, and infamy, eternal infamy is mine.

Osborne. Why, what have you done?

Sir Harry. Ruined you, ruined my sister.

Osborne. How!

Sir Harry. And branded myself, everlastingly, a villain. [Way!

Osborne. Ruined me! ruined your sister! which

Sir Harry. The money I have lost within.

Osborne. Well.

Sir Harry. Is her's—Is your's.

Osborne. Mine!

Sir Harry. Melissa's—her fortune—she put it into my hand this very day.

Osborne. D—n!

Sir Harry. Have compassion on me, give me the pistols, let me at once put an end to my misery and shame.

Osborne. Thoughtless, weak man! Do you think the momentary pang of death a sufficient punishment for the ruin and destruction you have entailed upon all those who have had the misfortune to love, or to be related to you? Do you think that to die, and to forget, at once, your infamy and crimes, is a compensation for the havoc you have made with the peace and property of those who were dearest to you, who must live to feel the effect of your vices, and bear, unjustly, the reproach of your abandoned conduct.

Sir Harry. Oh, torture!

Osborne. Was it not enough that you had reduced yourself, from affluence and honour, to contempt and beggary, but you must wantonly, wickedly, sport with what was not your own; and involve the innocent and unborn in your wretchedness? Shall not your sister's offspring, whom your intemperance shall have reduced to poverty and misery, detest your memory, and imprecate curses on your name?

Sir Harry. Oh, hell!

SIR HORNET ARMSTRONG speaks without, and afterwards enters, followed by CLARA and TIMID.

Sir Hor. Where are they? which is the room? So, Mr. Lucifer—could you decoy your friend to no other place to rob him, but your own house?

Osborne. Did you address yourself to me, Sir Hornet.

Sir Hor. Yes, I did, Sir Satan, and if—

Sir Harry. Dear sir, forbear; I alone am the proper object of anger—of vengeance—a wretch—a despised and miserable outcast; and bitterness and despair are deservedly my portion.

Sir Hor. You are a dupe, a poor fascinated fool; you have beheld the serpent's mouth open, have felt the influence of his poisonous breath, yet stupidly dropped into his ravenous jaws, and sung a requiem to your own destruction.

Osborne. You are liberal, sir, of your epithets and accusations. What do you mean by them?

Sir Hor. Horrible impudence! Have you not taken a vile, a rascally advantage of the want of temper in the man, for whom you professed the most perfect friendship? Have you not stripped him of his estate, by the most villainous arts, by plotting with Jews and scoundrels?

Osborne. You talk loud, sir. [was true.

Sir Harry. Osborne plotting! the better, then—

Sir Hor. Yes, plotting! He is the principal, the leader, of the hellish gang that has been plundering you.

Osborne. Well, sir! suppose it—What then?

Sir Hor. What then! Halts!

Osborne. Why so, sir? He has persisted in bringing destruction upon himself, and must suffer the effects of his obstinacy. What crime was there in my receiving what he was resolved to throw away? He had not been a month returned from his travels, before his passion for play made him the jest of every polite sharper in town. They saw there was an estate to be scrambled for, and every one was industrious to obtain a share. After squandering a part of his fortune among these adventurers, he engaged at play with me, and after losing one sum, was never easy till he had lost another. And then, to be accountable for his folly? [It is

Sir Harry. Infernal treachery! Dares he avow

Osborne. Dare! Yes, sir, I dare.

Clara. Righteous heaven! Is there no peculiar, no quick vengeance for ingratitude? (*Aside.*)

Sir Hor. The deeds, the annuities you have granted, the mortgages you have made, are in his possession; he owns he has them all.

Sir Harry. He!

Osborne. Yes, sir, I.

Sir Harry. Madness! Remember and beware, remember and tremble, though I have no longer the fortune of Sir Harry Portland, I have still Harry's spirit, and dare chastise insolence and perfidy.

Osborne. No doubt; the man who is rash enough to risk his estate upon the chance of a die, has, generally, valour enough to wish to cut the winner's throat. Friendship is no protection.

Clara. Friendship! Monstrous prostitution! Friendship! Deeds, Mr. Osborne, are the best proofs of friendship, and that preacher will gain but little credit who is a detected villain, while he is describing the fitness and beauty of moral virtues.

Sir Hor. Friendship! Where are the deeds, the mortgages?

Osborne. There they are, sir. (*Points to a box.*) They are mine; the annuities he has granted, and the mortgages he has made are mine; his effects are mine, his houses are mine, his estates are mine, his notes are mine, his all is mine, except his poverty and spirit, which, as he says, are his own.

Sir Harry. Heavens! must I bear this?

Sir Hor. Oh! for ratsbane or hemp.

Osborne. Nay more, sir: (*To Sir Harry.*) I was not only aware, but certain of my own superior ad-

dress, or I had not been weak enough to have risked any part of my fortune. I have not yet acquired your terrible contempt for riches; as it was, I used every art to stimulate and incite you to play; took every advantage, studied every trick, improved every lucky chance, and rejoiced at every and all of your losses, till I had you totally in my power; I beheld distress accumulating on your head, and was happy at it; remarked the agitation of your mind, and increased it; saw the infirmity of your temper, and aggravated it.

Sir Harry. D—n! Are you a man?

Osborne. Try me.

Sir Harry. Dare you give me the satisfaction—the revenge of a man?

Osborne. I'll give it you instantly, sir. (*As Sir Harry goes to go, Osborne seizes his arm, and before he speaks, his countenance changes from assumed anger and contempt, to the most tender and expressive friendship.*) There, there lies your revenge! there is your satisfaction! Take them, remember your former folly, and be happy.

Sir Harry. Sir!

Sir Hor. What?

Clara. Astonishment!

Osborne. Why do you seem surprised? My heart is your's, my life is your's! I owe you everything; a debt which never can be repaid, and never will be forgotten. When sinking beneath the murderous hand of villainy, it was the benevolent ardour of your soul, it was the intrepid valour of your arm that rescued me!

Sir Harry. Generous friend!

Osborne. In that box is contained all that I have ever won of you, and almost all you have ever lost. I have become an associate with sharpers to protect you from them; and, by sacrificing a little, have preserved the rest. I have worn the mask till it has become too painful, and now gladly cast it off. If my countenance have yet a dubious appearance, have a witness that will be instantly credited.—*(He goes to the chimney-door, and calls Melissa.)*

My sister!

Sir Harry. Sister! Osborne!

Clara. Oh, my heart!

Sir Hor. (*After a pause.*) Tol de rol!

Osborne. Look! I'm a happy old man! He's dead, he's a true friend! I'm a happy old man!

Sir Harry. Can you, too, sister, forgive my folly? you that I have injured so unpardonably?

Mel. Dear brother, you are not so guilty as you suppose. It was a plot upon you; you were led into it, to show you what a losing gamester is capable of!

Sir Hor. Harkye, sir! (*To Osborne.*) All the mortgages and deeds are there, you say?

Osborne. All, sir; together with whatever money I had, at any time, been won of him, since I have been concerned in this transaction.

Sir Hor. All in that box?

Osborne. All.

Clara. I'm a happy old man!

Sir Harry. My dear uncle!

Sir Hor. Let me alone—Tol de rol!—(*Goes to Osborne, and takes his hand.*) Will you forgive me, Osborne? will you—will you forgive my boy?

Sir Harry. (*Takes Osborne's other hand.*) Osborne—I cannot speak—

Clara. Indeed, Mr. Osborne, I don't know how to tell you what I think. Esteem, admiration, are most expressions to convey my feelings. I have been mistaken and to blame. I trembled for Sir Harry; I condemned you; and wrote a letter—

Sir Harry. Dear madam, was that letter your's?

Clara. It was.

Sir Harry. How much obliged am I to you, and

Clara. I am sorry; I was to blame.

Osborne. Nay, madam; nobody was to blame. And now, dear Harry, suffer me to say one word: let this transaction be a powerful, an everlasting memorial to you. Remember the blood that has been spilt in the moment of passion and distress, in consequence of indulging in this abominable vice; remember the distracted wife and widow's curse, the sting of desperation, and the red and impious hand of suicide! Despise the folly that made the practice fashionable; oppose its destructive course; and for ever shun, for ever abominate, the detestable vice of gaming.

Sir Harry. Professions of resolution from me, Osborne, come with an ill grace. I am ashamed of my folly: I despaired, even while I practised it; but the punishment you have inflicted has been so judicious, so severely generous, I think I can safely say there is no probability of a relapse.

Sir Hor. Well, but, Harry, turn about—look at this lady; surely, you have not forgotten Miss Turnbull, have you?

Sir Harry. Your Miss Turnbull, sir, I shall never forget.

Sir Hor. Oh! what you have heard the renowned history of my Bath adventure?

Sir Harry. I have, sir.

Sir Hor. Well, and what say you to—eh! my cherub? You told me, you know, you had no aversion to the fellow.

Clara. Nay, Sir Hornet, is that the part of a confidante?

Sir Hor. Why, yes, it is; for, as I take it, a confidante is but a kind of a go-between to bring the parties together—And here comes the blooming youth—[*Enter VANDERVELT.*—here comes Johannes de Temporibus to second the motion.

Vand. To second what motion, Sir Hornet?

Sir Hor. An hymeneal motion.

Vand. Can't tell. Who are the candidates?

Sir Hor. Harry Portland and Clara Forester.

Vand. Hold, hold! Sir Hornet, not so fast! that lady is my ward. [*wife.*]

Sir Hor. Yes, and may, if she please, be your Vand. Nay, I—I did not say so, Sir Hornet.

Sir Hor. No, but I did, young Van. But, harkye! (*takes him aside*) resign all your silly pretensions peaceably, throw your worthies into the fire, and give up the lady to her lover; or you shall be held up, in terror, an object of ridicule, to frighten all the dangling, whining, old fools in Christendom, who are turned of three-score.

Vand. Well, well, speak in a lower key.

Sir Hor. May I be certain of your consent, then?

Vand. Why, yes, yes—Heigho!

Sir Hor. Dear madam, this worthy, old gentleman, your guardian, most humbly implores you would have pity upon Sir Harry.

Clara. Did you say so, papa?

Vand. Me! no.

Sir Hor. How!

Vand. Not in those exact words; but something very like it, turtle. Heigho!

Mel. Come, my dear Clara, let me have the happiness to call you sister.

Osborne. Let me intercede, madam.

Clara. Psha! here is everybody interceding, but him that can intercede most to the purpose.

Sir Harry. Forgive me, dearest Clara! my fate is suspended on your lips; and I am so conscious of unworthiness, and so much affected by the fear of a severe sentence, that I have not power to plead for mercy.

Clara. Yes; but you have a partial, tender-hearted judge.

Sir Hor. Ay, "and a wise young judge," too.

Clara. Well, well! I cannot dissimble. A generous heart, a noble mind, are seldom met and seldom merited. When happiness like this presents itself, to reject is not to deserve it. [*Exeunt.*]

THE BASHFUL MAN;

A COMIC DRAMA—BY W. T. MONCRIEFF.



Act II.—Scene 4.

CHARACTERS.

SIR THOMAS FRIENDLY
DOCTOR STARCH
BLUSHINGTON

FRANK FRIENDLY
GYF
SERVANTS

LADY FRIENDLY
DAME PHYLLIS STRAITLOUGH
MISS DINAH

ACT I.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in Friendly Hall.

Enter SIR THOMAS and LADY FRIENDLY.

Sir T. I tell you, my lady, I am convinced I am right. The girl is positively struck—

Lady F. Struck with such an immovable creature as Mr. Blushington. Impossible, Sir Thomas! Why, they have never spoken to one another; never seen one another—except at church nay, I don't think that he has ever seen her even there, for he never looks at anything but his prayer-book.

Sir T. While you and most of the congregation generally look at everything—but your prayer-books. No matter for that, Dinah is smitten with him, I'm certain. I watched her narrowly all last Sunday; and, during the whole of the service, she never had her thumb off the page of matrimony, nor her eyes off the young fellow.

Lady F. He is certainly very well endowed in point of figure.—

Sir T. Which will satisfy, Dinah; and very well endowed in point of fortune, which will satisfy us: so the sooner we make it a match the better.

Lady F. True; but how is it to be brought about?

Sir T. Leave that to my management: you know how well I manage things. I'll send him an invitation to dine with us, introduce him to the girl; and, once together, they'll settle the business by themselves, much quicker than we can settle it for them, I'll be bound.

Lady F. But he has so much *mauvaise honte*, so much timidity about him!

Sir T. Dinah will soon rid him of all that: 'tis merely the fault of his education. Recollect, he

was bred up with no expectations; was sent poor scholar to Cambridge, was never introduced into society; and now, by the death of his father and uncle, he is, all at once, left as rich as a bob, and perfectly his own master! Why, it is enough to overturn any head! I don't know, with all my management, if even I should have been able to have continued perfectly myself, under such circumstances. I'll go and send the invitation directly.

Lady F. Well, as you like, my dear Sir Thomas. As he has so large an estate, it will certainly be but kind of us to marry him into the family: he may get into improper hands else—and if Dinah is in love with him, it would be cruel in us to baulk the poor girl's fancy!

Sir T. Very true, my love. We'll not lose a moment about it. Poor young man! I really feel for his unprotected situation! His fortune must be taken care of: he must marry Dinah. Yes, yes; I'll manage the thing at once. Come, my lady—Oh! hang this gout! [Exit.

SCENE II.—Library in Blushington House.

Enter BLUSHINGTON and GYP.

Blush. 'Tis of no use your attempting to persuade me, I shall not go out this morning, Gyp.

Gyp. Let me prevail on you, sir; do rub off the rust a little bit amongst your country neighbours. Consider, sir, you are not at college now, that you're to shut yourself up, day after day, amongst a parcel of musty old books. Come, sir, do venture abroad.

Blush. 'Tis impossible, Gyp; my bashfulness was born with me: I was almost too ashamed to come into the world; teased my poor mother terribly through it. When a boy, behind my father's

counter, my cursed modesty rendered me perfectly useless: I could never master up courage enough to look anybody in the face, and committed all sorts of blunders; gave the customers sand for salt, salt for sugar, and brick-dust for Cayenne.

Gyp. Common, every-day mistakes, sir; occur in the best regulated shops.

Blush. That's not all: I served them vinegar for small beer, and fly-water for ketchup; so finding me good for nothing, father thought the best thing he could do with me, was to send me to college; where I went a poor scholar, and have returned a rich ignoramus.

Gyp. The death of your father and uncle, sir, have left you nothing to desire, in point of wealth. Zounds! sir, take heart. What have you to fear?

Blush. Nothing, and yet everything. Go out in the open air, in broad day? Impossible! Whenever I sally forth, I imagine all eyes are fixed upon me, and am ready to start at every post I meet, fearing it may be some great man.

Gyp. Nothing unnatural, sir. Posts and great men are pretty inseparable now-a-days.

Blush. As if my bashfulness wasn't enough to perplex me, I must be plagued with the curse of near-sightedness: can't see an inch beyond my nose; nay, sometimes, not so far. Then I can't wear spectacles, conscious I am spectacle enough without; and as to using a quizzing-glass, that would make me the quiz of the whole county. This subjects me to all sorts of mistakes. 'Twas but the other day, I pulled off my hat to a shabby genteel beggar, and requested the honour of his acquaintance; and directly after that, gave a shilling to the rich banker of the next town, telling him I particularly liked to relieve distressed tradesmen.

Gyp. Rich bankers don't unfrequently come under that denomination. But consider, sir, a tall, fresh-looking gentleman like you, only five and twenty, with a thorough knowledge of the classics, and a lovely fortune—zounds! sir, your company will be courted by all the families of consequence for miles round.

Blush. Yes, that have marriageable daughters. Think I certainly am rather good looking, Gyp?

Gyp. Why, yes, sir; we don't want for beauty.

Blush. Ah! sir, only take the advice of your faithful Gyp. You've no better friend, sir; no, not even in your tutor, Doctor Starch; nor your maiden aunt, Dame Phillippa Straitlaced. Consider how carefully I always made your bed at college—

Blush. And stole my tea and sugar, Gyp: I do!

Gyp. I'm a sincere well-wisher, sir. How passionately I used to call you up to prayers in a morning!

Blush. And pocket half my candles while I was gone. I remember it well, Gyp. Haven't I rewarded you for it, by placing you at the head of my domestics?

Gyp. Yes, sir; made me own gentleman and private secretary.

Blush. I can do things very well when I'm by myself. I'm sure, I uttered as fine an oration the other day, to the Chinese mandarin over my chimney-piece as man would wish to hear; I spoke with such fire and force, that, hang me, if they didn't keep nodding their heads in approbation for above half-an-hour afterwards; and as for making love, you should have seen me with the plaster of Paris Venus, on our staircase, yesterday; but when I came to the real thing, somehow—

Gyp. It's just like bathing sir; one plunge, and the thing's done. Do just go out for a short walk, now, if it's only to try over your new bow, that I've got the dancing-master to teach you; as there is nothing like practice to familiarize you to the company of distinguished characters. Suppose me one.

Blush. Well, just by way of practice, I don't care if I do, for once.

Gyp. 'Tis well said. Now, then, first position! How lucky it was for you, I found out the professor who undertook to teach grown gentlemen to dance so easily. Mind you don't fall, sir! The few private lessons you've taken of him, have done you a world of good. Now, then, sir, you're to take me for a duke. You're advancing to address me. Second position: you wish to kiss my hand. Third position: I look on you towards me. Fourth position: you are coming—

Blush. (Stumbling.) No, I a'n't; I'm going.

Gyp. Fifth position—

Enter JOHN.

John. A letter from Sir Thomas Friendly Baronet, sir.

Blush. (Kicking Gyp.) Zounds! Gyp, rascal! you are making me expose myself again.

Gyp. Pardon me, sir; but you raised your foot rather too high for the fifth position, then!

Blush. Will you be quiet, sir? A letter from Sir Thomas Friendly! Bless my soul! I'm all in a tremble! Then for John to see me in such a situation! I'm crinisoning like a carnation! Who brought it, John?

John. One of Sir Thomas's boys, sir.

Blush. Why haven't you asked the gentleman to walk in?

John. Walk in, my lad.

Enter NICK.

Blush. (To Nick.) I'm sure, I beg ten thousand pardons for keeping you waiting. Have the goodness to take a chair, sir.

Nick. With all my heart, sir. What a civil gentleman! I'll take a chair, and anything else you like to give me besides.

Blush. Ay, very true; certainly, by all means. How could I be so neglectful! Give the gentleman a glass of wine, John.

Nick. If it makes no difference to you, sir, I'd rather have ale.

Blush. By all means. How could I make such a mistake! I declare I'm quite ashamed. Take Sir Thomas's gentleman into the cellar, John, and give him some ale.

John. I will, sir; and I'll take myself there, too. What's good for the goose—This way, Sir Thomas's gentleman. [Exit John and Nick.]

Blush. How very ill-bred of me not to behave better. A letter from Sir Thomas Friendly! What can he have to say to me? Dear, dear! if I a'n't quite afraid to look at it! Open it, Gyp; open it, and read.

Gyp. I will sir.—“Sir Thomas, Lady Friendly, and Miss Dinah's best compliments to Mr. Blushington; they can take no denial of his company at dinner, to meet a select party at Friendly Hall to-day. Dancing in the evening.”

Blush. What's to be done?—“Can take no denial!”

Gyp. No; so you see you must go.

Blush. “Dancing in the evening, too!”

Gyp. Yes; you've just learnt in time. It will give you an opportunity to shew off the fifth position, eh, sir!

Blush. Then Miss Dinah, the pretty young lady I took a sly peep at, from under my hat, last Sunday, when I entered church. Oh! I'm in agonies!

Gyp. Ah! there's an inducement! What a partner for you! Oh! you must go!

Blush. Must I? Was there ever anything so embarrassing! Do, my dear Gyp, give me your advice. If I could but get over the first introduction, I wouldn't so much mind.

Gyp. Suppose you were to arrange a few sentences in your mind, before-hand, to deliver to Sir Thomas, on your first meeting. Something

after this fashion: I'll suppose that I am you; you observe my manner; no embarrassment about me; you see how easy and free I am!

Blush. Yes, free enough, I must own!

Gyp. There's nothing like it, sir: only copy me.—“My dear Sir Thomas, I exceedingly rejoice in this opportunity of becoming acquainted with you; and trust this meeting will prove the means of cementing a long and agreeable intimacy. Hope Lady F. is well, and all the small F.'s.” There, sir! what do you think of that, in a pair of silk-stockings and pumps; standing in the fifth position, after your best bow, eh?

Blush. Why, I think it will make an impression.

Gyp. It will do the business, sir. I'll go and get your things ready to dress directly; for it will soon be time to be off.

Blush. Dear me, I wish it wasn't so late, and that I had a little leisure to prepare myself. But, hang it! I'll take heart for once. I can walk now without tottering; and, thanks to the mathematics, know the equilibrium of my body, and the due adjustment of the centre of gravity to the five positions, as well as any one; so I'm determined I'll conquer my timidity, and go. Let me run over it: “My dear Thomas—rejoice—this meeting—better acquaintance—reciprocal intimacy—little F.'s—” It's all right; I shall be able to get through it!

Gyp. Nothing can be better. This way, my dear sir; this way. Lady Friendly and Miss Dinah will be delighted to see you; they'll say—(As they are going very ceremoniously out, they run against John and Nick, who are entering, rather the worse for the cellar.)

Nick. Anything to go back, your honour?

Gyp. Go back? zounds! you're sending us back.

Blush. Oh, dear! oh, dear! I beg ten thousand pardons, sir; I really didn't mean any incivility.

John. The young man's had some ale, sir, and wants to know if there's any answer to go back.

Blush. This unlucky rencontre has upset all—me into the bargain. I shall never be able to summon resolution, after this, Gyp. Suppose I had run bump up against my Lady Friendly and Miss Dinah, in this manner, what would they have thought?—He'd better say I can't come.

Gyp. I'll tell him so, sir. You're to give my master's compliments, and say he'll come. You can't retract, sir. Make haste, that Sir Thomas may have time to get everything ready, and receive us with proper ceremony.

Blush. Ceremony! I shall expire with confusion. You'll be the death of me, Gyp. I shall never be able to muster courage again: it's no use attempting.

Gyp. Nonsense, sir; take a little breath. What are you waiting for! Go directly, and say my master's coming.

Nick. Oh! I'll go. Main strong ale!—Good b'ye, Mr. John; shall be glad to see you at the Hall, any time, in return: rare good stingo there!

Blush. Why, he can't stand! Why don't you assist the gentleman to the door, John?

John. Oh! I'll assist him, sir, never fear.

[Both stagger off.]

Blush. I shall never be able to look Sir Thomas in the face, after this. What will he think of my making his gentleman drunk?

Gyp. Think, sir! why, he'll make you drunk in return. You couldn't have taken a heartier way of expressing your pleasure at receiving his invitation. At all events, you must keep your word: so, go and dress at once: your pumps are all ready. This way.

Blush. You'll be the ruin of me: I shall never survive it! How could I ever consent to go! Dinner; after that, comes the dessert; and I shall get kicked out. Eat before half-a-dozen people! zounds! I shall be afraid they are going

to eat me. It won't do, Gyp; I sha'n't be able to open my mouth. I shall be as mute as a ood-fish: they'll take me for the salamander. It won't do! Oh, dear! oh, dear!

Gyp. You must go, sir: there can be no refusing. This way, sir.

[Exit Blushington, hurried off by Gyp.]

SCENE III.—An Apartment in Friendly Hall.

Enter DINAH and FRANK FRIENDLY.

Frank. And so, sister Di, you've fallen in love with my old fellow-collegian, Ned Blushington, have you? Truly, I admire your choice. Ned is young and healthy, rich, and well-studied: a girl can't well desire more. There's only one thing: by the lord! you must court him; for he'll never be able to muster up courage enough to court you! Let me see: it isn't leap-year this year, is it? That's unfortunate!

Dinah. Dear brother, how you talk!—

Frank. Nay, nay; confess it: 'tis useless your attempting to conceal it; 'tis written in every action, every feature. Love, like smoke, (alas! too like it, too fleeting in its stay,) cannot be concealed. Sister, you love!

SONG.

*Sister dear, that downcast eye;
Sister dear, that trembling sigh;
That pearly tear's soft flow;
That bosom's trembling glow;
That wild and hurried air;
Thy young heart's truth declare:
Sister dear, too plain they prove
You love!*

*Sister dear, that cheek's warm blush;
Sister dear, that timid flush;
The tear that downward steals;
Far more than speech reveals;
Thy silence even tells
All in thy heart that dwells:
Sister dear, too plain they prove
You love!*

Dinah. I'll revenge myself on you, one of these days, when Miss Wright comes to town!

Frank. With all my heart. Poor Ned! You'd call him the deepest red scholar in the college; because he always coloured so at everything; in fact, we laughed at him, till he became so timid, that the whole town styled him the sensitive plant of Brazen Nose. Well Di, you shall not want for my assistance in urging him on to declare himself. I think he has a sneaking kindness for you.

Dinah. La! Frank, I declare you make one quite ashamed.

Frank. And I'm sure there's no occasion for that; he'll be plenty ashamed for both. I must assist him. Yes, with such fine sporting-ground as he has, he'll make a charming brother-in-law: we shall agree famously. I'll keep his game in order for him; for, notwithstanding all his opportunities, hang me! if I think he can boast the achievement of a pair of horns yet. But marriage will improve him: he'll do better, then.

Dinah. What a rattle you are, Frank! But let us get out of the way. Our worthy father will be here soon: he's with Evans, the butler; no doubt, giving him directions about to-day; for I think I heard him say he had asked Mr. Blushington to dinner. I'm sure I don't know what possesses you all about the poor man; teasing one. It's mighty foolish, that I must say.

Frank. Yes, but mighty pleasant, for all that. It shall be a match! 'Tis no use your tongue denying you love him; for your eyes confess it, and they're the only true oracles in love. 'Tis no disgrace to you, Di: so, look up, girl! and rely on the affection of a brother.

SCENE V.—Library in Friendly Hall. *At the back, a handsome rose-wood table, on which is a head of Hercules and an elegant ink-stand; over that, on a sort of shelf, a superb edition of Xenophon, in sixteen volumes.*

Enter SIR THOMAS and LADY FRIENDLY.

Lady F. But why not receive Mr. Blushington in the great drawing-room, Sir Thomas?

Sir T. There's my management, my lady! Being a scholar, Mr. Blushington will feel, at once, the delicacy of the compliment I pay him, by first introducing him to the library; besides, the apparent number of books he will see here, will give him a high opinion of my erudition: there's management again? Wouldn't any one think, to look at it, that was really a fine edition of Xenophon, in folio; instead of which, it's merely a deal-board, covered with some gilded leather, for the maids to put their pails and brushes behind. All my contrivance! But, mum! here he comes. Oh! this plaguy gout!—But I must get up, and receive him.

Enter BLUSHINGTON, pushed on by GYP; preceded by EVANS, and followed by NICK and Servants.

Evans. Mr. Blushington, Sir Thomas.

Blush. Don't leave me, Gyp; the awful moment has arrived.

Sir T. Mr. Blushington, I rejoice to meet you.

Gyp. Fifth position, sir. *(Blushington in endeavouring to put himself into an attitude, stumbles and pitches on Sir Thomas's gouty foot.)*—Oh! confound the fellow, he's murdered me. *(Aside.)*

Blush. You infernal scoundrel, Gyp! you've made me tread Sir Thomas's toe off. My dear Sir Thomas, I beg ten thousand pardons; but—but—

Sir T. No apologies, I beg: these little accidents will happen. It's over, now: yes, as we scholars say, its gone in toto.

Gyp. All's right, sir!—Now for the speech. *(Apart to Blush.)*

Blush. *(Apart to Gyp.)* My tongue sticks to my throat: I couldn't utter a syllable to save my life.

Sir T. Allow me to introduce you to Lady Friendly. Lady Friendly, Mr. Blushington—

Blush. Happy—proud—dinner—sorry—acquaintance—

Sir T. Ay, ay; well thought of. Go, varlets, and hurry the dinner. No giggling, fussies!—Away!—*(Exit Nick and Servants.)*—Evans, take Mr. Blushington's man into the pantry, and make him welcome.

Blush. Oh, dear! no; no occasion for that, Sir Thomas. Lord bless me! don't leave me, Gyp. What shall I do by myself, if they take my only prop away. *(Aside to Gyp.)*

Gyp. Courage, sir! you get on famously. I must go, you see—can't help it. *(Aside to Blushington.)* Poor fellow!

Evans. This way, if you please; sir.

Blush. What will become of me! without guide or rudder! I'm lost!

Sir T. Take a chair, Mr. Blushington: you seem warm.

Blush. *(Aside.)* I'm frying!

Sir T. You perceive, Mr. Blushington, we're like you—dabble in literature a little; smack of the classics a bit!

Blush. The classics: I can launch out here; I'm on safe ground. Yes, Sir Thomas—certainly—by all means.

Sir T. Delightful study. I fagged d—d hard at college, Mr. Blushington; and was, I can assure you, very near being elected senior wrangler.

Blush. I don't doubt it. I chafe like a bull. *(Aside.)*

Lady F. We are all great readers, Mr. Blushington; my daughter Dinah in particular; before she was twelve years old, she had gone twice through "The Complete Housewife," and "The

Whole Duty of Man." You'll suit one another to a T. in that respect.

Blush. Hum! Oh, yes, certainly, my lady, by all means; though I can't say I've been through "The Whole Duty of Man," and "The Complete Housewife." They're rather ignorant: I must astonish them a little bit, with the extent of my learning. I begin to get more courage than I thought for. Yes, I'll surprise them now. *(Aside.)* Bless me, that's a very remarkable edition of Xenophon there—sixteen volumes folio: allow me to examine it. *(Getting up.)*

Sir T. *(Rising.)* Stop, stop, my dear Mr. Blushington, I—

Blush. Oh! Sir Thomas, I couldn't think of giving you the trouble. *(Goes, as he supposes, to lay hold of one of the volumes, when the board falls down on the slab, breaks the Hercules's head, and upsets the ink-stand.)* Hey! what the devil have I done? what the devil shall I do? I beg ten thousand pardons, Sir Thomas; upon my soul I didn't mean to do it. If I'd known it had only been sham—bless me! here's all the ink down too. Oh, dear! Oh, dear! what an accident.

Lady F. I thought what would come of your management, Sir Thomas. Where's a cloth? the table will be spoiled!

Blush. Here's a cloth, my lady. *(Takes his white cambric handkerchief and begins wiping up the ink.)* Bless me! I'm inking my handkerchief. *(Folds up the handkerchief, the ink pat inside, and puts it in his pocket.)* Excuse my awkwardness, my lady: I—I—oh, lord! that I could but run away. If Gyp was but here!

Enter EVANS.

Evans. Dinner's on table, Sir Thomas.

Blush. Here's a relief, then. I'm in a furnace.

Sir T. I won't have another word on the subject; there's no harm done; only the cover taken off the books, Hercules's head broke, and Mr. Blushington's handkerchief stained. You've received no material contusion yourself, I hope, my dear young friend?

Blush. Oh, dear, no! I'm in no material confusion at all: quite cool, I assure you. I wish I could jump out of the window. Mount Vesuvius is an ice-house to this. *(Aside.)*

Sir T. Come along, then, and I'll introduce you at once to Dinah and dinner.

Blush. More trials! what shall I have to go through next? Heaven preserve me! Lady Friendly, allow me to offer my arm. *(Offers his arm to Evans by mistake, and lugs him off unknowingly.)*

Sir T. I'll take your other wing, as I'm rather lame. Stop, stop. Eh! zounds! you young fellows are so brisk. I can't run races now. Why, curse me if he hasn't carried off the butler! *(Exit.)*

SCENE VI.—The great Dining-room in Friendly Hall; tables laid out for dinner.

Enter DINAH and FRANK.

Frank. Now, then, Di, for the important moment. A'nt you all in a twitter?

Dinah. La, Frank, how you do go on! Has Evans summoned the family to dinner yet?

Frank. He is gone now. Poor Ned! I can well conceive the agony he is in at this moment; blushing like a full-blown rose, every step he takes. Hey! here they come.

Enter SIR THOMAS, LADY FRIENDLY, and BLUSHINGTON; followed by EVANS, GYP, NICK, and Servants.

Ha! my dear Blushington! Welcome, welcome! I rejoice to meet a fellow cantab, a brother soph, once again. Allow me to introduce you to my sister. Brother Soph, sister Di.; sister Di. brother Soph.

Blush. Thankye my dear fellow, thankye—hope you're well with all my heart and soul. *(Advances*

timidly, and, without looking towards Dinah, shakes her heartily by the hand, supposing her to be young Friendly.)

Sir T. Eh! that's Dinah. This is Frank.

Blush. Happy to see you, miss—hope you're quite well, miss. (*Bowing to Frank, who has taken Dinah's place, supposing him to be Dinah.*)

Frank. Nay, nay; here's Dinah.

Blush. Oh! yes, certainly—by all means. Another mistake. (*Aside.*) Extremely proud, Mr. Friendly—great honour—happy—see—Miss Dinah—

Dinah. Very gratified, Mr. Blushington, to have the honour of meeting any friend of my brother.

Sir T. But come, take your places; the dinner's getting cold. Mr. Blushington, you will sit by my daughter.

Blush. Yes, certainly; by all means—that is—oh! with great pleasure. What will become of me? that d—d Xenophon. I feel my cheeks burning like a firebrand; and misfortunes never come alone. (*Aside.*) Dear me; if I hav'n't taken the young lady's chair: beg pardon. (*After some blunders on the part of Blushington, with the chairs, they sit down to dinner; he first, by seating himself in Dinah's place, mistakes the Baronet and his lady sit at the back, fronting the audience; Frank on one side, and Dinah and Blushington on the outside, nearest the audience, so that they can see the motions of all parties.*)

Sir T. Now, then, Mr. Blushington, allow me to send you some soup, and you, Dinah; 'tis turtle, and fit for young lovers.

Blush. You're very good—a little drop—I'm getting somewhat cool now, if it does but last. (*Aside.*) Bread, Miss Dinah; allow me to help you. Eh! bless me; if I hav'n't knocked over the salt. Oh, dear! oh, dear! Excuse my awkwardness, miss. I'm at it again. (*Aside.*)

Dinah. Don't mention it, I beg; 'tis not of the slightest consequence. We are not in the least superstitious here.

Sir T. Throw a little over your left shoulder, Mr. Blushington. (*Blushington in throwing some of the salt over his left shoulder, almost blinds Nicholas, who is standing behind him with his mouth open, and receives it in his face; endeavouring to amend the error, he then salutes Sir Thomas in a similar manner, and, in his confusion, tilts his plate of hot soup into his lap.*)

Blush. Oh, dear! Oh, dear!

Sir T. Hey! sounds, what's the matter now?

Nick. 'Squire ha' tilted the hot soup over his breeches, Sir Thomas.

Sir T. Dear! dear! what an accident. Some clean cloths, rascal.

Lady F. It's always unlucky to upset the salt. I thought something fatal would happen through it.

Dinah. I hope no material injury is likely to result from this, Mr. Blushington!

Frank. You hav'n't completely scalded yourself. Nothing fatal, is there Ned? Why don't you bring some napkins, Nicholas.

Blush. I musn't appear to mind it, though I am more than three parts boiled. (*Aside.*) Not at all—not at all—'tis a mere trifle.

Nick. I'll wipe you down, sir. Nothing shall be spoiled: your silks will be as good as ever with a little washing. It hasn't taken the skin off, has it, sir? There, now you're as well as if nothing had happened.

Blush. (*Aside.*) As well as if nothing had happened, after such a fomentation as this. Why my thighs seem stewing in a boiling cauldron.

Dear! oh, dear! if anybody would but chuck me into the New River now,

Sir T. Here, Nicholas, take away the soup. You don't wish for any more, do you Mr. Blushington?

Blush. Not a drop, I can assure you.

Sir T. No; I think we've had enough. Shall I trouble you to cut up that capon?

Blush. Carve a capon! Lord bless me, I couldn't carve a cabbage; but I must not let them see my ignorance. I must try and bask it somehow. (*Aside.*) Oh, yes; certainly, by all means. Eh! there, if I haven't knocked over the butter-boat. Nothing but misfortunes. Oh! that I could but hide myself for ever from the light of day!

Lady F. Allow me, Mr. Blushington. You young bachelors are not so used to carving as us old married folks: Dinah is as awkward at carving as any one. Matrimony is the only thing to make good carvers.

Blush. Certainly; by all means! Your ladyship is extremely good.—I'd give a thousand pounds if dinner was but once well over. (*Aside.*)

Frank. Mr. Blushington, Dinah will take a glass of wine with you.

Blush. Oh! yes, certainly; by all means! Lord bless me! Shall I take the liberty, miss?

Dinah. I beg your pardon, Mr. Blushington, but that is the vinegar cruet you have in your hand; these are the bucellas.

Blush. Ask ten thousand pardons, I'm sure; but my sight—(*takes hold of a jug of beer.*)

Dinah. No; that is the beer.

Blush. True; yes, certainly; by all means! that is the beer: this is the wine. Very laughable! Can't think how I can make so many mistakes! Am extremely happy to nob and hob—that is, hob and nob.

Sir T. Let me recommend a piece of this pudding, Mr. Blushington: you'll find it uncommonly good; I can assure you, I do.

Blush. Oh! yes; certainly, by all means. (*Sir Thomas helps Blushington to some pudding; he cuts a piece, and is about to put it into his mouth.*)

Dinah. Shall I trouble you for a part of that widgeon, Mr. Blushington?

Blush. Oh! yes; certainly, by all means. (*Pops the piece of pudding into his mouth.*) Eh! oh! ah! I—my mouth! my mouth!—fire! water!—I'm burnt! I'm—oh! ah! eh!

Sir T. God bless me!—Ah! there's nothing so bad as hot pudding. Some water there, Nicholas!

Lady F. No; oil is the best for drawing out fire; Sir Thomas. The poor, young man is full of accidents!

Dinah. If I might advise Mr. Blushington, I would recommend wine.

All. Ay, ay; a glass of sherry.

Frank. Nicholas, bring a glass of sherry, rascal!

Nick. (*Aside.*) Sherry! I'll give him a little brandy. He needs something, so dashed as he is: besides, he gave me some strong ale this morning, and one good turn deserves another.—Here it be, sir. (*Gives Blushington a glass of brandy.*)

Blush. Certainly, by all means—thankye. (*Drinks*) Oh! murder, murder; I'm scarified—I'm skinned—I'm—Oh, dear! oh, dear!—the brandy, the brandy!

Gyp. I must get him away; he's incurable.

Sir T. What do you mean, soondrel, by giving the gentleman brandy! You incendiary, do you think we were playing at Snap-dragon?—Silence your giggling there, or I'll discharge the whole of you! Compose yourself, Mr. Blushington. Be cool! Sit down a bit.

Blush. I'm in a perspiration—a conflagration! Where's my handkerchief? (*Takes his ink handkerchief, and blacks his face.*)

Sir T. Oh! d—e, but I can't stand that.

Gyp. I must get him away. Leave the place, sir. (*Taking away his chair to give him room.*)

Blush. Eh! leave the place, Gyp! certainly, by all means. I—

[*Blushington rushes off, drawing the tablecloth (which he has fastened to his button-holes) after him, overturning the whole of the dinner things.—Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Gardens of Friendly Hall.

Enter SIR THOMAS FRIENDLY, LADY FRIENDLY, FRANK, and DINAH.

Sir T. I give him up; such inveterate bashfulness is incurable.

Dinah. Very true, pa; therefore, you know, of course, it's no use my marrying him.

Frank. Hum! that is your opinion: now mine is different. Will you be guided by me, and resign him wholly to my management?

Sir T. With all my heart, Frank; but after my management has failed, I fear there is but very little hope of your's.

Frank. We shall see: are you content, Di? for you're the party most interested.

Dinah. Oh! I'm sure I don't care anything at all about it, for my part.

Frank. That's a fib, Di, but no matter. As you're all agreed, the first thing we'll do is, to send him a letter inviting the whole of ourselves to dine with him to-day.

Sir T. What?

Frank. This won't be half; but I'll detail my plans at full as we go along: and if our impudence don't cure him of his bashfulness, say I've been brought up at Brazen-nose for nothing, that's all. Away with you! and while you're dressing, I'll send off the note and prepare. No words: you've agreed to leave it all to me.

Sir T. Well, well! Frank has some *nous*, my lady.

Dinah. I certainly should like to see how Mr. Blushington plays the host, that I must say.

Frank. Ay, and the husband, too, Di.

Lady F. But taking the young man at such a nonplus—

Sir T. Come along, my lady; Frank shall have his way for once, that I'm determined upon. Go on, and prosper, my boy! come, my lady; come, Di.

Frank. I'll not fail for want of trying, at all events. So here's at it.

[*Exeunt Sir T. Lady F. and Frank.*]

Dinah. How will Frank succeed? What a tumult is in my bosom! 'tis Cupid has stolen there. Yes, 'tis the fluttering of his wings I feel. Oh! love, love! either compose thyself to peace, and let this breast feel but the soft down of thy pinions, or take thy flight for ever.

SONG.—DINAH.

*Love came one day to beauty's bow'rs,
And begg'd her nursery-man to be;*

*Engaging she the sweetest flow'rs
Should ever in her garden see.*

Beguil'd, she hir'd, ah! woe for her!

*The rogue to be her gardener;
Soon with the gales of gentle sighs,
Each drooping flow'r he cherish'd there,
While dewy tears from dotting eyes
Kept all her roses fresh and fair.*

But mark, alas!

What came to pass.

*While summer reign'd, the rogue remain'd,
And joy and peace, and sunshine shed;*

But winter came—ah! can I name

Love's treachery! the urchin fed,

And sadly beauty—woe for her!

Mis'd, in the storms, her gardener.

Her flowers all died, her shrubs deck'd,

Her blooming beds were all left bare;

No solace could poor beauty find,

Loos left but thorns and wild weeds there.

SCENE II.—A gloomy Apartment in Blushington house.

Enter BLUSHINGTON and GYP.

Blush. Shut up the doors, block up the windows, lock up the house, never let me see the light of day nor the face of man again. After this last catastrophe, it's very plain I never was intended to be one of the sons of Adam, but was born by mistake. I shall never be able to venture abroad again, so I'll become a monk of my own making; have my vicuals sent me through a hole in the door, let my beard grow, and pass my life in trying to find out the philosopher's stone.

Gyp. But why?

Blush. Why, sha'n't I be an universal laughing-stock—a perpetual jest—awkwardness personified? won't every one point and jeer at me whenever they see me? I've sent to Doctor Starob, and Dame Straitlace, my aunt, to come and take charge of my estate, and then I'll seclude myself from the world for ever.

Gyp. Nonsense, sir; have more philosophy; turn your thoughts to some other subject; seek consolation from your books.

Blush. Books! I shall never touch a book again—but I shall think of that d—d Xenophon, and revive all my shame and mortification.

Gyp. Well then, sir, betake yourself to your studies; go on to your writings.

Blush. Writings! No, no; I've had enough of ink for one while. Didn't I print a map of the world upon my face with that cursed handkerchief? haven't I borne the mark of Cain upon my forehead? Oh! that was a black business! it wrote my disgrace in indelible characters; 'tis never to be washed out.

Gyp. Well, then, suppose you let me get your things ready to dress, and take a ride.

Blush. Dress! Do you want to drive me mad, Gyp? I shall never go to dress but I shall remember my infernal black breeches, and feel the scolding of the hot soup again. Talk of dressing to a man whose extremities have been just stewed! who has had the lower half of him boiled! If you had sent me a surgeon to dress me after such an excoiation you'd have done something.

Gyp. Well, at all events, don't starve yourself; take a little something, and make up your mind what you'll have for dinner.

Blush. Dinner! You put me on the rack. Haven't I had enough of dinner to last me all my life! Oh! that diabolical pudding! and that still more devilish brandy! Haven't I been flayed and blistered alive with ardent spirits? hasn't my tongue and mouth been grilled? a'n't my throat and palate as raw as beef? a'n't I suffering the torments of a goblin d—d? and yet, to talk to me of dinner! Horrible word! source of all my agonies! all my confusion! Never breathe it in my ear again; bury it for ever in oblivion, Gyp.

Gyp. Compose yourself, sir; take a chair; sit down for a few minutes..

Blush. A chair! There you touch another of the many chords of my mortification: through missing my chair, didn't I bring down the whole contents of the table upon me? bury myself under a huge mountain of fish, flesh, and fowl? wasn't my chops completely choked up with custards? wasn't one eye nearly poked out with the latter end of a goose, and the other completely closed up with a cod's head and shoulders? saying nothing of my nose being crushed as flat as a flounder with the butt end of a buttock of beef: and yet, you talk to me of dinner! Odious sound! terrible meal! Give me ratsbane, arsenic, anything but dinner.

Enter JOHN.

Well, what do you want? Come to stare at me, as if I were some remarkable monster, I dare say. I shall be the shew of the place soon.

John. A letter from Sir Thomas Friendly, sir.

Blush. Ah! demanding payment for his crockery, and wanting to have the Hercules' head made good, I dare say. Give it me: I'm desperate.

John. Sir Thomas's gentleman, Mr. Nicholas, brought it, sir; and says he hopes you'll excuse the little mistake of the brandy at dinner, yesterday.

Blush. Dinner again! Get out of my sight, you infernal scoundrel! do. Don't you know that I've discarded dinner from these walls for ever?

John. (*Aside.*) Yes; but I haven't, though.

Blush. The brandy, too! I told you everybody would throw it in my face. (*To Gyp.*) But let's see what Sir Thomas charges; I'll pay it at once and have done with it. (*Opens the letter.*) Here's a note, but where's the bill? I suppose he lumps all the articles together. Read it, Gyp.

Gyp. (*Reads.*) "Sir Thomas, Lady Friendly, Mr. Francois, and Miss Dinah's compliments, hope Mr. Blushington has recovered from the little disarrangements of yesterday—"

Blush. Little disarrangements they call them! to be boiled, devilled, and half smothered! Go on.

Gyp. (*Reads.*) "If perfectly convenient, Sir T. & F., Mr F., and Miss D. F.—"

Blush. Why, zounds! there's half the alphabet — will be glad of the money, I suppose?

Gyp. No. (*Reads.*) "Will do themselves the pleasure of taking dinner—"

Blush. What! Dinner?

Gyp. (*Reads.*) "Of taking dinner with Mr. Blushington to-day, at Blushington-house."

Blush. Ten thousand devils! They are not satisfied with having driven me mad with one dinner, but they want to set me raving with another. Say I'm dead; tell them I'm buried; that I'm going to be made a dinner of myself.

Gyp. But consider, sir; common politeness, common decency—you must receive them in return: you wouldn't violate the rights of hospitality, would you? besides, what a glorious opportunity it will afford you of retrieving yourself! you'll be able to put everything right again.

Blush. Yes; my boiled thighs, and fricasseeed throat, for example. No, no, Gyp; I'll not be way-laid into another dinner. I'll run away. Get my horse saddled: I'll ride to the middle of Hounslow-heath—go down in the diving-bell—call on the chapcellor—anything to get out of the way of dinner. Yes, quick is the word! I'll be off; I'll—
[Enter JOHN.]—You have just arrived in time: saddle my horse directly, John.

John. Sir Thomas, Lady Friendly, Mr. Francois, and Miss Dinah, sir.

Blush. What, come? Nothing can save me—my ruin is complete—all hope forsakes me—I'm utterly undone! You may bid me good b'ye, Gyp; my cheeks are growing into chalk.

Enter SIR THOMAS FRIENDLY, LADY FRIENDLY, FRANK, and DINAH.

Sir T. My dear young friend, we don't stand upon ceremony, you see; couldn't avoid the opportunity of a leisure day to inquire how you are after yesterday, and take a friendly chop with you. I assure you, I've reprimanded Nicholas severely about the brandy.

Blush. That infernal brandy again! I shall never hear the last of it. (*Aside.*) Very proud, Sir Thomas—happy—the honour—certainly, by all means.

Sir T. But, egad! you're looking charmingly after it. Why, you've a colour like a maid.

Blush. Fray, don't; you overpower me.

Lady F. Charming, indeed! doesn't seem to have had the slightest effect on him.

Blush. Oh! really, you distress me.

Frank. Why, not to compliment Mr. Blushington, I must say I never saw him look better.

Blush. Oh! upon my word—This is too much!

(*Aside.*)

Dinah. Discords often create harmony, and flowers are sometimes fresher after a storm.

Blush. They're roasting me by a slow fire! but I was born to suffer. (*Aside.*)

Sir T. I'm so happy we found you at home.

Blush. (*Aside.*) That infernal John to let them in!

Sir T. But I thought you wouldn't be out to-day. You're very pleasantly situated here, Mr. Blushington.

Blush. Yes, very pleasantly, indeed!

Sir T. Only want Mrs. Blushington. Don't let us interrupt you in giving your orders; dinner must be attended to. You can leave us whenever you please; we shall make ourselves quite at home.

Blush. I'm petrified! (*Aside.*) Certainly, by all means, Sir Thomas. Should be extremely proud—no doubt—dinner—great pleasure—but—bachelor—no convenience—suitable—distinguished honour—want—attendance.

Sir T. Oh! make no apologies, my dear friend, I beg; I've provided against that, knowing you have only a bachelor's establishment: we've brought the whole of our servants with us.

Blush. The devil they have! there's no escape; they've hemmed me in; they'll give me no quarter. (*Aside.*)

Sir T. If you'll just give my butler the keys of your cellar, he'll look at the wine: you needn't be afraid of him, he's an excellent judge, and will be sure to give us the best you have; leave him alone for a choice article.

Blush. Rather free, though; it's what I could not do; but I suppose it's good breeding! (*Aside.*)

Sir T. Here, Evans!

Enter EVANS.

Evans. Sir?

Sir T. Take the keys of Mr. Blushington's cellar; taste the different bins, and select a dozen or two of the rarest wines against dinner time.

Evans. Very well, Sir Thomas; I have been inquiring of Mr. John, and know where to pitch upon the oldest champagne and madeira already.

Sir T. And mind you don't go to get drunk there, and do any mischief.

Evans. I'll take care, Sir Thomas.

Sir T. Mr. Blushington, shall I trouble you for the keys?

Blush. Oh! yes, certainly, by all means: rather impudent, but I suppose it's the fashion. (*Aside.*)

Sir T. I've sent my cook to your butcher's, and ordered some venison and turtle, so you may depend on everything being right in that particular; therefore, give yourself no anxiety about there not being enough.

Blush. Sent his cook to my butcher's; this wasn't manners in my day; how times are changed! I'm confounded! shall never do for society. (*Aside.*)

Lady F. While dinner is getting ready, Sir Thomas, as Mr. Blushington and Dinah may have their little secrets between them to talk over, we'll leave them.

Blush. By no means, certainly not; I've no little secrets between me and the young lady, upon my soul I haven't! This is worse than all.

Lady F. Hush, hush! we know; young folks will be young folks. I'll go and gather some flowers in the garden; you've some very valuable tulip beds, I hear.

Sir T. I'll stroll into your library and tumble your books about, kick up a dust among the sages. You know I'm rather literary.

Blush. Xenophon to wit! Tumble my books about—the fellow had better cut my throat at once. (*Aside.*)

Sir T. I hear, you've some very rare and curious manuscripts there; I shall rummage them all out.

Blush. Rammage my manuscripts! D—n his education; but he's one of the polite world.

Frank. While dad is amusing himself with your books, Blushington, I'll take a turn over your grounds, pop at your partridges, beat up your preserves, kiss your game-keeper's daughter, rumple your dairy-maid, and so on: but you must lend me your fowling-piece.

Blush. Going to poach upon another man's grounds, and asks him to lend him a fowling-piece! I've often heard of the height of impudence, but this is one of the most complete illustrations of it I've met with yet. Oh! I'm miserably ignorant of good-breeding; they'll ask me for some of my teeth presently, and expect me to hand them the tongs to draw them with; or, perhaps, ask me to draw them myself, by way of a treat.—My servant, sir, will give you the fowling-piece.

Frank. Then D. I. O. my boy. I'll be sure to be back in time for dinner. *[Exit.*

Lady F. Ay, ay; we'll none of us forget that. A pleasant tête-à-tête to you, Mr. Blushington. *[Exit.*

Sir T. I'll follow their example, and be off too; my company is not wanted now. Come friend, *(to Gyp)* your master has no occasion for your presence at present, he's more agreeably engaged; so I'll take care of you. Shew me the way to the library—Nothing so bad as interruptions in situations of this kind. *(Aside to Blush.)*

Gyp. I can't stay to help you—I must go, sir—very sorry—make the best of it—I'm coming, sir. *[Exit Gyp and Sir T.*

Blush. *(Aside.)* Why, I declare, if they haven't all gone, and left me alone with miss! I would not have minded if it had been an old woman so much, but such a young and pretty one, oh, it's cruel! *(Takes a chair, and sits down.)* Eh! bless me, what am I doing! keeping the young lady standing! *(Offers Dinah a chair, she sits.)* Dear me, now I feel just for all the world as if I'd left the chair, and were on my legs for a speech. I suppose, if I don't speak to her, they'll call me rude; and I mustn't be rude to the ladies. But what am I to say? I wish she'd speak first. Not a word! that ever a woman should be backward at talking! the world will soon be at an end.

Dinah. *(Aside.)* Poor fellow, I must take pity on his situation, and say a few words to encourage him. Did you speak, Mr. Blushington?

Blush. I thought she couldn't keep silence long. *(Aside.)* No—o—miss—yo—you were saying something I—I believe.

Dinah. I was about to remark, Mr. Blushington, that I imagined, you were about to remark something.

Blush. Very true, I ought to have remarked something, sure enough. What the devil shall I remark? I'll be bound, I look now just like a fellow that's going to steal a pint-pot—I have it.—*(Aside.)*—I was about to remark, miss, that this is very fine weather.

Dinah. Yes, it's clearing—a little dull just now, though—but brightening up at last.

Blush. It has been rather overcast; but it is as you say, miss, rather brightening. What charming eyes she has! I will endeavour to be a little civil to her, if I die for it: there's no one to see me—no scalding soup to upset—no red-hot pudding to swallow.

Dinah. A little sunshine, after so much cold weather, Mr. Blushington, cannot but be extremely agreeable.—He improves. When the temperature of our barometer rises to fine, the buds of promise spring into blossoms of performance, and ultimately grow into flowers of perfection.

Blush. *(Aside.)* What a botanist! Her sunny smiles quite open a holyday in one's heart. I wish Gyp was here to see me now: I feel all life and

vigour in this summer of her complaisance; I'm quite growing into perfection, as she says; I'll go a little nearer to her. What a sensitive plant I am! *(Aside.)*

Dinah. Warmth is a generous, a delightful element, Mr. Blushington.

Blush. In a proper place, certainly, by all means, Miss Dinah; but compound it, when it attacks one's thighs and cheeks, in the shape of soup and pudding. *(Aside.)*

Dinah. It draws forth all that is inspiring and charming in our natures— *[exactly.*

Blush. *(Aside, rubbing his thighs.)* Hum! not

Dinah. It melts the most frigid, draws forth the most backward.

Blush. *(Edging closer to her.)* Oh! yes, certainly, by all means.

Dinah. Gives to the flowers their beauty, their fragrance, their maturity—

Blush. *(Getting closer.)* It does—it does—no doubt—certainly—by all means—where the devil am I going to? *(Drawing back.)*

Dinah. The most retiring object gains strength at its approach—

Blush. I'm getting on rather too fast, but I can't resist. Your words are all wisdom, charming Miss Dinah! With such a lovely directress as you of my future life, I—

Dinah. Sir!

Blush. Beg pardon, didn't mean to offend—She's thrown me all on my back again—I've put my foot into it—I've affronted her—I've gone on too far—I must apologize. I was merely going to say, that if it was my happy lot to have a partner like—No, that's not it—I mean, that the warmth you were speaking about, d—n me, I'm all in a blaze—the warmth, beauty, inspiring passion, happy mortal, would give me confidence to—I beg pardon—I really—if I've offended—on my knee, I—

Enter SIR THOMAS FRIENDLY, LADY FRIENDLY, and FRANK.

Sir T. Eh, zounds, we're interrupting.

Frank. I give you joy, my boy—Di, I congratulate you.

Sir T. D—d sorry, we should pop in so mal-à-propos.

Frank. Interrupt such a tender tête-à-tête!

Blush. Sir Thomas, my lady, upon my soul I—that is, Miss Dinah—

Sir T. Pshaw! never try to conceal it, my dear boy; the admiration of a pretty girl was never yet accounted a fault by the most fastidious, and there are worse venches than Di.

Blush. Certainly, by all means, but—

Frank. The love of woman is the proudest boast, as it is the greatest glory and brightest merit of man.

Blush. Oh! certainly, by all means—The devil caught me in a pretty situation, I can't back.

Frank. In the admiration of women, bashfulness becomes a crime, and backwardness a disgrace.

Blush. That's very true, so I'd better hold my tongue. Hey, here's a reference!

Enter EVANS.

Evans. I've looked out the wine, Sir Thomas.

Enter NICK.

Nick. Dinner be all ready, Sir Thomas, and I'll take care there shall be no mistake with the brandy again.

Blush. Oh, that infernal brandy! my nose tingle at the very thoughts!

Sir T. We'll not keep a good dinner in suspense, Frank; take your mother's arm; Mr. Blushington will do the same good office for Dinah, and I'll hobble on after you.

Blush. I must say, they're uncommonly free and easy; and as it's my own dinner, I'll pluck up courage and be free and easy too; I'll take care not to

my life, my tear; but I'll take their bills, if they're shopkeepers. What do they sell?—(Tutor.) Eh! bless me, what does he say?—(Collegian.) He says, sir, that—that Anacron and Theocritus are *shopkeepers*, sir; that is, that their works don't *sell*, and that he's not over partial to them; likes something more solid.—(Tutor.) Hum! ha! You will get ready for your examination to-day: when I hope that the pains I have taken to prepare you, will not have been thrown away; but that you will speedily arrive at the highest of college honours—*Vale*.—(Collegian.) Good b'ye, sir. Glad the old Prig is gone. Bring out the glover's daughter. Send old Smokey home for the blunt; uncork another bottle, and let's be jolly.

*Those who may think a life at college,
Fagging and tagging, poring, boring,
Haven't their nobs o'erstock'd with knowledge;
Life in a college is full of glee.*

*Doctors, proctors—Greek and Latin;
Currs'd dry study, brain gets muddy;
Tutor pops a sentence pat in;
Gain a degree, make holiday.
Read old Homer, get diploma,
While others are pluck'd and sent away;
Spluttering, muttering, hammering, stammering:
We are the true Greeks—huzza, huzza!*

"When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war."—(Row in the street.) Town, gown! Town, gown!—(Collegian.) What the devil's the matter in the High-street, there?—(Bed-maker.) Only a row between the students and the townsmen and the gownsmen, about a silly wench of a shop girl; that's all, sir.—(Collegian.) Oh! d—e, Gyp, must make one among them; must support the gown. Call them out there. "Town, gown!—gown, town!" There'll be more heads than *Priscian's* broken to-day.—(Bed-maker.) Sir, sir, we must be off; there's four heads of houses coming down the next street.—(Collegian.) Four houses coming down on our heads in the next street; you're right; then, egad, it's high time to be off, faith.—(Bed-maker.) Chapel-bell has rung long ago; and then there's the examination in the Hall to-day, you know, sir; and after this row.—(Collegian.) I shall be more fitted than ever to be *Senior Wrangler*. Ah! Gyp, hope I shan't get plucked; funk confoundedly: no matter, I must put a bold face on it. I say, Tom, what the devil's that bit of red under your gown there?—(Fellow Collegian.) Hold your tongue, you fool; only my hunting tick: hadn't time to pull it off. I've been rusticated.—(Collegian.) Take care they don't rusticate you, that's all. You know it's against College rules to hunt or race; and, as to coming to chapel in your hunting toggery.—(Fellow Collegian.) It was on the spur of the moment; just in time to show, however. (Prayers are read.)—(Cryer.) Now, then, to the Hall, gentlemen.—(Collegian.) Eh! who the deuce is that going up, the *Welshman* from *Caitis*, poor Shenkin-ap-Watkins. Poor fellow, *stave* like roasted cheese; they're going to try him in Greek. Zounds! if he were going to be tried at the Old Bailey, he couldn't be more frightened: and old Doctor M'Jargon, the Scotch proctor, one of the examiners; he'll be plucked to a certainty, like a poor pigeon as he is. Never mind, we're the Greeks that are never plucked: only hear him.—(Doctor M'Jargon.) Now, Mr. Shenkin-ap-Watkins, we will proceed to *Homer*, d'ye ken—Dinna be in sic a muckle-puckle! there's nowt to be alarmed at: fair and softly; there's na need to be in sic a hurry and splutter. (Mr. Shenkin-ap-Watkins, reading with a strong Welsh accent, and evidently dreadfully nervous and frightened.)

"TON D'APAMEIBOMENOS, PROSEPH FODAS OKUS
ACHILLEUS;
ATREIDE, KUDISTE, PHILOKTENOTATY PANTON,
POS GAR TOI DOSOUOI GERAS NEGATEUMOI ACHAIOT!
OUDE TI PO IDMEN KUNIEIA KRIMENA POLLA!
ALIA TA MEN POLION EKPEPATRONEN TA PEDASTAI
LAOUS D'OUK NPEOIKE PALILLOGA TAUT' EPAGEI-
REIN."

(Doctor M'Jargon.) Hauld, hauld! Troth, Mr. Shenkin-ap-Watkins, ye have nae the *true Doric accent*, the pure pronunciation o' the Greek language. Ye should speak it after this fashion, d'ye ken, and nae let yer words hop about like see many kids on an o'er yer mickie Welsh mountains. (Reading with a strong deliberate Scotch accent.)

"TON D'APAMEIBOMENOS," &c.

That is the way the Greek language ought to be spoken, eh! Ye may gang down, Mr. Shenkin-ap-Watkins: we must e'en send him back to his native goats again; he'll never be able to feed his flocks with Virgil or Tho-

ocritus, I trow. Call Mr. Terence O'Terry.—(Cryer.) Mr. Terence O'Terry.—(Mr. Terence O'Terry.) Faith, here am I, sir.—(Doctor M'Jargon.) Now, Mr. Terence O'Terry, I hope ye're a' prepared!—(Mr. Terence O'Terry.) You may take your oath of that, sir, all the same as if it was my own mother tongue. (Reading very rapidly, and with a strong Irish accent.)

"TON D'APAMEIBOMENOS," &c.

(Doctor M'Jargon.) Stop, stop, Mr. Terence O'Terry! what, in the de'il's name, d'ye call that! O' my conscience, ye bellow like a bull, and have got a burr like a knife-grinder's wheel on the tip of your tongue; troth, if that's Greek, it's St. Giles's Greek, and nae the Greek of that auld chield, Homer. Break up the Hall; we've had enough for one day, at all events; he mun gang back to the bogs again, he winna do here. As for you, Mr. Blushington, you are entitled to your degree.—(Collegian.) Huzza, huzza! now for fun and jollity.

*Those who may think a life at college,
Fagging, tagging, poring, boring,
Haven't their nobs o'erstock'd with knowledge;
Life in a college is full of glee.*

Enter GYP, showing in DAME PHILIPPA STRAIT-LACE and DOCTOR STARCH.

* *Blush.* My aunt Strailace! Zounds! I must face her out. (Aside.) Another glass of wine, Sir Thomas. (Drinks.) Doctor Starch, too! he'll read me a rare lecture! (Aside.) Another glass of wine, Sir Thomas. (Drinks.)

Dame P. The world is certainly turned upside down! here's goings on! I'm shocked!

Gyp. Yes, it isn't a sight fit to contaminate your chaste eyes, ma'am; you'd better go away.

Dame P. Nephew, nephew, how has your innocence been abused! Where is all your artlessness and purity gone to? Didn't you write me word that you wished to put your household under the superintendence of some discreet female!

Blush. Yes, I did; but I meant a young and pretty one; relations are apt to disagree, you know. I'm sorry you've had your journey for nothing, but I'm provided. Your health, Miss Dinah. (Drinks.) Must be polite to aunt Phil, though. (Aside.) Will you take a bumper of Madeira and a devilled biscuit after your walk?

Dame P. The devil possesses you all; but I'll take out a statute of lunacy.

Doctor S. My dear pupil, let the lessons—

Blush. I beg your pardon, Doctor, but I'm not at school now.

Doctor S. Didn't you say that you wished for a person to be a second father to you?

Blush. I did, and I've found one—Sir Thomas; and I don't care how soon he makes me his son-in-law.

Sir T. Well said! The fact is, Doctor, and you, my good madam, with a little of my management, my family and I have succeeded in giving to society one who promises to become not its least best ornament; one who, under your guidance, would have been lost to it for ever.

Blush. Yes, but having once broken through the ice of ceremony, it shall never freeze up my faculties again. I've become sensible of the sweet influence of a young and lovely woman; I've felt the delight of friendship and good fellowship; I find that properly fulfilling the duties of society brings its own reward with it; I have determined to marry, to become a citizen of the world.

Dame P. I'll not stay to witness it. He is quite lost to remorse, and must ruin himself his own way. Come, Doctor.

Doctor S. Very much at your service, Miss Philippa. Oh! my hopeful pupil! Oh! my poor hopes of profit in managing his estate for him! Oh, tempora! oh, mores!

Blush. I am glad they're gone; I now only feel bashful in one point—that of having deserved the approbation of my friends. Assured of their good opinion, I shall laugh at the censures of pruders and pedants, and pass my future life in endeavouring to retain it.

[Exit.

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY HUGH KELLY.



Act IV.—Scene 4.

CHARACTERS.

GENERAL SAVAGE
CAPTAIN SAVAGE
BELVILLE

TORRINGTON
LEESON
CONNOLLY

GHASTLY
SPRUCE
LADY RACHEL MILDW

MRS. BELVILLE
MRS. TEMPEST
MISS WALSHINGHAM

ACT I.

SCENE I.—An Apartment at Belville's.

Enter CAPTAIN SAVAGE and MISS WALSHINGHAM.

Capt. S. Ha, ha, ha! Well, Miss Walsingham, this fury is going. What a noble peal she has rung in Belville's ears.

Miss W. Did she see you, Captain Savage?

Capt. S. No, I took care of that, for though she is not married to my father, she has ten times the influence of a wife, and might injure me not a little with him, if I didn't support her side of the question.

Miss W. It was a pleasant conceit of Mr. Belville, to insinuate that the poor woman was disordered in her senses.

Capt. S. And did you observe how the termagant's violence of temper supported the probability of the charge?

Miss W. Yes, she became almost frantic in reality, when she found herself treated like a mad woman. [admirable.]

Capt. S. Belville's affected surprise, too, was *Miss W.* Yes, the hypocritical composure of his countenance, and his counterfeit pity for the poor woman, were intolerable.

Capt. S. While that amiable creature, his wife, implicitly believed every syllable he said.

Miss W. And felt nothing but pity for the occasion. But pray, is it really under a pretence of passing the girl upon the stage, that Belville has taken away Mrs. Tempest's niece from the people she cherished with?

Capt. P. It is. Belville, ever on the look out for fresh objects, met her in these primitive regions of purity, the green boxes; where, discovering that she was passionately desirous of becoming an actress, he improved his acquaintance

with her, in the fictitious character of an *nager*, and she eloped last night, to be, as the *gines*, the heroine of a Dublin theatre.

Miss W. So, then, as he has kept his real name artfully concealed, Mrs. Tempest can, at least, but suspect him of Miss Leeson's seduction.

Capt. S. Of no more; and this only from the description of the people who saw him in company with her at the play, but I wish the affair may not have a serious conclusion, for she has a brother, a very spirited young fellow, who is a counsellor in the Temple, and who will certainly tell Belville to an account the moment he hears of it.

Miss W. And what will become of the poor creature, after he has deserted her?

Capt. S. You know that Belville is generous to profusion, and has a thousand good qualities to counterbalance this single fault of gallantry, which contaminates his character.

Miss W. You men, you men! You are wretched, that there's no having a moment's satisfaction with you; and what's still more provoking, there's no having a moment's satisfaction without *Capt. S.* Nay, don't think us all alike. [You.]

Miss W. I'll endeavour to deceive myself; for it is but a poor argument of your sincerity, to be the confidant of another's falsehood.

Capt. S. Nay, no more of this, my love; we people live happier than Belville and his wife; nor is there a man in England, notwithstanding all his levity, who considers his wife with the former degree of affection: if you have a friendship therefore, for her, let her continue in *any* way, so necessary to her repose, and give no support whatever of his gallantries to anybody.

Miss W. If I had no pleasure in obliging you, I have too much regard for Mrs. Belville, not to follow your advice; but you need not enjoin me

so strongly on the subject, when you know I can keep a secret.

Capt. S. You are all goodness; and the prudence with which you have concealed our private engagements has eternally obliged me; had you trusted the secret even to Mrs. Belville, it would not have been safe; she would have told her husband, and he is such a rattleskull, that, notwithstanding all his regard for me, he would have mentioned it in some moment of levity, and sent it in a course of circulation to my father.

Miss W. The peculiarity of your father's temper, joined to my want of fortune, made it necessary for me to keep our engagements inviolably secret; there is no merit, therefore, either in my prudence, or in my labouring assiduously to cultivate the good opinion of the General; since both were so necessary to my own happiness: don't despise me for this acknowledgment now.

Capt. S. Bewitching softness! But your goodness, I flatter myself, will be speedily rewarded, you are now such a favourite with him, that he is eternally talking of you; and I really fancy he means to propose you to me himself; for, last night, in a few minutes after he had declared you would make the best wife in the world, he suddenly asked me if I had any aversion to matrimony?

Miss W. Why, that was a very great concession, indeed, as he seldom stoops to consult anybody's inclinations.

Capt. S. So it was, I assure you; for, in the army, being used to nothing but command and obedience, he removes the discipline of the parade into his family, and no more expects his orders should be disputed in matters of a domestic nature than if they were delivered at the head of his regiment.

Miss W. And yet, Mrs. Tempest, who you say is as much a storm in her nature as her name, is disputing them eternally.

Enter MR. and MRS. BELVILLE.

Bel. Well, Miss Walsingham, haven't we had a pretty morning's visitor?

Miss W. Really, I think so; and I have been asking Captain Savage how long the lady has been disordered in her senses.

Bel. Why will they let the poor woman abroad, without somebody to take care of her?

Capt. S. Oh, she has her lucid intervals.

Miss W. I declare I shall be as angry with you as I am with Belville. (*Aside to the Captain.*)

Mrs. B. You can't think how sensibly she spoke at first.

Bel. I should have had no conception of her madness, if she had not brought so preposterous a charge against me.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Lady Rachel Mildew, madam, sends her compliments, and if you are not particularly engaged, will do herself the pleasure of waiting upon you.

Mrs. B. Our compliments, and we shall be glad to see her ladyship. [*Exit Servant.*]

Bel. I wonder if Lady Rachel knows that Torrington came to town last night from Bath.

Mrs. B. I hope he has found benefit by the waters, for he is one of the best creatures existing; he's a downwright parson Adams in good nature and simplicity.

Miss W. Lady Rachel will be quite happy at his return, and it would be a laughable affair, if a match could be brought about between the old maid and the old bachelor.

Capt. S. Mr. Torrington is too much taken up at Westminster Hall to think of paying his devoirs to the ladies; and too plain a speaker, I fancy, to be agreeable to Lady Rachel.

Bel. You mistake the matter widely; she is deeply smitten with him; but honest Torrington is

utterly unconscious of his conquest, and modestly thinks that he has not a single attraction for any woman in the universe.

Mrs. B. Yet my poor aunt speaks sufficiently plain, in all conscience, to give him a different opinion of himself.

Miss W. Yes, and puts her charms into such repair, whenever she expects to meet him, that her cheeks look for all the world like a raspberry ice upon a ground of custard.

Capt. S. I thought Apollo was the only god of Lady Rachel's idolatry, and that in her passion for poetry she had taken leave of all the less elevated affections.

Bel. Oh! you mistake again; the poets are eternally in love, and can, by no means, be calculated to describe the imaginary passions, without being very susceptible of the real ones.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. The man, madam, from Tavistock-street, has brought home the dresses for the masquerade, and desires to know if there are any commands for him.

Mrs. B. Oh! bid him stay till we see the dresses. [*Exit Servant.*]

Miss W. They are only dominos.

Bel. I am glad of that; for characters are as difficult to be supported at the masquerade, as they are in real life. The last time I was at the Pantheon, a vestal virgin invited me to sup with her, and swore that her pocket had been picked by a justice of peace.

Miss W. Nay, that was not so bad as the Hamlet's Ghost that boxed with Henry the Eighth, and afterwards danced a hornpipe to the tune of Nancy Dawson. Ha, ha, ha! we follow you, Mrs. Belville. [*Raeuit.*]

SCENE II.—*Leeson's Chambers in the Temple.*

Enter LEESON.

Lee. Where is this clerk of mine? Connolly!

Con. (Behind.) Here, sir.

Lees. Have you copied the marriage-settlement, as I corrected it?

Enter CONNOLLY, with pistols.

Con. Ay, honey, an hour ago.

Lee. What, you have been trying those pistols?

Con. By my soul, I have been firing them this half hour, without once being able to make them

Lee. They are plaguy dirty. [*Go off.*]

Con. In troth! so they are; I strove to brighten them up a little, but some misfortune attends every thing I do, for the more I clean them the dirtier they are, honey.

Lee. You have had some of our usual daily visitors for money, I suppose?

Con. You may say that; and three or four of them are now hanging about the door, that I wish handsomely hanged anywhere else, for bodering us.

Lee. No joking, Connolly; my present situation is a very disagreeable one.

Con. 'Faith! and so it is; but who makes it disagreeable? Your aunt Tempest would let you have as much money as you please, but you won't condescend to be acquainted with her, though people in this country can be very intimate friends, without seeing one another's faces for seven years.

Lee. Do you think me base enough to receive a favour from a woman who has disgraced her family, and stoops to be a kept mistress? You see, my sister is already ruined by a connexion with her.

Con. Ah! sir, a good guinea isn't the price for coming through a bad hand; if it was, you would become of us lawyers! And by my soul, many a high head in London would, at this minute, be very low, if they hadn't received favours even from much worse people than kept mistresses.

Lee. Others, Connolly, may prostitute their honour as they please; mine is my chief possession; and I must take particular care of it.

Con. Honour, to be sure, is a very fine thing, sir, but I don't see how it is to be taken care of, without a little money; your honour, to my knowledge, hasn't been in your own possession these two years, and the devil a dram can you honestly swear by, till you get it out of the hands of your creditors.

Lee. I have given you a licence to talk, Connolly, because I know you faithful; but I haven't given you a liberty to sport with my misfortunes.

Con. You know I'd die to serve you, sir; but of what use is your giving me leave to spake, if you oblige me to hould my tongue? 'tis out of pure love and affection that I put you in mind of your misfortunes.

Lee. Well, Connolly, a few days will, in all probability, enable me to redeem my honour, and to reward your fidelity; the lovely Emily, you know, has half consented to embrace the first opportunity of flying with me to Scotland, and the paltry trifles I owe, will not be missed in her fortune.

Con. But, dear sir, consider you are going to fight a duel this very evening, and if you should be kilt, I fancy you will find it a little difficult to run away afterwards with the lovely Emily.

Lee. If I fall, there will be an end to my misfortunes.

Con. But surely it will not be quite genteel, to go out of the world without paying your debts.

Lee. But how shall I stay in the world, Connolly, without punishing Belville for ruining my sister?

Con. Oh! the devil fly away with this honour; an ounce of common sense is worth a whole ship load of it, if we must prefer a bullet or a halter to a fine young lady and a great fortune.

Lee. We'll talk no more on the subject at present. Take this letter to Mr. Belville; deliver it into his own hand, be sure, and bring me an answer; make haste, for I shall not stir out till you come back.

Con. By my soul, I wish you may be able to stir out then, honey. Oh! but that's true,—

Lee. What's the matter?

Con. Why, sir, the gentleman I last lived clerk with, died lately and left me a legacy of twenty guineas.

Lee. What! is Mr. Stanley dead?

Con. 'Faith! his friends have behaved very unkindly if he is not, for they have buried him these

Lee. And what then? [six weeks.]

Con. Why, sir, I received my little legacy this morning, and if you'd be so good as to keep it for me, I'd be much obliged to you.

Lee. Connolly, I understand you, but I am already shamefully in your debt: you've had no money from me this age.

Con. Oh, sir! that does not signify; if you are not kilt in this d—d duel, you'll be able enough to pay me; if you are, I sha'n't want it.

Lee. Why so, my poor fellow?

Con. Because, though I am but your clerk, and though I think fighting the most foolish thing upon earth, I'm as much a gentleman as yourself, and have as much right to commit a murder in the way of duelling. [Mr. Belville?]

Lee. And what then? You have no quarrel with

Con. I shall have a d—d quarrel with him though if you are kilt; your death shall be revenged, depend upon it, so let that content you.

Lee. My dear Connolly, I hope I sha'n't want such a proof of your affection. How he distresses me! [Exit Con.]

Con. You will want a second, I suppose, in this affair; I stood second to my own brother, in the Fifteen Acres, and though that has made me detest the very thought of duelling ever since; yet if you want a friend, I'll attend you to the field of death with a great deal of satisfaction.

Lee. I thank you, Connolly, but I think it extremely wrong in any man who has a quarrel, to expose his friend to difficulties; we shouldn't seek for redress, if we are not equal to the task of fighting our own battles; and I choose you particularly to carry my letter, because you may be supposed ignorant of the contents, and thought to be acting only in the ordinary course of your business.

Con. Say no more about it, honey; I will be back with you presently. (*Going, returns.*) I put the twenty guineas in your pocket, before you were up, sir; and I don't believe you'd look for such a thing there, if I wasn't to tell you of it. [Exit.]

Lee. This faithful, noble-hearted creature!—but let me fly from thought; the business I have to execute will not bear the test of reflection. [Exit.]

Re-enter CONNOLLY.

Con. As this is a challenge, I shouldn't go without a sword; come down little tickle-pitcher. (*Takes a sword.*) Some people may think me very conceited now; but as the dirtiest black-legs in town can wear one without being stared at, I don't think it can suffer any disgrace by the side of an honest man. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—*An Apartment at Belville's.*

Enter MRS. BELVILLE.

Mrs. B. How strangely this affair of Mrs. Tempest hangs upon my spirits, though I have every reason, from the tenderness, the politeness, and the generosity of Mr. Belville, as well as from the woman's behaviour, to believe the whole charge the result of a disturbed imagination. Yet suppose it should be actually true?—Heigho!—Well, suppose it should? I would endeavour, I think I would endeavour, to keep my temper; a frowning face never recovered a heart that was not to be fixed with a smiling one; but women, in general, forget this grand article of the matrimonial creed entirely; the dignity of insulted virtue obliges them to play the fool, whenever their Corydons play the libertine; and they must pull down the house about the traitor's ears, though they are themselves to be crushed in pieces by the ruins.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Lady Rachel Mildew, madam. [Exit.]

Enter LADY RACHEL MILDEW.

Lady R. My dear, how have you done since the little eternity of my last seeing you. Mr. Torrington is come to town, I hear.

Mrs. B. He is, and must be greatly flattered to find that your ladyship has made him the hero of your new comedy.

Lady R. Yes, I have drawn him as he is, an honest practitioner of the law, which is, I fancy, no very common character. [Theatre.]

Mrs. B. And it must be a vast acquisition to the

Lady R. Yet the managers of both houses have refused my play, have refused it peremptorily; though I offered to make them a present of it.

Mrs. B. That's very surprising.

Lady R. They allege that the audiences are tired of crying at comedies; and insist that my "Despairing Shepherdess" is absolutely too dismal for representation. [Lawyer in a new light?]

Mrs. B. What, though you have introduced a

Lady R. Yes, and have a boarding-school romp that slaps her mother's face, and throws a basin of scalding water at her governess.

Mrs. B. Why, surely, these are capital jokes.

Lady R. But the managers can't find them out; however, I am determined to bring it out somewhere, and I have discovered such a treasure for my boarding-school romp, as exceeds the most sanguine expectation of criticism.

Mrs. B. How fortunate!

Lady R. Going to Mrs. Le Blood, my milliner's, this morning, to see some contraband silks, (for you know there's a foreign minister just arrived,)

I heard a loud voice rehearsing Juliet, from the dining-room; and, upon inquiry, found that it was a country girl just eloped from her friends in town, to go upon the stage with an Irish manager.

Mrs. B. Ten to one, the strange woman's niece who has been here this morning. (*Aside.*)

Lady R. Mrs. Le Blond has some doubts about the manager it seems, though she hasn't seen him yet, because the apartments are very expensive, and were taken by a fine gentleman out of livery.

Mrs. B. What am I to think of this? Pray, Lady Rachel, as you have conversed with this young actress, I suppose you could procure me a sight of her?

Lady R. This moment if you will, I am very intimate with her already; but pray keep the matter a secret from your husband, for he is so witty, you know, upon my passion for the drama, that I shall be teased to death by him.

Mrs. B. Oh! you may be very sure that your secret is safe, for I have a most particular reason to keep it from Mr. Belville; but he is coming this way with Captain Savage: let us, at present, avoid him. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter BELVILLE and CAPTAIN SAVAGE.

Capt. S. You are a very strange man, Belville; you are for ever tremblingly solicitous about the happiness of your wife, yet for ever endangering it by your passion for variety.

Bel. Why, there is certainly a contradiction between my principles and my practice; but, if ever you marry, you'll be able to reconcile it perfectly. Possession, Savage! Oh, possession is a miserable whether of the appetite in love! and I own myself so sad a fellow, that though I wouldn't exchange Mrs. Belville's mind for any woman's person on earth, there is scarcely a woman's person on earth, which is not to me a stronger object of attraction.

Capt. S. Then perhaps in a little time you'll be weary of Miss Leeson!

Bel. To be sure I shall; though, to own the truth, I have not yet carried my point conclusively with the little monkey.

Capt. S. Why how the plague has she escaped a moment, in your hands?

Bel. By a mere accident. She came to the lodgings, which my man Spruce prepared for her, rather unexpectedly last night, so that I happened to be engaged particularly in another quarter,—you understand me,—and the d—d aunt found me so much employment all the morning, that I could only send a message by Spruce, promising to call upon her the first moment I had to spare in the course of the day.

Capt. S. And so you are previously satisfied that you shall be tired of her.

Bel. Tired of her? Why I am at this moment in pursuit of fresh game, against the hour of satiety: Game, that you know to be exquisite! and I fancy I shall bring it down, though it is closely guarded by a deal of that pride which passes for virtue with the generality of your mighty good people.

Capt. S. Indeed! and may a body know this wonder?

Bel. You are to be trusted with anything, for you are the closest fellow I ever knew, and the rack itself would hardly make you discover one of your own secrets to anybody. What do you think of Miss Walsingham?

Capt. S. Miss Walsingham? Death and the devil. (*Aside.*)

Bel. Miss Walsingham.

Capt. S. Why, surely she has not received your addresses with any degree of approbation?

Bel. With every degree of approbation I could.

Capt. S. She has? [*Exeunt.*]

Bel. Ay; why, this news surprises you?

Capt. S. It does indeed!

Bel. Ha, ha, ha! I can't help laughing to think what a happy dog Miss Walsingham's husband is likely to be!

Capt. S. A very happy dog, truly.

Bel. She's a delicious girl, isn't she, Savage? But she'll require a little more trouble; for a fine woman, like a fortified town, to speak in your father's language, demands a regular siege; and we must even allow her the honours of war, to magnify the greatness of our own victory.

Capt. S. Well, it amazes me, how you gay fellows ever have the presumption to attack a woman of principle; Miss Walsingham has no apparent levity of any kind about her.

Bel. No; but she continued in my house, after I had whispered my passion in her ear, and gave me a second opportunity of addressing her improperly; what greater encouragement could I desire?

Enter SPRUCE.

Well, Spruce, what are your commands?

Spruce. My lady is just gone out with Lady Rachel. I understand you. [*Exit.*]

Spruce. I believe you do. (*Aside.*)

Capt. S. What is the English of these significant looks between Spruce and you?

Bel. Only that Miss Walsingham is left alone, and that I have now an opportunity of entertaining her. You must excuse me, Savage; you must, upon my soul; but not a word of this affair to anybody, because, when I shake her off my hands, there may be fools enough to think of her, upon terms of honourable matrimony. [*Exit.*]

Capt. S. So, here's a discovery! a precious discovery! and while I have been racking my imagination, and sacrificing my interest to promote the happiness of this woman, she has been listening to the addresses of a married man, the husband of her friend, and the immediate friend of her intended husband. By Belville's own account, however, she has not yet proceeded to any criminal lengths; but why did she keep the affair a secret from me? or why did she continue in his house after a repeated declaration of his unwarrantable attachment? What's to be done? If I open my engagement with her to Belville, I am sure he will instantly desist; but then her honour is left in a state extremely questionable. It shall be still concealed. While it remains unknown, Belville will himself tell me everything; and doubt, upon an occasion of this nature, is infinitely more insupportable than the downright falsehood of the woman whom we love. [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in General Savage's House.

Enter GENERAL SAVAGE and TORRINGTON.

Gen. S. Zounds! Torrington, give me quarter, when I surrender up my sword: I own that for these twenty years, I have been suffering all the inconveniences of marriage, without tasting any one of its comforts, and rejoicing in an imaginary freedom, while I was really grovelling in chains.

Tor. In the dirtiest chains upon earth; yet you wouldn't be convinced, but laughed at all your married acquaintance as slaves, when not one of them put up with half so much from the worst wife as you were obliged to crouch under, from a kept mistress.

Gen. S. 'Tis too true; but you know she sacrificed much for me; you know that she was the widow of a colonel, and refused two very advantageous matches on my account.

Tor. If she was the widow of a judge, and had refused a high chancellor, she was still a devil incarnate, and you were, of course, a madman to live with her. [*I have been sick.*]

Gen. S. You don't remember her card of mine when Tor. I recollect, however, her usage of you in

health, and you may easily find a tender nurse, when you are bowed over by the gout or the rheumatism.

Gen. S. Well, well, I agree with you that she is a devil incarnate; but I am this day determined to part with her for ever,

Tor. Not you, indeed.

Gen. S. What, don't I know my own mind?

Tor. Not you, indeed, when she is in the question; with everybody else, your resolution is as unalterable as a determination in the house of peers; but Mrs. Tempest is your fate, and she reverses your decrees with as little difficulty as a fraudulent debtor now-a-days procures his certificate under a commission of bankruptcy.

Gen. S. Well, if, like the Roman Fabius, I conquer by delay, in the end, there will be no great reason to find fault with my generalship. The proposal of parting now comes from herself.

Tor. Oh! you daren't make it for the life of you.

Gen. S. You must know, that this morning we had a smart cannonading on Belville's account, and she threatens, as I told you before, to quit my house if I don't challenge him for taking away her niece.

Tor. That fellow is the very devil among the women, and yet there isn't a man in England fonder of his wife.

Gen. S. Poh! if the young minx hadn't surrendered to him, she would have capitulated to some body else, and I shall, at this time, be doubly obliged to him, if he is in any way instrumental in getting the

Tor. Why at this time? [snuff off my hands.

Gen. S. Because, to shew you how fix'd my resolution is to be a keeper no longer, I mean to marry immediately.

Tor. And can't you avoid being pressed to death, like a felon who refuses to plead, without incurring a sentence of perpetual imprisonment?

Gen. S. I fancy you would, yourself, have no objection to a perpetual imprisonment in the arms of Miss Walsingham?

Tor. But have you any reason to think, that upon examination, in a case of love, she would give a favourable reply to your interrogatories?

Gen. S. The greatest; do you think I'd hazard such an engagement without being perfectly sure of my ground? Notwithstanding my present connexion won't suffer me to see a modest woman at my own house, she always treats me with particular attention whenever I visit at Belville's, or meet her anywhere else. If fifty young fellows are present, she directs all her assiduities to the old soldier, and my son has a thousand times told me that she professes the highest opinion of my understanding.

Tor. And truly you give a notable proof of your understanding, in thinking of a woman almost young enough to be your grand-daughter.

Gen. S. Nothing like an experienced chief to command in any garrison.

Tor. Recollect the state of your present citadel.

Gen. S. Well, if I am blown up by my own mine, I shall be the only sufferer. There's another thing I want to talk of, I am going to marry my son to Miss Moreland.

Tor. Miss Moreland!

Gen. S. Belville's sister.

Tor. Oh! ay, I remember that Moreland had got a good estate to assume the name of Belville.

Gen. S. I haven't yet mentioned the matter to my son, but I settled the affair with the girl's mother yesterday, and she only waits to communicate it to Belville, who is her oracle, you know.

Tor. And are you sure the captain will like her.

Gen. S. I am not so unreasonable as to insist upon his liking her, I shall only insist upon his marrying her.

Tor. What, whether he likes her or not?

Gen. S. When I issue my orders, I expect them to be obeyed; and don't look for an examination into their propriety.

Tor. What a delightful thing it must be to live under a military government, where a man is not to be troubled with the exercise of his understanding.

Gen. S. Miss Moreland has thirty thousand pounds; that's a large sum of ammunition money.

Tor. Ay, but a marriage merely on the score of fortune, is only gilding the death warrant sent down for the execution of a prisoner. However, as I know your obstinate attachment to what you once resolve, I sha'n't pretend to argue with you; where are the papers which you want me to consider?

Gen. S. They are in my library; file off with me to the next room and they shall be laid before you; but first I'll order the chariot, for the moment I have your opinion, I purpose to sit down regularly before Miss Walsingham. Who waits there?—[Enter a Servant.]—Is Mrs. Tempest at home?

Serv. Yes, sir, just come in, and just going out again.

Gen. S. Very well; order the chariot to be got

Serv. Sir, one of the panels was broken last night at the Opera-house.

Gen. S. Sir, I didn't call to have the pleasure of your conversation, but to have obedience paid to my orders.

Tor. Go order the chariot, you blockhead.

Serv. With the broken panel, sir!

Gen. S. Yes, you rascal, if both panels were broken, and the back shattered to pieces.

Serv. The coachman thinks that one of the wheels is damaged, sir.

Gen. S. Don't attempt to reason, you dog, but execute your orders. Bring the chariot without the wheels, if you can't bring it with them.

Tor. Ay, bring it, if you reduce it to a sledge, and let your master look like a malefactor for high treason, on his journey to Tyburn.

[Enter MRS. TEMPEST.]

Mrs. T. General Savage, is the house to be for ever a scene of noise with your domineering? The chariot sha'n't be brought; it won't be fit for use till it is repaired, and John shall drive it this very minute to the coachmaker's. [another thing.]

Gen. S. Nay, my dear, if it isn't fit for use, that's

Tor. Here's the experienced chief, that's fit to command in any garrison! [Aside.]

Gen. S. Go order me the coach, then. [To Serv.]

Mrs. T. You can't have the coach.

Gen. S. And why so, my love?

Mrs. T. Because I want it for myself. Robert, get a hack for your master—though, indeed, I don't see what business he has out of the house.

[Exit, with Servant.]

Tor. When you issue your orders, you expect them to be obeyed, and don't look for an examination into their propriety.

Gen. S. The fury! this has steeled me against her for ever, and nothing on earth can now prevent me from drumming her out immediately.

Mrs. T. [Without.] An unreasonable old fool! but I'll make him know who governs this house.

Gen. S. Zounds! here she comes again; she has been lying in ambuscade, I suppose, and has overheard us. [for ever.]

Tor. What if she has? you are steel'd against her

Gen. S. No, she's not coming, she's going down stairs; and now, dear Torrington, you must be as silent as a sentinel on an out-post about this affair. If that irrago were to hear a syllable of it, she might perhaps attack Miss Walsingham in her very camp, and defeat my whole plan of operations.

Tor. I thought you were determined to drum her out immediately. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—Belville's House.

Enter MISS WALSHINGHAM, followed by BELVILLE.

Miss W. I beg, sir, that you will insult me no

longer with solicitations of this nature; give me proofs of your sincerity, indeed! What proofs of sincerity can your situation admit of, if I could be even weak enough to think of you with partiality at all?

Bel. If our affections, madam, were under the government of our reason, circumstanced as I am, this unhappy bosom wouldn't be torn by passion for Miss Walsingham. Had I been blessed with your acquaintance before I saw Mrs. Belville, my hand as well as my heart would have been humbly offered to your acceptance—fate, however, has ordered it otherwise, and it is cruel to reproach me with that situation as a crime, which ought to be pitied as my greatest misfortune.

Miss W. He's actually forcing tears into his eyes! however, I'll mortify him severely. (*Aside.*)

Bel. But such proofs of sincerity as my situation can admit of, you shall yourself command, as my only business in existence is to adore you.

Miss W. His only business in existence to adore me! (*Aside.*)

Bel. Prostrate at your feet, my dearest Miss Walsingham (*kneeling*), behold a heart eternally devoted to your service. You have too much goodness, madam, to be the slave of custom, and too much humanity not to pity the wretchedness you have caused. Only, therefore, say that you commiserate my sufferings, I'll ask no more, and surely that may be said, without any injury to your purity, to snatch even an enemy from distraction. Where's my handkerchief? (*Aside.*)

Miss W. Now to answer in his own way, and to make him ridiculous to himself. (*Aside.*) If I thought, if I could think (*affecting to weep*) that that these protestations were real,—

Bel. How can you, madam, be so unjust to your own merit? how can you be so cruelly doubtful of my solemn asseverations? Here I again kneel, and swear eternal love.

Miss W. I don't know what to say; but there is one proof,—(*Affecting to weep.*)

Bel. Name it, my angel, this moment, and make me the happiest of mankind!

Miss W. Swear to be mine for ever.

Bel. I have sworn it a thousand times, my charmer; and I will swear it to the last moment of my life.

Miss W. Why, then—but don't look at me I beseech you; I don't know how to speak it.

Bel. The delicious emotion—do not check the generous tide of tenderness that fills me with such ecstasy.

Miss W. You'll despise me for this weakness.

Bel. This weakness—this generosity, which will demand my everlasting gratitude.

Miss W. I am a fool; but there is a kind of fatality in this affair—I do consent to go off with you.

Bel. Eternal blessings on your condescension.

Miss W. You are irresistible, and I am ready to fly with you to any part of the world.

Bel. Fly to any part of the world, indeed! you shall fly by yourself, then. (*Aside.*) You are the most lovely, the most tender creature in the world, and thus again let me thank you. Oh! Miss Walsingham, I cannot express how happy you've made me! But where's the necessity of our leaving England?

Miss W. I thought he wouldn't like to go abroad. (*Aside.*) That I may possess the pleasure of your company unrival'd.

Bel. I must cure her of this taste for travelling. (*Aside.*)

Miss M. You don't answer, Mr. Belville?

Bel. Why I was turning the consequence of your proposal in my thoughts, as going off—going off—you know.

Miss W. Why going off, you know, is going off; and what objections can you have to going off?

Bel. Why going off, will subject you, at a certainty, to the slander of the world; whereas, by staying at home, we may not only have numberless opportunities of meeting, but at the same time prevent suspicion itself from ever breathing on your reputation.

Miss W. I didn't dream of your starting any difficulties, sir. Just now I was dearer to you than all the world.

Bel. And so you are, by heaven!

Miss W. Why won't you sacrifice the world, then, at once, to obtain me?

Bel. Surely, my dearest life, you must know the necessity which every man of honour is under, of keeping up his character?

Miss W. So, here's this fellow swearing to ten thousand lies, and yet talking very gravely about his honour and his character. (*Aside.*) Why, to be sure, in these days, Mr. Belville, the instances of conjugal infidelity are so very scarce, and men of fashion are so remarkable for a tender attachment to their wives, that I don't wonder at your circumspection. But do you think I can stoop to accept you by halves, or admit of any partnership in your heart?

Bel. Oh! you must do more than that, if you have anything to say to me. (*Aside.*) Surely, madam, when you know my whole soul unalterably your own, you will permit me to preserve those appearances with the world, which are indispensably requisite. Mrs. Belville is a most excellent woman, however it may be my fortune to be devoted to another. Her happiness, besides, constitutes a principal part of my felicity, and if I were publicly to forsake her, I should be hunted as a monster from society.

Miss W. Then, I suppose, it is by way of promoting Mrs. Belville's repose, sir, that you make love to other women; and, by way of shewing the nicety of your honour, that you attempt the purity of such as your own roof, peculiarly, entitles to protection. For the honour intended to me—thus low to the ground, I thank you, Mr. Belville.

Bel. Laughed at, by all the stings of mortification!

Miss W. Good b'ye; don't let this accident mortify your vanity too much; but take care, the next time you vow everlasting love, that the object is neither tender enough to sob—sob—at your distress, nor provoking enough to make a proposal of leaving England. How greatly a little common sense can lower these fellows of extraordinary impudence! (*Exit.*)

Bel. So, then, I am fairly taken in, and she has been only diverting herself with me all this time; however, lady fair, I may chance to have the laugh in a little time on my side; for if you can sport in this manner about the flame, I think it must, in the run, lay hold of your wings. What shall I do in this affair? She sees the matter in its true light, and there's no good to be expected from thumping of bosoms, or squeezing white handkerchiefs;—no, these won't do with women of sense, and in a short time, they'll be ridiculous to the very babies of a boarding-school.

Enter CAPTAIN SAVAGE.

Capt. S. Well, Belville, what news? You have had a fresh opportunity with Miss Walsingham.

Bel. Why, faith! Savage, I've had a most extraordinary scene with her, and yet have but little reason to brag of my good fortune, though she offered in express terms to run away with me.

Capt. S. Prythee explain yourself, man; she couldn't surely be so shameless!

Bel. Oh! her offering to run away with me, was by no means the worst part of the affair.

Capt. S. No, then it must be d—d bad, indeed; but prythee hurry to an explanation.

Bel. Why, then, the worst part of the affair is,

that she was laughing at me the whole time, and made this proposal of an elopement, with no other view than to shew me in shrew colours to myself, as a very dirty fellow to the best wife in England.

Capt. S. I am easy. (*Aside.*)

Enter SPRUCE.

Spruce. Sir, there is an Irish gentleman below with a letter for you, who will deliver it to nobody *Bel.* Shew him up, then. [but yourself.

Spruce. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

Capt. S. It may be on business, Belville; I'll take my leave of you.

Bel. Oh! by no means; I can have no business which I desire to keep from you, though you are the arrantest miser of your confidence upon earth, and would rather trust your life in anybody's hands than even a paltry amour with the apprentice of a milliner.

Enter CONNOLLY.

Con. Gentlemin, your most obedient; pray, which of you is Mr. Belville?

Bel. My name is Belville, at your service, sir.

Con. I have a little bit of a letter for you, sir. •

Bel. (*Reads.*) "Sir,—The people where Miss Leeson lately lodged, asserting positively, that you have taken her away in a fictitious character, the brother of that unhappy girl thinks himself obliged to demand satisfaction, for the injury which you have done his family. Though a stranger to your person, he is sufficiently acquainted with your reputation for spirit, and shall, therefore, make no doubt of seeing you with a case of pistols, near the Ring in Hyde Park, at eight o'clock this evening, to answer the claims of
"To Cracks Belville, Esq." GEORGE LEESON.

Capt. S. Eight o'clock in the evening! 'tis a strange time!

Con. Why so, honey? A fine evening is as good a time for a bad action as a fine morning; and if a man of sense can be such a fool as to fight a duel, he should never sleep upon the matter, for the more he thinks of it, the more he must feel himself ashamed of his resolution.

Bel. A pretty letter!

Con. Oh! yes, an invitation to a brace of bullets is a very pretty thing. [*written.*

Bel. For a challenge, however, 'tis very civilly

Con. 'Faith! if it was written to me, I shouldn't be very fond of such civility; I wonder he doesn't sign himself your most obedient servant. •

Capt. S. I told you Leeson's character, and what would become of this d—d business; but your affairs, are they settled, Belville?

Bel. Oh! they are always settled; for as this is a country where people occasionally die, I take constant care to be prepared for contingencies.

Con. Occasionally die! I'll be very much obliged to you, sir, if you tell me the country where people do not die; for I'll immediately go and end

Bel. Ha, ha, ha! [*my days there.*

Con. 'Faith! you may laugh, gentlemin, but though I am a foolish Irishman and come about a foolish piece of business, I'd prefer a snug birth in this world, bad as it is, to the finest coffin in all Christendom.

Bel. I am surprised, sir, that thinking in this manner, you would be the bearer of a challenge.

Con. And well you may, sir; but we must often take a pleasure in serving our friends, by doing things that are very disagreeable to us.

Capt. S. Then you think Mr. Leeson much to blame, perhaps, for hazarding his life where he can by no means repair the honour of his sister.

Con. Indeed and I do; but I shall think this gentleman, begging his pardon, much more to blame for meeting him. [*disappoint your friend?*

Bel. And why so, sir? You wouldn't have me

Con. 'Faith! and that I would; he, poor lad, may have some reason, at present, to be tired of the world, but you have a fine estate, a fine wife,

a fine parcel of children. In short, honey, you have everything to make you fond of living, and the devil burn me, were I in your case, if I'd stake my own happiness against the misery of any man.

Bel. I am very much obliged to your advice, sir, though on the present occasion I cannot adopt it. Be so good as to present my compliments to your friend, and tell him I shall certainly do myself the honour of attending his appointment.

Con. Why, then, upon my soul, I am very sorry for it. •

Capt. S. 'Tis not very customary, sir, with gentlemen of Ireland to oppose an affair of honour.

Con. They are like the gentlemin of England, sir, they are brave to a fault; yet I hope to see the day that it will be infamous to draw the swords of either, against anybody but the enemies of their country. [*Exit.*

Bel. I am quite charmed with this honest Hibernian, and would almost fight a duel for the pleasure of his acquaintance.

Capt. S. Come, step with me a little, and let us consider whether there may not be some method of accommodating this cursed business.

Bel. Poh! don't be uneasy upon my account; my character, with regard to affairs of this nature, is, unhappily, too well established, and you may be sure that I shan't fight with Leeson.

Capt. S. No! you have injured him greatly.

Bel. The very reason, of all others, why I should not cut his throat. [*Exit.*

Enter SPRUCE.

Spruce. What, the devil, this master of mine has got a duel upon his hands! Zounds! I am sorry for that; he is a prince of a fellow, and a good subject must always love his prince, though he may now and then be a little out of humour with his actions.

Enter GENERAL SAVAGE.

Gen. S. Your hall-door standing open, Spruce, and none of your sentinels being on guard, I have surprised your camp thus far without resistance. Where is your master?

Spruce. Just gone out with Captain Savage, sir.

Gen. S. Is your lady at home?

Spruce. No, sir, but Miss Walsingham is at home; shall I inform her of your visit?

Gen. S. There is no occasion to inform her of it, for here she is, Spruce. [*Exit Spruce.*

Enter MISS WALSHINGHAM.

Miss W. General Savage, your most humble servant.

Gen. S. My dear Miss Walsingham, it is rather cruel that you should be left at home by yourself, and yet I am greatly rejoiced to find you at present without company.

Miss W. I can't but think myself in the best company, when I have the honour of your conversation, General.

Gen. S. You flatter me too much, madam; yet I am come to talk to you on a serious affair, Miss Walsingham; an affair of importance to me and to yourself. Have you leisure to favour me with a short audience, if I beat a parley?

Miss W. Anything of importance to you, sir, is always sufficient to command my leisure. 'Tis as the Captain suspected. (*Aside.*)

Gen. S. You tremble, my lovely girl, but don't be alarmed; for though my business is of an important nature, I hope it won't be of a disagreeable one.

Miss W. And yet I am greatly agitated. (*Aside.*)

Gen. S. Soldiers, Miss Walsingham, are said to be generally favoured by the kind partiality of the ladies.

Miss W. The ladies are not without gratitude, sir, to those who devote their lives peculiarly to the service of their country.

Gen. S. Generously said, madam; then give me

leave, without any masked battery, to ask, if the heart of an honest soldier is a prize at all worth your acceptance.

Miss W. Upon my word, sir, there's no masked battery in this question.

Gen. S. I am as fond of a *coup de main*, madam, in love, as in war, I hate the tedious method of supping a town, when there is a possibility of entering sword in hand.

Gen. W. Why, really, sir, a woman may as well know her own mind, when she is first summoned by the trumpet of a lover, as when she undergoes all the tiresome formality of a siege. You see, I have caught your own mode of conversing, General.

Gen. S. And a very great compliment I consider it, madam; but now that you have candidly confessed an acquaintance with your own mind, answer me with that frankness for which everybody admires you so much. Have you any objection to change the name of Walsingham?

Miss W. Why, then, frankly, General Savage, I say, no. [declaration.]

Gen. S. Ten thousand thanks to you for this kind *Miss W.* I hope you won't think it a forward one.

Gen. S. I'd sooner see my son run away in the day of battle; I'd sooner think Lord Russell was bribed by Louis the XIVth, and sooner vilify the memory of Algernon Sidney.

Miss W. How unjust it was ever to suppose the General a tyrannical father! (*Aside.*)

Gen. S. You have told me condescendingly, *Miss Walsingham*, that you have no objection to change your name; I have but one question more

Miss W. Pray propose it. [to ask.]

Gen. S. Would the name of Savage be disagreeable to you? Speak frankly again, my dear girl!

Miss W. Why, then, again, I frankly say, no.

Gen. S. You make me too happy; and though I shall readily own, that a proposal of this nature would come with more propriety from my son—

Miss W. I am much better pleased that you make the proposal yourself, sir.

Gen. S. You are too good to me. Torrington thought that I should meet with a repulse. (*Aside.*)

Miss W. Have you communicated this business to the Captain, sir?

Gen. S. No, my dear madam, I did not think that at all necessary. I have always been attentive to the Captain's happiness, and I propose that he shall be married in a few days.

Miss W. What, whether I will or no?

Gen. S. Oh! you can have no objection.

Miss W. I must be consulted, however, about the day, General; but nothing in my power shall be wanting to make him happy.

Gen. S. Obliging loveliness!

Miss W. You may imagine that if I were not previously impressed in favour of your proposal, it would not have met my concurrence so readily.

Gen. S. Then you own that I had a previous friend in the garrison?

Miss W. I don't blush to acknowledge it, when I consider the accomplishments of the object, sir.

Gen. S. Oh! this is too much, madam; the principal merit of the object is his passion for *Miss Walsingham*.

Miss W. Don't say that, General, I beg of you; for I don't think there are many women in the kingdom who could behold him with indifference.

Gen. S. Ah! you flatter, flattering angel! and yet, by the memory of Marlborough, my lovely girl,

the idea of a prepossession on your part, which I have imagined me to hope for a favourable reception.

Miss W. Then I must have been very indiscreet, for I laboured to conceal that prepossession as much as possible.

Gen. S. You couldn't conceal it from me; you couldn't conceal it from me. The female heart is a

field which I am thoroughly acquainted with, and which has, more than once, been a witness to my victories, madam.

Miss W. I don't at all doubt your success with the ladies, General; but as we now understand one another so perfectly, you will give me leave to retire.

Gen. S. One word, my dear creature, and no more; I shall wait upon you sometime to-day, with Mr. Torrington, about the necessary settlements.

Miss W. You must do as you please, General; you are invincible in everything.

Gen. S. And if you please, we'll keep everything a profound secret till the articles are all settled, and the definitive treaty ready for execution.

Miss W. You may be sure that delicacy will not suffer me to be communicative on the subject, sir.

Gen. S. Then you leave everything to my management.

Miss W. I can't trust a more noble negotiator.

[Exit.]

Gen. S. The day's my own. (*Sings.*) "Britons, strike home! strike home! Revenge," &c. [Exit.]

* ACT III.—SCENE I.—*Miss Leeson's Lodgings.*

Enter LADY RACHEL MILDEW, MRS. BELVILLE, and MISS LEESON.

Lady R. Well, Mrs. Belville, I am extremely glad you agree with me in opinion of this young lady's qualifications for the stage. Don't you think she'd play *Miss Headstrong* admirably in my comedy?

Mrs. B. Yes, indeed, I think she possesses a natural fund of spirit, very much adapted to the character. 'Tis impossible, surely, that this hoyden can have a moment's attraction for Mr. Belville. (*Aside.*)

Miss L. You are very obliging, ladies; but I have no turn for comedy, my forte is tragedy entirely.

"Alphonso! Oh! Alphonso, to thee I call."

Lady R. But, my dear, are there none of our comedies to your taste?

Miss L. Oh! yes; some of the sentimental ones are very pretty; there's such little difference between them and tragedies.

Lady R. And pray, my dear, how long have you been engaged to Mr. Frankly?

Miss L. I only came away last night, and have not seen Mr. Frankly since, though I expect him every moment. [tuned. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. B. Last night! Just as Mrs. Tempest men-

Lady R. You had the concurrence of your friends?

Miss L. Not I, madam. Mr. Frankly said I had too much genius to mind my friends, and as I should want nothing from them, there was no occasion to consult them in the affair. [perhaps?]

Lady R. Then Osbaldiston is not your real name?

Miss L. Oh! no; nor do I tell my real name: I chose Osbaldiston because it was a long one, and would make a striking appearance in the bills.

Mrs. B. I wish we could see Mr. Frankly.

Miss L. Perhaps you may, madam; for he designs to give me a lesson every day, till we are ready to set off for Ireland.

Lady R. Suppose, then, my dear, you would oblige us with a scene in *Juliet*, by way of showing your proficiency to Mrs. Belville.

Miss L. Will you stand up for Romeo?

Lady R. With all my heart, and I'll give you some instructions.

Miss L. I beg pardon, ma'am; I'll learn to act under nobody but Mr. Frankly. This room is without a carpet; if you will step into the next, ladies, I'll endeavour to oblige you. "Shall I not be envired, distraught!"—This way, ladies.

Lady R. Pray, madam, shew us the way. [Exit with Miss Lee.]

Mrs. B. I'll prolong this mummery as much as possible, in hopes the manager may come. Lie still, poor, fluttering heart, it cannot be the lord of all your wishes; it cannot, surely, be your adored Belville! [Exit.]

Re-enter MISS LEESON.

Miss Lee. Haven't I left my Romeo and Juliet here? Oh! yes, there it is.

Enter BELVILLE.

Bel. "Oh! were those eyes in heav'n,
They'd thro' the starry regions stream so bright,
That birds would sing, and think it was the morn."

Miss L. Ah! my dear Mr. Frankly, I am so glad you are come! I was dying to see you.

Bel. Kiss me, my dear: why didn't you send me word of your intention to come away last night?

Miss L. I hadn't time; but as I knew where the lodgings were, I thought I should be able to find you by a note to the coffee-house I always directed to.

Bel. Kiss me again, my little sparkler.

Miss L. Nay, I won't be kissed in this manner; for though I am going on the stage, I intend to have some regard for my character. But—ha, ha—I am glad you are come now: I have company above stairs.

Bel. Company! that's unlucky at this time, for I wanted to make you entirely easy about your character. (*Aside.*) And pray, my dear, who is your company? You know we must be very cautious for fear of your relations.

Miss L. Oh! they are only ladies. But one of them is the most beautiful creature in the world.

Bel. The devil she is! [*heaven's light.*]

Miss L. "An earth-treading star, that makes dim

Bel. Zounds! I'll take a peep at the star, who knows but I may have an opportunity of making another actress? (*Aside.*)

Miss L. Come, charmer, charmer!

Bel. "Wert thou as far

As that vast shore, wash'd by the farthest sea,
I would adventure for such merchandize." Now let's see what fortune has sent us above stairs.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Dining-room at Miss Lerson's.*

MRS. BELVILLE and LADY RACHEL discovered.

Mrs. B. This is a most ignorant young creature, Lady Rachel.

Lady R. Why, I think she is: did you observe how she slighted my offer of instructing her?

Enter MISS LEESON.

Miss L. Ladies, ladies! here he is; here is Mr. Frankly.—[*Enter BELVILLE, bowing very low.*]

Bel. Ladies, your most obedient.

Mrs. B. Let me, if possible, recollect myself. Sir, your most obedient, humble servant.

Bel. Zounds! let me out of the house.

Lady R. What do I see?

Miss L. You seem, ladies, to know this gentleman.

Mrs. B. (*Detaining him.*) You sha'n't go, renegade. You laughed at my credulity this morning, and I must now laugh at your embarrassment.

Bel. What a kind thing it would be in anybody to blow out my stupid brains? [*my comedy.*]

Lady R. I'll mark this down for an incident in

Miss L. What do you hang your head for, Mr. Frankly?

Bel. Be so good as to ask that lady, my dear. The devil has been long in my debt, and now he pays me home with a witness.

Mrs. B. What a cruel thing it is to let Mrs. Tempest out, my love, without somebody to take care of her! [*madam?*]

Miss L. What, do you know Mrs. Tempest, *Mrs. B.* Yes, my dear; and I am pretty well acquainted with this gentleman.

Miss L. What, isn't this gentleman the manager of a play-house in Ireland?

Bel. The curtain is almost dropped, my dear; the farce is nearly over, and you'll be speedily acquainted with the catastrophe.—[*Enter MRS. TEMPEST.*]

Mrs. T. Yes, sir, the curtain is almost dropped; I have had spies to watch your haunts, and the catastrophe ends in your detection. Come, you abandoned slut— [*brought upon the stage?*]

Miss L. And have I eloped, after all, without being

Mrs. T. I don't know that you would be brought upon the stage, but I am sure you were near being brought upon the town. I hope, madam, for the future, you'll set me down a mad woman. (*To Mrs. B.*)

Mrs. B. Mr. Belville, you'll make my apologies to this lady, and acknowledge that I think her perfectly in her senses.

Bel. I wish that I had entirely lost mine.

Lady R. (*Writing.*) "I wish that I had entirely lost mine." A very natural wish, in such a situation.

Mrs. T. Come, you audacious minx, come away. You shall be sent into Yorkshire this very evening; and see what your poor mother will say to you, hussey.

Miss L. I will go on the stage if I die for't; and 'tis some comfort there's a play-house at York.

[*Exit with Mrs. T.*]

Bel. Nancy, I am so ashamed, so humbled, and so penitent, that if you knew what passes here, I am sure you would forgive me.

Mrs. B. My love, though I cannot say I rejoice in your infidelity, yet, believe me, I pity your distress: let us, therefore, think no more of this.

Lady R. (*Writing.*) "And think no more of this."

This conduct is new in a wife, and very dramatic.

Bel. Where, my angel, have you acquired so many requisites to charm with?

Mrs. B. In your society, my dear; and, believe me, that a wife may be as true a friend as any bottle companion upon earth, though she can neither get merry with you overnight, nor blow out your brains about some foolish quarrel in the morning.

Bel. If wives knew the omnipotence of virtue, where she wears a smile upon her face, they'd all follow your bewitching example, and make a faithless husband quite an incredible character.

Lady R. (*Writing.*) "Quite an incredible character." Let me set down that. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*General Savage's House.*

Enter GENERAL SAVAGE and CAPTAIN SAVAGE.

Gen. S. Yes, Horace, I have been just visiting at Belville's. [*Walsingham?*]

Capt. S. You found nobody at home but Miss Gen. S. No; but I'd a long conversation with her, and upon a very interesting subject.

Capt. S. 'Tis as I guessed. (*Aside.*)

Gen. S. She is a most amiable creature, Horace.

Capt. S. So she is, sir, and will make any man happy that marries her.

Gen. S. I am glad you think so.

Capt. S. He's glad I think so! 'tis plain; but I must leave everything to himself, and seem wholly passive in this affair. (*Aside.*)

Gen. S. A married life, after all, Horace, I am now convinced is the most happy, as well as the

Capt. S. It is, indeed, sir. [*most reputable.*]

Gen. S. Then, perhaps, you would have no objection to be married, if I offered you as agreeable a young woman as Miss Walsingham.

Capt. S. 'Twould be my first pride on every occasion, sir, to pay an implicit obedience to your commands.

Gen. S. That's sensibly said, Horace, and obligingly said; prepare yourself, therefore, for an introduction to the lady in the morning.

Capt. S. Is the lady prepared to receive me, sir?

Gen. S. Oh! yes; and you can't think how highly delighted Miss Walsingham appeared, when I acquainted her with my resolution on the subject.

Capt. S. She's all goodness.

Gen. S. The more I know her, the more I am charmed with her. I must not be explicit with him yet, for fear my secret should get wind, and reach the ears of the enemy. (*Aside.*) I propose, Horace, that you should be married immediately.

Capt. S. The sooner the better, sir, I have no will but your's.

Gen. S. (*Shaking hands with him.*) By the memory of Marlborough, you are a most excellent boy. But

what do you think? Miss Walsingham insists upon naming the day. [make it a distant one.]

Capt. S. And welcome, sir, I am sure she won't. *Gen. S.* Oh! she said that nothing in her power should be wanting to make you happy.

Capt. S. I am sure of that, sir. (*A loud knocking.*) *Gen. S.* Zounds! Horace, here's the disgrace and punishment of my life; let's avoid her as we would a fever in the camp.

Capt. S. Come to the library, and I'll tell you how whimsically she was treated this morning at Belville's.

Gen. S. Death and the devil! make haste. Oh! I must laugh at marriage, and be cursed to me! But I am providing, Horace, against your falling into my error.

Capt. S. I am eternally indebted to you, sir.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

Enter Mrs. BELVILLE and Lady RACHEL MILDEW.

Lady R. Nay, Mrs. Belville, I have no patience, you act quite unnaturally. [searable?]

Mrs. B. What, because I am unwilling to be misled?—this attempt to seduce Miss Walsingham, which your woman overheard, is unpardonable.

Mrs. B. I don't say but that I am strongly wounded by his irregularities. Yet, if Mr. Belville is unhappy a rover, I would much rather that he should have twenty mistresses than one.

Lady R. You astonish me.

Mrs. B. Why, don't you know, my dear madam, that while he is divided amidst a variety of objects, 'tis impossible for him to have a serious attachment?

Lady R. Lord! Mrs. Belville, how can you speak with so much composure! a virtuous woman should be always outrageous upon such an occasion as this.

Mrs. B. What, and weary the innocent sun and moon from the firmament, like a despairing princess in a tragedy? No, no, Lady Rachel; 'tis bad enough to be indifferent to the man I love, without studying to excite his aversion.

Lady R. How glad I am that Miss Walsingham made him so heartily ashamed of himself! Lord! these young men are so full of levity! Give me a husband of Mr. Torrington's age, say I.

Mrs. B. And give me a husband of Mr. Belville's, say I, with all his follies. However, Lady Rachel, I am pretty well satisfied that my conduct at Miss Leeson's will have a proper effect upon Mr. Belville's generosity, and put an entire end to his galantries for the future.

Lady R. Don't deceive yourself, my dear. The gods in the shilling gallery would sooner give up Roast Beef, or go without an epilogue on the first night of a new piece. [as Mr. Belville?]

Mrs. B. Why should you think so of such a man?

Lady R. Because Mr. Belville is a man. However, if you dare run the risk, we will try the sincerity of his reformation. [my soul upon his honour.]

Mrs. B. If I dare run the risk! I would stake *Lady R.* Then your poor soul would be in a very terrible situation.

Mrs. B. By what test can we prove his sincerity?

Lady R. By a very simple one. You know I write to Miss Walsingham, that our hands are scarcely

Mrs. B. Well— [known asunder.]

Lady R. Why, then, let me write to him as from [doubt of his honour.]

Mrs. B. If I did not think it would look like a

Lady R. Poh! Dare you proceed upon my plan?

Mrs. B. Most confidently. Come to my dressing-room, where you'll find everything ready for writing, and then you may explain your scheme more particularly.

Lady R. I'll attend you; but I am really sorry, my dear, for the love of propriety, to see you so often under the perfidy of your husband; you should be quite wretched, indeed you should. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Temple.*

Enter LEESON.

Lee. The hell-hounds are after me.—[*Enter CONNOLLY.*—Fly, open the chambers this moment, the bailiffs are in sight.]

Con. Faith, and that I will; but it will be of no use to fly a step if I haven't the key.

Lee. Zounds! did not you lock the door?

Con. Yes; but I believe I left the key on the inside. However, I see no more than three people, and I think we could beat them to their hearts' content in three minutes.

Lee. What, and fly in the face of the law?

Con. To be sure you have a great regard for the law, when you are going to fight a duel.

Lee. 'Sdeath! is this a time to talk? Stay here, and throw every possible impediment in the way of these execrable rascals. [*Going.*]

Con. Holloa! honey, come back. These execrable rascals are very worthy people, I fancy, for they are quietly turning down the next court. [sure.]

Lee. Their appearance alarmed me beyond measure.

Con. Oh! you shouldn't judge by outside shew, my dear; for there is no being a complete rogue, without the appearance of an honest man.

Lee. Circumstanced as I am at present, everything terrifies me; for should I be arrested, the consequence would possibly be fatal, both to my honour and my love. Belville would proclaim me publicly a coward; and Emily set me down as a base, a mercenary adventurer, who was solely attracted by her fortune.

Con. Why, 'faith! honey, like yourself, they might be apt to judge by appearances.

Lee. Oh! Connolly, a man of spirit should learn prudence from his very pride, and consider every unnecessary debt he contracts as a wanton diminution of his character: the moment he makes another his creditor, he makes himself a slave. He runs the hazard of insults which he never can resent, and of disgraces which are seldom to be mitigated. He incurs the danger of being dragged, like the vilest felon to the felon's prison; and, such is the depravity of the world, that guilt is even more likely to meet with advocates, than misfortune. [*Exit.*]

Con. Must! long life to you, ould Shillala! I wish I had anything besides my carcass to venture for you, for that's nothing; yet you are as welcome to it as the flowers in May. Poor lad! I don't wonder that he is so much afraid of a prison, for, to be sure, it is a blessed place to live in; and a blessed law it must be which coops a man up from every chance of getting money, by way of making him pay his debts. But now let my thick skull consider, if there is any method of preventing this infernal duel. Suppose I have him bound over to the peace. No, that will never do; it would be a shameful thing for a gentleman to keep the peace! besides, I must appear in the business; and people may think, from my connexion with him, that he has not honour enough to throw away his life. Suppose I go another way to work, and send an anonymous letter about the affair to Mrs. Belville: they say, though she is a woman of fashion, that no creter upon earth can be fonder of her husband. Surely, the good genius of Ireland put this scheme into my head. I'll about it this minute; and if there's only one of them kept from the field, I don't think that the other can be much hurt when there will be nobody to fight with him. [*Exit.*]

SCENE V.—*Captain Savage's Lodgings.*

Enter CAPTAIN SAVAGE and BELVILLE.

Capt. S. Why, 'faith! Belville, your detection, and so speedily, too, after all the pretended sanctity of the morning, must have thrown you into a most humiliating situation.

Bel. Into the most distressing one you can imagine: had my wife raved at my falsehood, in the customary manner, I could have brazened it out pretty toler-

ably; but the angel-like sweetness with which she bore the mortifying discovery, planted daggers in my bosom, and made me, at that time, wish her the veriest wixen in the whole creation.

Capt. S. Yet, the suffering forbearance of a wife, is a quality for which she is seldom allowed her merit; we think it her duty to put up with our falsehood, and imagine ourselves exceedingly generous in the main, if we practise no other method of breaking her heart.

Bel. Monstrous, monstrous! from this moment I bid an everlasting adieu to my vices; the generosity of my dear girl—[*Enter a Servant.*]

Serv. (To Bel.) Here's a letter, sir, which Mr. Spruce has brought you.

Bel. Give me leave, Savage. Zounds! what an industrious devil the father of darkness is, when the moment a man determines upon a good action, he sends such a thing as this to stagger his resolution.

Capt. S. What have you got there?
Bel. You shall know presently. Will you let Spruce come in?

Capt. S. Where have you acquired all this ceremony?

Bel. Bid Spruce come in.

Serv. Yes, sir. [Exit.]

Capt. S. Is that another challenge?

Bel. 'Tis, upon my soul, but it came from a beautiful enemy, and dares me to give a meeting to Miss *Capt. S.* How! [Walsingham.]

Enter SPRUCE.

Bel. Pray, Spruce, who gave you this letter?
Spruce. Miss Walsingham's woman, sir: she said it was about very particular business, and therefore I wouldn't trust it by any of the footmen.

Capt. S. Oh! d— your diligence! [*Aside.*]

Bel. You may go home, Spruce.

Spruce. Is there no answer necessary, sir?

Bel. I shall call at home myself, and give the necessary answer.

Spruce. What can be the matter with him all of a sudden, that he is so cold upon the scent of wickedness! [*Aside, and exit.*]

Capt. S. And what answer do you propose making to it, Belville?

Bel. Read the letter, and then tell me what I should do. You know Miss Walsingham's hand.

Capt. S. Oh! perfectly. This is not—yes, it is her hand. I have too many cursed occasions to know it. [*Aside.*] [the letter.]

Bel. What are you a muttering about? Read.

Capt. S. (Reads.) "If you are not entirely discouraged, by our last conversation, from renewing the subject which then gave offence"—

Bel. Which then gave offence! You see, Savage, that it is not offensive any longer.

Capt. S. 'Sdeath! you put me out. [*Reads.*]
"You may, at the masquerade, this evening"—

Bel. You remember how earnest she was for the masquerade party.

Capt. S. Yes, yes, I remember it well. And I remember, also, how hurt she was this morning about the affair of Miss Leeson. [*Aside.—Reads.*]
"Have an opportunity of entertaining me." Oh! the strumpet! [*Aside.*]

Bel. But mind the cunning with which she signs the note, for fear it should by any accident fall into improper hands.

Capt. S. (Aside.) Ay, and you put it into very proper hands. [*Reads.*]
"I shall be in the blue domino." The signature is—"YOU KNOW WHO."

Bel. Yes; you know who! [this to try you.]

Capt. S. May be, however, she has only written

Bel. To try me! for what purpose? But if you read a certain postscript there, I fancy you'll be of a different opinion.

Capt. S. (Reads.) "If Mr. Belville has any house of character to retire to, it would be most agreeable, as there could be no fear of interruption."

Bel. What do you say now? Can you recommend

me to any house of character, where we shall be free from interruption.

Capt. S. Oh! curse her house of character! [*Aside.*]
But, surely, Belville, after your late determined resolution to reform—

Bel. Zounds! I forgot that.

Capt. S. After the unexampled sweetness of your wife's behaviour—

Bel. Don't go on, Savage. There is something here, (putting his hand upon his bosom) which feels already not a little awkwardly.

Capt. S. And can you still persist?

Bel. I am afraid to answer your question.

Capt. S. Where the plague are you flying?

Bel. From the justice of your censure, Horace; my own is sufficiently severe; yet I see that I shall be a rascal again, in spite of my teeth; and good advice is only thrown away upon so incorrigible a libertine. [Exit.]

Capt. S. So, then, this diamond of mine proves a counterfeit after all, and I am really the veriest wretch existing, at the moment in which I conceived myself the peculiar favourite of fortune. Oh! the cursed, cursed sex! I'll see her once more to upbraid her with her falsehood, then acquaint ~~myself~~ ^{myself} with her perfidy, to justify my breaking off the marriage, and tear her from my thoughts for ever.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, sir, sir— [ter with the booty?]

Capt. S. Sir, sir, sir! What the devil's the mat-

Serv. Miss Walsingham, sir—

Capt. S. Ah! what of her?

Serv. Was this moment overturned at Mr. Belville's door, and, John tells me, carried in a fit into the house.

Capt. S. Ha! let me fly to her assistance. [Exit.]

Serv. Ha! let me fly to her assistance! Oh! are you thereabouts? [Exit.]

SCENE VI.—*Mr. Belville's.*

Enter MRS. BELVILLE, MISS WALSHINGHAM, and LADY RACHEL MILDEW.

Mrs. B. But are you, indeed, recovered, my dear?

Miss W. Perfectly, my dear; I wasn't in the least hurt, though greatly terrified, when the two fools of coachmen contended for the honour of being first, and drove the carriages together with a violence incredible.

Lady R. I sincerely rejoice at your escape; and now, Mrs. Belville, as you promised to choose a dress for me if I went in your party to the masquerade this evening, can you spare a quarter of an hour to Tavistock-street?

Mrs. B. I am loth to leave Miss Walsingham alone, Lady Rachel, so soon after her fright.

Miss W. Nay, I insist that you don't stay at home upon my account; and Lady Rachel's company to the masquerade is a pleasure I have such an interest in, that I beg you won't delay a moment to oblige her.

Mrs. B. Well, then, I attend your ladyship.

Lady R. You are very good; and so is Miss Walsingham. [Exit with Mrs. B.]

Miss W. I wonder Captain Savage stays away so long! where can he be all this time? I die with impatience to tell him of my happy interview with the General. [Enter a Servant.]

Serv. Captain Savage, madam.

Miss W. Shew him in. [Exit Serv.] How he must rejoice to find his conjectures so fortunately realized!—[Enter CAPTAIN SAVAGE.]

Capt. S. So, madam, you have just escaped a sad accident.

Miss W. And by that agreeable tone and countenance, one would almost imagine you were very sorry for my escape.

Capt. S. People, madam, who doubt the kindness of others, are generally conscious of some defect in themselves.

Miss W. Don't madam me, with this accent of indifference. What has put you out of humour?

Capt. S. Nothing.

Miss W. Are you indisposed?

Capt. S. The crocodile, the crocodile! (*Aside.*)

Miss W. Do you go to the masquerade to-night?

Capt. S. No, but you do.

Miss W. Why not? Come, don't be ill-natured; I'm not your wife yet.

Capt. S. Nor ever will be, I promise you.

Miss W. What is the meaning of this very whimsical behaviour?

Capt. S. The settled composure of her impudence is intolerable. (*Aside.*) Madam, madam, how have I deserved this usage? [you go to that?]

Miss W. Nay, sir, sir, how have I deserved it, if

Capt. S. The letter, madam; the letter.

Miss W. What letter?

Capt. S. Your letter, inviting a gallant from the masquerade to a house of character, madam. What, you appear surprised.

Miss W. Well I may, at so shameless an aspersion.

Capt. S. Madam, madam, I have seen your letter. Your new lover could not keep your secret a moment. But I have nothing to do with you, and only come to declare my reasons for renouncing you overlastingly.—[*Enter a Servant.*]

Serv. General Savage, madam.

Miss W. Shew him up. [*Exit Serv.*] I am glad he is come, sir; inform him of your resolution to break off the match, and let there be an end of everything between us.—[*Enter GENERAL SAVAGE.*]

Gen. S. The news of your accident reached me but this moment, madam, or I should have posted much sooner to reconnoitre your situation. My aid-de-camp, however, has not been inattentive, I see, and I dare say his diligence will not be the least lessened, when he knows his obligations to you.

Capt. S. Oh! sir, I am perfectly sensible of my obligations; and the consciousness of them was one motive of my coming here.

Gen. S. Then you have made your acknowledgement to Miss Walsingham, I hope.

Miss W. He has, indeed, General, said a great deal more than was necessary.

Gen. S. That opinion proceeds from the liberality of your temper; for 'tis impossible he can ever say enough of your goodness.

Capt. S. So it is; if you knew but all, sir.

Gen. S. Why, who can know more of the matter than myself?

Miss W. This gentleman, it seems, has something, General Savage, very necessary for your information.

Gen. S. How's this?

Capt. S. Nay, sir, I only say, that for some particular reasons, which I shall communicate to you at a more proper time; I must beg leave to decline the lady whose hand you kindly intended for me this morning.

Gen. S. Oh! you must! Why, then, I hope you decline, at the same time, all pretensions to every shilling of my fortune. It is not in my power to make you fight, you poltroon, but I can punish you for cowardice.

Miss W. Nay, but General, let me interpose here. If he maintain any charge against the lady's reputation, 'twould be very hard that he should be disinherited, for a necessary attention to his honour.

Capt. S. And if I don't make the charge good, I submit to be disinherited without murmuring.

Gen. S. 'Tis false as hell! the lady is infinitely too good for you, in every respect; and I undervalued her worth when I thought of her for your wife.

Miss W. I am sure the lady is much obliged to your favourable opinion, sir.

Gen. S. Not in the least, madam; I only do her common justice.

Capt. S. I cannot bear that you should be displeased a moment, sir; suffer me, therefore, to render the conversation less equivocal, and a few words will explain everything.

Gen. S. Sirrah, I'll hear no explanation; aren't my orders that you should marry?

Miss W. For my sake hear him, General Savage.

Capt. S. Madam, I disdain every favour that is to be procured by your interposition. [*Exit.*]

Miss W. This matter must not be suffered to proceed farther, though provokingly cruelly as the Captain has behaved. (*Aside.*)

Gen. S. What's that you say, my bewitching girl?

Miss W. I say that you must make it up with the Captain, and the best way will be to hear his charge patiently.

Gen. S. I am shocked at the brutality of the dog; he has no more principle than a suttler, and no more steadiness than a young recruit upon drill. But you shall have ample satisfaction: this very day I'll cut him off from a possibility of succeeding to a shilling of my fortune. He shall be as miserable as—

Miss W. Dear General, do you think that this would give me any satisfaction?

Gen. S. How he became acquainted with my design I know not, but I see plainly that his mutiny proceeds from his aversion to my marrying again.

Miss W. To your marrying again, sir! why should he object to that? [dren, to be sure.]

Gen. S. Why, for fear I should have other chil-

Miss W. Indeed, sir, it was not from that motive; and, if I can overlook his folly, you may be prevailed upon to forgive it.

Gen. S. After what you have seen, justice should make you a little more attentive to your own interest, my lovely girl.

Miss W. What, at the expence of his?

Gen. S. In the approaching change of your situation, there may be a family of your own.

Miss W. Suppose there should, sir; won't there be a family of his, too?

Gen. S. I care not what becomes of his family.

Miss W. But, pray, let me think a little about it, General.

Gen. S. 'Tis hard, indeed, when I was so desirous of promoting his happiness that he should throw anything in the way of mine. [confined to me.]

Miss W. Recollect, sir, his offence was wholly

Gen. S. Well, my love, and isn't it throwing an obstacle in the way of my happiness, when he abuses you so grossly for your readiness to marry me?

Miss W. Sir?

Gen. S. I see, with all your good-nature, that this is a question you cannot rally against.

Miss W. It is, indeed, sir. What will become of me? (*Aside.*)

Gen. S. You seem suddenly disordered, my love?

Miss W. Why, really, sir, this affair affects me strongly.

Gen. S. Well, it is possible that, for your sake, I may not punish him with as much severity as I intended. In about an hour I shall beg leave to beat up your quarters again, with Mr. Torrington; for 'tis necessary I should shew you some proof of my gratitude, since you have been so kindly pleased to honour me with a proof of your affection.

Miss W. (*Aside.*) So, now, indeed, we are in a hopeful situation! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.—SCENE I.—An Apartment at Belville's.

Enter MRS. BELVILLE and CAPTAIN SAVAGE.

Mrs. B. Don't argue with me, Captain Savage; but consider that I am a wife, and pity my distraction.

Capt. S. Dear madam, there is no occasion to be so much alarmed; Mr. Belville has very properly determined not to fight; he told me so himself; and should have been effectually prevented, if I hadn't known his resolution.

Mrs. B. There is no knowing to what extremities he may be provoked, if he meets Mr. Leeson; I have sent for you, therefore, to beg that you will save him from the possibility, either of exposing himself to any danger, or of doing an injury to his adversary.

Capt. S. What would you have me do, madam?
Mrs. B. Fly to Hyde-park, and prevent, if yet possible, his meeting with Mr. Leeson. Do it, I conjure you, if you'd save me from desperation.

Capt. S. Though you have no reason whatever to be apprehensive for his safety, madam, yet, since you are so very much affected, I'll immediately execute your commands. *[Exit.]*

Mrs. B. Merciful heaven! where is the generosity, where is the sense, where is the shame of men, to find a pleasure in pursuits which they cannot remember without the deepest horror; which they cannot follow without the meanest fraud; and which they cannot effect without consequences the most dreadful! The single word, pleasure, in a masculine sense, comprehends everything that is cruel; everything that is base; and everything that is desperate. Yet, men, in other respects the noblest of their species, make it the principal business of their lives, and do not hesitate to break in upon the peace of the happiest families, though their own must be necessarily exposed to destruction. Oh! Belville, Belville! my life, my love! The greatest triumph which a libertine can ever experience is too despicable to be envied; 'tis, at best, nothing but a victory over his own humanity, and if he be a husband, he must be dead indeed, if he is not doubly tortured upon the wheel of recollection.

Enter Miss WALSHINGHAM and LADY RACHEL MILDEW.

Miss W. My dear Mrs. Belville, I am extremely unhappy to see you so distressed.

Lady R. Now I am extremely glad to see her so; for if she weren't greatly distressed, it would be monstrously unnatural.

Mrs. B. Oh, Matilda! my husband, my husband! my children, my children!

Miss W. Don't weep, my dear, don't weep, pray, be comforted, all may end happily. Lady Rachel, beg of her not to cry so.

Lady R. Why, you are crying yourself, Miss Walshingham; and though I think it out of character to encourage her tears, I can't help keeping you company.

Mrs. B. Oh! why is not some effectual method contrived to prevent this horrid practice of duelling?

Lady R. I'll expose it on the stage, since the law, now-a-days, kindly leaves the whole cognizance of it to the theatre.

Miss W. And yet, if the laws against it were as well enforced as the laws against destroying the game, perhaps it would be equally for the benefit of the kingdom.

Mrs. B. No law will ever be effectual till the custom is rendered infamous. Wives must shriek, mothers must agonize, orphans must multiply, unless some blessed hand strips the fascinating glare from honourable murder, and bravely exposes the idol who is worshipped thus in blood. While it is disreputable to obey the laws, we cannot look for reformation: but if the duellist is once banished from the presence of his sovereign; if he is for life excommunicated the confidence of his country; if a mark of indelible disgrace be stamped upon him; if the sword of public justice will be the sole chastiser of wrongs; trifles will not be punished with death, and offences really meriting such a punishment will be reserved for the only proper avenger, the common executioner.

Lady R. I couldn't have expressed myself better on the subject, my dear; but till such a hand as you talk of is found, the best will fall into the error of the times.

Miss W. Yes, and butcher each other like madmen, for fear their courage should be suspected by fools.

Mrs. B. No news yet from Captain Savage?

Lady R. He can't have reached Hyde-park yet, my dear.

Miss W. Let us lead you to your chamber, you'll be better there.

Mrs. B. Matilda, I must be wretched and restless; but I'll attend you.

Lady R. Thank heavens, I have no business to plunge me into such a situation.

Miss W. And if I thought I could keep my resolution, I'd determine this moment on living through all the days of my life. Pray, don't spare my dear, my dear.

SCENE II.—Hyde Park.

Enter BELVILLE.

Bel. I fancy I am rather before the time of appointment; engagements of this kind are the daily ones in which, now-a-days, people pretend to any punctuality: a man is allowed half-an-hour's law to dinner, but a thrust through the body must be given within a second of the clock.

Enter LEESON.

Lee. Your servant, sir. Your name, I suppose, is Belville?

Bel. Your supposition is very right, sir; and I fancy I am not much in the wrong, when I suppose your name to be Leeson.

Lee. It is, sir; I am sorry I should keep you here a moment.

Bel. I am very sorry, sir, you should bring me here at all.

Lee. I regret the occasion, be assured, sir; but it is not now a time for talking, we must proceed to action.

Bel. And yet, talking is all the action I shall proceed to, depend upon it.

Lee. What do you mean, sir? Where are your pistols?

Bel. Where I intend they shall remain till my next journey into the country, very quietly over the chimney in my dressing-room.

Lee. You treat this matter with too much levity, Mr. Belville; take your choice of mine, sir.

Bel. I'd rather take them both, if you please; for then no mischief shall be done with either of them.

Lee. Sir, this trifling is adding insult to injury, and shall be resented accordingly. Didn't you come here to give me satisfaction?

Bel. Yes, every satisfaction in my power.

Lee. Take one of these pistols, then.

Bel. Come, Mr. Leeson, your bravery will not at all be lessened by the exercise of a little understanding. If nothing less than my life can atone for the injury I have unconsciously done you, fire at me instantly, but don't be offended because I decline to do you an additional wrong.

Lee. 'Sdeath! sir, do you think I come here with an intention to murder?

Bel. You come to arm the guilty against the innocent, sir, and that, in my opinion, is the most atrocious intention of murder.

Lee. How's this?

Bel. Lookye, Mr. Leeson, there's your pistol. *(Throws it on the ground.)* I have already acted very wrongly with respect to your sister; but, sir, I have some character (though, perhaps, not enough) to maintain, and I will not do a still worse action, in raising my hand against your life.

Lee. This hypocritical cant of cowardice, sir, is too palpable to disarm my resentment; though it held you to be a man of profligate principles, I nevertheless considered you as a man of courage; but if you hesitate a moment longer, by heaven, I'll chastise you on the spot. *(Draws.)*

Bel. I must defend my life; though, if it did not look like timidity, I would inform you—*(They fight, Leeson is disarmed.)* Mr. Leeson, there is your sword again.

Lee. Strike it through my bosom, sir; I don't desire to outlive this instant.

Bel. I hope, my dear sir, that you will long live happy, as your sister, though to my shame I can claim no merit on that account, is recovered unpoluted, by her family; but let me beg that you will now see the folly of decisions by the sword, when success is not fortunately chained to the side of justice. Before I leave you, receive my sincerest

apologies for the injuries I have done you; and, be assured, no occurrence will ever give me greater pleasure, than an opportunity of serving you, if, after what is past, you shall at any time condescend to use me as a friend. [Exit.]

Lee. Very well, very well, very well.—[Enter CONNOLLY.]—What, you have been within hearing. You may say that. [ing, I suppose?

Lee. And isn't this very fine?

Con. Why, I can't say much as to the finery of it, sir, but it is certainly very foolish.

Lee. And so, this is my satisfaction after all!

Con. Yes, and pretty satisfaction it is. When Mr. Belville did you but one injury, he was the greatest villain in the world; but now that he has done you two, in drawing his sword upon you, I suppose he is a very worthy gentleman.

Lee. To be foiled, baffled, disappointed in my revenge! What though my sister is, by accident, unstained, his intentions are as criminal as if her ruin were actually perpetrated; there is no possibility of enduring the reflection! I wish not for the blood of my enemy, but I would at least have the credit of giving him life.

Con. Arrah! my dear, if you had any regard for the life of your enemy, you shouldn't put him in the way of death.

Lee. No more of these reflections, my dear Connolly; my own feelings are painful enough. Will you be so good as to take these d—d pistols, and come with me to the coach?

Con. Troth, and that I will; but don't make yourself uneasy; consider that you have done everything which honour required at your hands.

Lee. I hope so.

Con. Why, you know so. You have broken the laws of heaven and earth as nobly as the first lord in the land; and you have convinced the world that where anybody has done your family one injury, you have courage enough to do it another yourself, by hazarding your life.

Lee. Those, Connolly, who would live reputably in any country, must regulate their conduct, in many cases, by its very prejudices. Custom, with respect to duelling, is a tyrant, whose despotism nobody ventures to attack, though everybody detests its cruelty.

Con. I didn't imagine that a tyrant of any kind would be tolerated in England. But where do you think of going now? for chambers, you know, are, at present, most delightfully dangerous.

Lee. I shall go to Mrs. Crayon's.

Con. What, the gentlewoman that paints all manner of colours in red chalk? [Emily.]

Lee. Yes, where I first became acquainted with

Con. And where the sweet creature has met you two or three times under pretence of sitting for her picture.

Lee. Mrs. Crayon's will, I dare say, oblige me in this exigency with an apartment for a few days, but come, Connolly, we have no time to lose, though if you had any prudence, you would abandon me in my present situation.

Con. Ah! sir, is this your opinion of my friendship? Do you think that anything can ever give me half so much pleasure in serving you, as seeing you surrounded by misfortunes? [Exit.]

SCENE III.—An Apartment at B. Wille's.

Enter GENERAL SAVAGE, TORRINGTON, and SPRUCE.

Spruce. Miss Walsingham will wait on you immediately, gentlemen.

Gen. S. Very well.

Spruce. What can old Holifernes want so continually with Miss Walsingham? [Aside and exit.]

Gen. S. When I bring this sweet, mild creature home, I shall be able to break her spirit to my own wishes. I'll inure her to proper discipline from the first moment, and make her tremble at the very thought of mutiny.

Tor. Ah! General, you are wonderfully brave, when you know the meekness of your adversary.

Gen. S. Envy, Torrington; stark, staring envy: few fellows, on the borders of fifty, have so much reason as myself, to boast of a blooming young woman's partiality. [confines of threescore.

Tor. On the borders of fifty, man! beyond the

Gen. S. The more reason I have to boast of my victory; then; but don't grumble at my triumph, you shall have a kiss of the bride, let that content you, Torrington.—[Enter Miss WALSHINGHAM.]

Miss W. Gentlemen, your most obedient. General, I intended writing to you about a trifling mistake; but poor Mrs. Belville has been so very ill that I couldn't find an opportunity.

Gen. S. I am sorry for Mrs. Belville's illness, but I am happy, madam, to be personally in the way of receiving your commands, and I wait upon you, with Mr. Torrington, to talk about a marriage settlement.

Miss W. Heavens! how shall I undeceive him? [Aside.]

Tor. 'Tis rather an awkward business, Miss Walsingham, to trouble you upon; but as the General wishes that the affair may be as private as possible, he thought it better to speak to yourself, than to treat with any other person.

Gen. S. Yes, my lovely girl; and to convince you that I intend to carry on an honourable war, not to pillage like a free-booter, Mr. Torrington will be a trustee.

Miss W. I am infinitely obliged to your intention, but there's no necessity to talk about any settlement, for—

Gen. S. Pardon me, madam, pardon me, there is—besides, I have determined that there shall be one, and what I once determine is absolute. A tolerable hunt for her own behaviour, when I have married her, Torrington. [Apart to Tor.]

Miss W. I must not shock him before Mr. Torrington. [Aside.] General Savage, will you give me leave to speak a few words in private to you.

Gen. S. There is no occasion for sounding a retreat, madam, Mr. Torrington is acquainted with the whole business, and I am determined, for your sake, that nothing shall be done without him.

Tor. I can have no objection to your hearing the lady *ex parte*, General. [particular nature.

Miss W. What I have to say, sir, is of a very

Tor. [Rising.] I'll leave the room, then.

Gen. S. [Opposing him.] You sha'n't leave the room, Torrington. Miss Walsingham shall have a specimen of my command even before marriage; and you shall see, that every woman is not to bully me out of my determination. [Apart to Tor.]

Miss W. Well, General, you must have your own way.

Gen. S. [To Tor.] Don't you see that it's only fighting the battle stoutly at first, with one of these

Tor. Ah! General. [gentle creatures?

Gen. S. I own, madam, your situation is a distressing one; let us sit down, let us sit down.

Miss W. It is unspeakably distressing, indeed, sir.

Tor. Distressing, however, as it may be, we must proceed to issue, madam; the General proposes your jointure to be one thousand pounds a year.

Miss W. General Savage—

Gen. S. You think this too little, perhaps?

Miss W. I can't think of any jointure, sir.

Tor. Why, to be sure, a jointure is, at best, but a melancholy possession, for it must be purchased by the loss of the husband you love.

Miss W. Pray, don't name it, Mr. Torrington.

Gen. S. [Kissing her hand.] A thousand thanks to you, my lovely girl.

Miss W. For heaven's sake, let go my hand.

Gen. S. I shall be mad till it gives me legal possession of the town. [I beg you'll hear me.

Miss W. Gentlemen—General—Mr. Torrington,

Gen. S. By all means, my adorable creature; I can never have too many proofs of your disinterested affection.

Miss W. There is a capital mistake in this whole affair. I am sinking under a load of distress.

Gen. S. Your confusion makes you look charmingly though.

Miss W. There is no occasion to talk of jointures or marriages to me; I am not going to be married. *Tor.* What's this?

Miss W. Nor have I an idea in nature, however enviable I think the honour, of being your wife, sir.

Gen. S. Madam!

Tor. Why, here's a demur.

Miss W. I am afraid, sir, that in our conversation this morning, my confusion, arising from the particularity of the subject, has led you into a most material misconception. [mistake my ground.]

Gen. S. I am thunderstruck, madam. I couldn't *Tor.* As clear a *sol. pros.* as ever was issued by an attorney-general.

Gen. S. Surely, you can't forget, that at the first word you hang out a flag of truce, told me ever, that I had a previous friend in the fort, and didn't so much as hint at a single article of capitulation.

Tor. Now for the rejoinder to this replication.

Miss W. All this is unquestionably true, General, and perhaps a good deal more; but, in reality, my confusion before you on this subject to-day, was such, that I scarcely knew what I said; I was dying with distress, and at this moment I am very little better. Permit me to retire, General Savage, and only suffer me to add, that though I think myself highly flattered by your addresses, it is impossible for me ever to receive them. Lord, lord! I am glad it is over in any manner. [Exit.]

Tor. Why, we are a little out in this matter, General; the judge has decided against us, when we imagined ourselves sure of the cause.

Gen. The gates shut in my teeth, just as I expected the keys from the governor.

Tor. I am disappointed myself, man; I sha'n't have a kiss of the bride.

Gen. S. At my time of life, too! [her.]

Tor. I said from the first you were too old for *Gen. S.* Zounds! to fancy myself sure of her, and to triumph upon a certainty of victory.

Tor. Ay, and to kiss her hand in a rapturous return for her tenderness to you: let me advise you never to kiss before folks, as long as you live again.

Gen. S. Don't distract me, Torrington; a joke, where a friend has the misfortune to lose the battle, is a downright inhumanity.

Tor. You told me that your son had accused her of something that you would not hear. Suppose we call at his lodgings, he may, perhaps, be able to give us a little information.

Gen. S. Thank you for the thought; but keep your anger more than ever upon your lips. You know how I dread the danger of ridicule; and it would be too much, not only to be thrashed out of the field, but to be laughed at into the bargain.

Tor. I thought when you made a presentment of your sweet person to Miss Walsingham, that the bill would be returned ignoramus. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.—*Belville's.*

MRS. BELVILLE and LADY RACHEL MILDEW, discovered.

Lady R. You heard what Captain Savage said? *Mrs. B.* I would batter myself, but my heart will not suffer it. The Park might be too full for the horrid purpose; and, perhaps, they are gone to decide the quarrel in some other place.

Lady R. The Captain inquir'd of numbers in the Park, without hearing a syllable of them; and is, therefore, positive that they have parted without doing any mischief.

Mrs. B. I am, nevertheless, torn by a thousand apprehensions; and my fancy, with a gloomy kind

of fondness, fastens on the most deadly. This very morning, I exultingly numbered myself in the catalogue of the happiest wives. Perhaps I am a wife no longer; perhaps, my little innocents! your unhappy father is at this moment breathing his last sigh, and wishing, (oh, how vainly!) that he had not preferred a guilty pleasure to his own life, to my eternal peace of mind, and your felicity!

Enter SPRUCE.

Spruce. Madam, madam, my master, my master!

Mrs. B. Is he safe?—[Enter BELVILLE.]

Bel. My love!

Mrs. B. Oh, Mr. Belville! [Faints.]

Bel. Assistance, quick!

Lady R. There, she revives. [heart!]

Bel. The angel-softness! how this rends my

Mrs. B. Oh! Mr. Belville, if you could conceive the agonies I have endured, you would avoid the possibility of another quarrel as long as you lived, out of common humanity.

Bel. My dearest creature, spare these tender reproaches; you know not how sufficiently I am punished to see you thus miserable.

Lady R. That's pleasant, indeed, when you have yourself deliberately loaded her with affliction.

Bel. Pray, Lady Rachel, have a little mercy! Your poor humble servant has been a very naughty boy; but if you only forgive him this single time, he will never more deserve the rod of correction.

Mrs. B. Since you are returned safe, I am happy. Excuse these foolish tears, they gush in spite of me.

Bel. How contemptible they render me, my love!

Lady R. Come, my dear, you must turn your mind from this gloomy subject. Suppose we step up stairs, and communicate our pleasure to Miss Walsingham?

Mrs. B. With all my heart. Adieu, recreant!

[Exit with Lady R.]

Bel. I don't deserve such a woman! yet, I believe I am the first husband that ever found fault with a wife for having too much goodness.—[Enter SPRUCE.]—What's the matter?

Spruce. Your sister—

Bel. What of my sister?

Spruce. Sir, she has eloped.

Bel. My sister!

Spruce. There is a letter left, sir, in which she says, that her motive was a dislike to a match with Captain Savage, as she has placed her affections unalterably on another gentleman.

Bel. Death and d—!

Spruce. Mrs. Moreland, your mother, is in the greatest distress, sir; and begs you will immediately go with the servant that brought the message; for he observing the young lady's maid carrying some bundles out a little suspiciously, thought there must be some scheme going on, and dogged a hackney-coach, in which Miss Morland went off, to the very house where it set her down.

Bel. Bring me to the servant instantly; but don't let a syllable of this matter reach my wife's ears, her spirits are already too much agitated. [Exit.]

Spruce. Zounds! we shall be paid home for the tricks we have played in other families. [Exit.]

SCENE V.—*Captain Savage's Lodgings.*

Enter CAPTAIN SAVAGE.

Capt. S. The vehemence of my resentment against this abandoned woman has certainly led me too far. I shouldn't have acquainted her with my discovery of her baseness; no, if I had acted properly, I should have concealed all knowledge of the transaction till the very moment of her guilt, and then burst upon her when she was solacing with her paramour, in all the fulness of security. Now, if she should either alter her mind, with respect to going to the masquerade, or go in a different habit to elude my observation, I not only lose the opportunity of exposing her, but give her time to plan some plausible excuse for her infamous letter to Belville.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. General Savage and Mr. Torrington, sir.

Capt. S. You blockhead! why did you let them wait a moment? What can be the meaning of this visit?

[Exit Servant.]

Enter GENERAL SAVAGE and TORRINGTON.
Gen. S. I come, Horace, to talk to you about Miss Walsingham.

Capt. S. She's the most worthless woman existing, sir: I can convince you of it. *[her.]*

Gen. S. I have already changed my opinion of *Capt. S.* What you have found her out, sir?

Tor. Yes, he has made a trifling discovery.

Gen. S. 'Sdeath! don't make me contemptible to my son. *(Aside to Torrington.)*

Capt. S. But, sir, what instance of her precious behaviour has come to your knowledge? for an hour has scarcely elapsed since you thought her a miracle of goodness.

Tor. Ay, he has thought her a miracle of goodness within this quarter of an hour.

Gen. S. Why she has a manner that would impose upon all the world.

Capt. S. Yes, but she has a manner also to undo the world thoroughly.

Tor. That we have found pretty recently. However, in this land of liberty, none are to be pronounced guilty till they are positively convicted; I can't, therefore, find against Miss Walsingham, upon the bare strength of presumptive evidence.

Capt. S. Presumptive evidence! Haven't I promised you ocular demonstration?

Tor. Ay, but till we receive this demonstration, my good friend, we cannot give judgment.

Capt. S. Then I'll tell you at once who is the object of her honourable affections.

Gen. S. Who, who?

Capt. S. What would you think if they were placed on Belville?

Gen. S. Upon Belville! Has she deserted to him from the corps of virtue?

Capt. S. Yes, she wrote to him, desiring to be taken from the masquerade to some convenient scene of privacy; and though I have seen the letter, she has the impudence to deny her own hand.

Gen. S. What a fiend, then, there is disguised under the uniform of an angel! *[confusion!]*

Tor. The delicate creature that was dying with *Capt. S.* Only come with me to the masquerade, and you shall see Belville carry her off. 'Twas about the scandalous appointment with him, I was speaking, when you conceiv'd I treated her rudely.

Gen. S. And you were only anxious to shew her in her real character to me, when I was so exceedingly offended with you.

Capt. S. Nothing else in the world, sir. I knew you would despise and detest her, the moment you were acquainted with her baseness.

Gen. S. How she brazened it out before my face, and what a regard she affected for your interest! I was a madman not to listen to your explanation.

Tor. Though you both talk this point well, I still see nothing but strong presumption against Miss Walsingham. Mistakes have already happened, mistakes may happen again; and I will not give up a lady's honour, upon an evidence that would not cast a common pick-pocket at the Old Bailey.

Capt. S. Come to the masquerade and be satisfied.

Gen. S. Let us detach a party for dresses immediately. Yet remember, Torrington, that the punctuality of evidence which is necessary in a court of law, is by no means requisite in a court of honour.

Tor. Perhaps it would be more to the honour of your honourable courts if it were. *[Exit.]*

SCENE VI.—An Apartment at Mrs. Crayon's.

Bel. (Behind.) My dear, you must excuse me.

Serv. Indeed, sir, you must not go up stairs.

Bel. Indeed but I will. The man is positive to the house, and I'll search every room in it, if I

don't find the lady. James, don't stir from the street-door.

Enter BELVILLE, followed by a female Servant.

Serv. Sir, you are the strangest gentleman I ever met with in all my born days. I wish my mistress was at home.

Bel. I am a strange fellow, my dear; but if your mistress was at home, I should take the liberty of peeping into the apartments.

Serv. Sir, there's company in that room, you can't go in there.

Bel. Good manners, by your leave a little.—*(Forcing the door.)* Whoever my gentleman is, I'll call him to a severe reckoning; I have been just called to one myself, for making free with another man's sister.

Enter LEESON, followed by CONNOLLY.

Lee. Who is it that dares commit an outrage upon this apartment?

Con. An Englishman's very lodging—ay, and an Irishman's too, I hope, is his castle! An Irishman is an Englishman all the world over.

Bel. Mr. Leeson!

Serv. Oh! we shall have murder.

Con. Run into that room, my dear, and stay with the young lady. *[Exit Serv.]*

Lee. Connolly, let nobody else into that room.

Con. Let me alone for that, honey, if this gentleman have fifty people.

Lee. Whence is it, Mr. Belville, that you thus persecute me with injuries?

Bel. I am filled with astonishment!

Con. 'Faith, to speak the truth, you do look a little surprised. *[this new violence?]*

Lee. Answer me, sir: what is the foundation of

Bel. I am come, Mr. Leeson, upon an affair—

Con. The devil burn me, if he was half so much confounded, a while ago, when there was a naked sword at his breast.

Bel. I am come, Mr. Leeson, upon an affair, sir, that—How the devil shall I open it to him, since the tables are so fairly turned upon me? *(Aside.)*

Lee. Despatch, sir; for I have company in the

Bel. A lady, I suppose? *[next room.]*

Lee. Suppose it is, sir? *[sir?]*

Bel. And the lady's name is Moreland, isn't it, *Lee.* I can't see what business you have with her name, sir. You took away my sister, and I hope you have no designs upon the lady in the next room.

Bel. Indeed but I have.

Lee. The devil you have!

Con. Well, this is the most unaccountable man I ever heard of; he'll have all the women in the town, I believe.

Lee. And pray, sir, what pretensions have you to the lady in the next room, even supposing her to be Miss Moreland!

Bel. No other pretensions than what a brother should have to the defence of his sister's honour: you thought yourself authorized to cut my throat, awhile ago, in a similar business.

Lee. And is Miss Moreland your sister?

Bel. Sir, there is insolence in that question: you know she is.

Lee. By heaven! I did not know it till this moment; but I rejoice at the discovery.—This is blow for blow! *[a swoop of it.]*

Con. Devil burn me, but they have fairly made

Bel. And you really didn't know that Miss Moreland was my sister?

Lee. I don't conceive myself under much necessity of apologizing to you, sir; but I am incapable of a dishonourable design upon any woman; and though Miss Moreland, in our short acquaintance, repeatedly mentioned her brother, she never once told me that his name was Belville.

Con. And he has had such few opportunities of being in her company, unless by letters, honey! that he knew nothing more of her connections, than

her being a sweet, pretty creature, and having thirty thousand pounds.

Bel. The fortune, I dare say, no way lessened the force of her attractions. [not.]

Lee. I am above dissimulation, it really did

Bel. Well, Mr. Leeson, our families have shewn such a very strong inclination to come together, that it would really be a pity to disappoint them.

Con. Upon my soul, and so it would; though the dread of being forced to have a husband, the young lady tells us, quickened her resolution to marry this gentleman.

Bel. Oh! she had no violence of that kind to apprehend from her family; therefore, Mr. Leeson, since you seem as necessary for the girl's happiness, as she seems for your's, you shall marry her here in town, with the consent of her friends, and save yourself the trouble of a journey to Scotland.

Lee. Can I believe you serious?

Bel. Zounds! Leeson, that air of surprise is a sad reproach! I didn't surprise you when I did a bad action, but I raise your astonishment when I do a good one.

Con. And by my soul, Mr. Belville, if you know how a good action becomes a man, you'd never do a bad one as long as you liv'd.

Lee. You have given me life and happiness in one day, Mr. Belville! However, it is now time you should see your sister: I know you'll be gentle with her, though you have so much reason to condemn her choice; and, generously remember, that her elopement proceeded from the great improbability there was of a beggar's ever meeting with the approbation of her family.

Bel. Don't apologize for your circumstances, Leeson; a princess could do no more than make you happy; and, if you make her so, you meet her upon terms of the most perfect equality.

Lee. This is a new way of thinking, Mr. Belville.

Bel. 'Tis only an honest way of thinking; and I consider my sister a gainer upon the question; for a man of your merit is more difficult to be found than a woman of her fortune. [Exeunt.]

ACT V.—SCENE I.—A Drawing-room.

Enter BELVILLE.

Bel. Well, happiness is once more mine; and the women are all going in tip-top spirits to the masquerade. Now, Mr. Belville, let me have a few words with you: Miss Walsingham, the ripe, the luxurious Miss Walsingham, expects to find you there, burning with impatience. But, my dear friend, after the occurrences of the day, can you be weak enough to plunge into fresh crimes? Can you be base enough to abuse the goodness of that angel, your wife; and wicked enough, not only to destroy the innocence which is sheltered beneath your own roof, but to expose your family, perhaps, again to the danger of losing a son, a brother, a father, and a husband? The possession of the three Graces is surely too poor a recompense for the folly you must commit, for the shame you must feel, and the consequences you must hazard. Upon my soul, if I struggle a little longer, I shall rise in my own opinion, and be less a rascal than I think myself: ay, but the object is bewitching; the matter will be an eternal secret; and if it be known that I sneak in this pitiful manner from a fine woman, when the whole elysium of her person solicits me,—Well, and am I afraid the world should know that I have shrunk from an infamous action? A thousand blessings on you, dear conscience, for that one argument; I shall be an honest man after all. Suppose, however, that I give her the meeting? That's dangerous; and I am so little accustomed to do what is right, that I shall certainly do what is wrong, the moment I am in the way of temptation. Come, Belville, your resolution is not so very slender a dependence, and you owe Miss Walsingham reparation for the injury which you have done her

principles. I'll give her the meeting; I'll take her to the house I intended—Zounds! what a fool I have been all this time, to look for precarious satisfaction in vice, when there is such exquisite pleasure to be found at a certainty in virtue! [Exit.]

Enter LADY RACHEL and MRS. BELVILLE.

Lady R. For mirth's sake, don't let him see us. There has been a warm debate between his passion and his conscience. [for it!]

Mrs. B. And the latter is the conqueror, my life

Lady R. Dear Mrs. Belville, you are the best of women, and ought to have the best of husbands.

Mrs. B. I have the best of husbands.

Lady R. I have not time to dispute the matter with you now; but I shall put you into my comedy, to teach wives, that the best receipt for matrimonial happiness, is to be deaf, dumb, and blind.

Mrs. B. Poh, poh! you are a satirist, Lady Rachel—But we are losing time. Shouldn't we put on our dresses, and prepare for the grand scene?

Lady R. Don't you tremble at the trial?

Mrs. B. Not in the least; I am sure my heart has no occasion. [little plot?]

Lady R. Have you let Miss Walsingham into our

Mrs. B. You know she could not be insensible of Mr. Belville's design upon herself; and it is ~~is~~ farther than that design, we have anything to carry into execution.

Lady R. Well, she may serve to facilitate the matter; and, therefore, I am not sorry that you have trusted her.

Mrs. B. We shall be too late, and then what signifies all your fine plotting?

Lady R. Is it not a little pang of jealousy that would fain now quicken our motions?

Mrs. B. No, Lady Rachel, it is a certainty of my husband's love and generosity, that makes me wish to come to the trial. I would not exchange my confidence in his affections for all the mines of Peru; so nothing you can say will make me miserable.

Lady R. You are a most unaccountable woman; so away with you. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—The same.

Enter SPRUCE and GHOSTLY.

Spruce. Why, Ghostly, the old General, your master, is a greater fool than I ever thought he was. He want to marry Miss Walsingham?

Ghost. Mrs. Tempest suspected that there was something going forward, by all his hugger-mugger consulting with Mr. Torrington, and so set me on to listen.

Spruce. She's a good friend of your's; and that thing she made the General give you the other day, if the hospital, is, I suppose, a snug hundred a year.

Ghost. Better than two; I wash for nearly four thousand people. There was a major of horse who put in for it, and pleaded a large family—

Spruce. With long services, I suppose.

Ghost. Yes; but Mrs. Tempest insisted upon my long services: so the major was set aside. However, to keep the thing from the newspapers, I fancy he will succeed the barber who died last night, poor woman, of a lying-in fever, after being brought to bed of three children. Places in public institutions—

Spruce. Are often sweetly disposed of. I think of asking Belville for something, one of these days.

Ghost. He has great interest.

Spruce. I might be a justice of peace, if I pleased, and in a shabby neighbourhood, where the mere swearing would bring in something tolerable; but there are so many strange people let into the commission now-a-days, that I shouldn't like to have my name in the list.

Ghost. You are right.

Spruce. No, no; I leave that to paltry tradesmen, and shall think of some little sinecure, or a small pension on the Irish establishment.

Ghost. Well, success attend you. I must hobble home as fast as I can, to know if Mrs. Tempest has

any orders. Oh! there's a rare storm brewing for our old goat of a General.

Spruce. When shall we crack a bottle together?

Ghast. Oh! I sha'n't touch a glass of claret these three weeks; for last night I gave nature a little fillip with a drunken bout according to the doctor's directions; I have entirely left off bread, and I am in great hopes that I shall get rid of my gout by these means, especially if I can learn to eat my meat quite raw, like a cannibal.

Spruce. Ha, ha, ha!

Ghast. Look at me, Spruce, I was once as likely a young fellow as any under ground in the whole parish of St. James's; but waiting on the General so many years—

Spruce. Ay, and following his example, Ghastly.

Ghast. 'Tis too true,—has reduced me to what you see. These miserable spindles would do very well for a lord or a duke, Spruce; but they are a sad disgrace to a poor valet-de-chambre. [*Exit.*]

Spruce. Well, I don't believe there's a gentleman's gentleman within the weekly bills, who joins a prudent solicitude for the main-chance, to a strict care of his constitution, better than myself. I have a little girl who stands me in about three guineas a week; I never bet more than a pound upon a rubber of whist; I always sleep with my head very warm; and swallow a new laid egg every morning with my chocolate. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—A Street.

Two sedan-chairs cross the stage, and set down BELVILLE and a Lady at the door of a house.

Bel. This way, my dear creature. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter GENERAL SAVAGE, CAPTAIN SAVAGE, and TORRINGTON.

Capt. S. There, there they go in. You see the place is quite convenient, not twenty yards from the masquerade.

Gen. S. How closely the fellow sticks to her!

Tor. Like the great seal to the peerage patent of a chancellor. But, gentlemen, we have still no more than proof presumptive: where is the ocular demonstration which we were to have?

Capt. S. I'll swear to the blue domino; 'tis a very remarkable one, and so is Belville's.

Tor. You would have rare custom among the Newgate solicitors if you'd venture an oath upon the identity of the party under it.

Gen. S. 'Tis the very size and shape of Miss Walsingham. [*Is a trifling alibi in this case.*]

Tor. And yet I have a strange notion that there

Gen. S. It would be a d—d affair if we should be countermined.

Capt. S. Oh! follow me; here's the door let's luckily open, and I'll soon clear up the matter beyond a question. [*Exit into the house.*]

Tor. Why, your son is mad, General. This must produce a deadly breach with Belville. For heaven's sake, let's go in and prevent any excesses of his rashness.

Gen. S. By all means, or the poor fellow's generous anxiety on my account may be productive of very fatal consequences. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—An Apartment.

BELVILLE discovered, unmasked, and a Lady in a blue domino, masked.

Bel. My dear Miss Walsingham, we are now perfectly safe, yet I will by no means entreat you to unmask, because I am convinced, from the propriety with which you repulsed my addresses this morning, that you intend the present interview should make me still more deeply sensible of my presumption.

I never lied so awkwardly in all my life; if I were to make her comply I should be at no loss for language. [*Aside.*] The situation in which I must appear before you, madam, is certainly a very humiliating one; but I am persuaded that your generosity will be gratified to hear that I have bid an everlasting adieu to my profligacy, and am now only

alive to the virtues of Mrs. Belville. She won't speak: I don't wonder at it, for bramen as I am myself, if I met with so mortifying a rejection, I should be cursedly out of countenance. [*Aside.*]

Capt. S. (Within.) I will go in.

Gen. S. (Within.) I command you to desist.

Tor. (Within.) This will be an affair for the Old Bailey.

Bel. Why, what the devil is all this? Don't be alarmed, Miss Walsingham; be assured I'll protect you at the hazard of my life; step into this closet, you sha'n't be discovered, depend upon it. [*She goes in.*] And now to discover the cause of this confusion. [*Unlocks the door.*]

Enter GENERAL SAVAGE, CAPTAIN SAVAGE, and TORRINGTON.

Bel. Savage! what is the meaning of this strange behaviour?

Capt. S. Where is Miss Walsingham?

Bel. So, then, sir, this is a premeditated scheme, for which I am obliged to your friendship.

Capt. S. Where's Miss Walsingham, sir?

Gen. S. Dear Belville, he is out of his senses; this storm was entirely against my orders.

Tor. If he proceeds much longer in these vagaries, we must amuse him with a commission of lunacy.

Bel. This is neither a time nor a place for argument, Mr. Torrington; but as you and the General seem to be in the possession of your senses, I shall be glad if you'll take this very friendly gentleman away; and depend upon it, I sha'n't die in his debt for the present obligation.

Capt. S. And depend upon it, sir, pay the obligation when you will, I sha'n't stir till I see Miss Walsingham. Lookye, Belville, there are secret reasons for my behaving in this manner; reasons, which you yourself will approve, when you know them; my father here—

Gen. S. Disavows your conduct in every particular, and would rejoice to see you at the halberds.

Tor. And, for my part, I told him previously 'twas a downright burglary.

Bel. Well, gentlemen, let your different motives for breaking in upon me in this agreeable manner be what they may, I don't see that I am less annoyed by my friends than my enemy. I must, therefore, again request that you will all walk down stairs.

Capt. S. I will first walk into this room.

Bel. Really, I think you will not.

Gen. S. What frenzy possesses the fellow to urge this matter further?

Capt. S. While there's a single doubt, she triumphs over justice. [*Drawing.*] I will go into that room.

Bel. Then you must make your way through me.

Enter MRS. BELVILLE from the room.

Mrs. B. Ah!

Capt. S. There, I knew she was in the room; there's the blue domino.

Gen. S. Put up your sword, if you don't desire to be cashiered from my favour for ever.

Bel. Why would you come out, madam? But you have nothing to apprehend.

Capt. S. Pray, madam, will you have the goodness to unmask?

Bel. She sha'n't unmask.

Capt. S. I say she shall.

Bel. I say she shall not.

Mrs. B. Pray, let me oblige the gentleman. [*Unmasks.*] [*Covery!*]

Capt. S. Death and destruction! here's a dis-Gen. S. and Tor. Mrs. Belville!

Mrs. B. Yes, Mrs. Belville, gentlemen. Is conjugal fidelity so very terrible a thing now-a-days, that a man is to suffer death for being found in company with his own wife?

Bel. My love, this is a surprise, indeed: but it is a most agreeable one; since you find me really

ashamed of my former follies, and cannot now doubt the sincerity of my reformation.

Mrs. B. I am too happy! this single moment would overpay a whole life of anxiety.

Bel. Where shall I attend you? Will you return to the masquerade?

Mrs. B. Oh! no. Lady Rachel and Miss Walsingham are, by this time, at our house, with Mr. Lesson and the Irish gentleman whom you pressed into our party, impatiently expecting the result of this adventure.

Bel. Give me leave to conduct you home, then, from this scene of confusion. To-morrow, Captain Savage, I shall beg the favour of your explanation. (*Aside to Capt. S.*) Kind gentlemen, your most humble servant.

Mrs. B. And when you next disturb a tête-à-tête, for pity to a poor wife don't let it be so very uncustomary a party, as the matrimonial one.

[*Exit with Bel.*]

Gen. S. (To Capt. S.) So, sir, you have led us upon a blessed expedition here.

Tor. Now, don't you think that if your courts of honour, like our courts of law, searched a little minutely into evidence, it would be equally to the credit of their understandings?

Capt. S. Though I am covered with confusion at my mistake, (for, you see, Belville was mistaken as well as myself,) I am overjoyed at this discovery of Miss Walsingham's innocence.

Gen. S. I should exult in it, too, with a *feu de joie*, if it didn't now shew the impossibility of her ever being Mrs. Savage.

Capt. S. Dear sir, why should you think that an impossibility? Though some mistakes have occurred in consequence, I suppose, of Mrs. Belville's little plot upon her husband, I dare say Miss Walsingham may yet be prevailed upon to come into our family.

Tor. Take care of a new error in your proceedings, young gentleman.

Gen. S. Ay, another defeat would make us completely despicable.

Capt. S. Sir, I'll forfeit my life if she does not consent to the marriage this very night.

Gen. S. Only bring this matter to bear, and I'll forgive you everything.

Tor. The Captain should be informed, I think, General, that she declined it peremptorily this evening.

Gen. S. Ay, do you hear that, Horace?

Capt. S. I am not at all surprised at it, considering the general misconception we laboured under. But I'll immediately to Belville's, explain the whole mystery, and conclude everything to your satisfaction. [*Exit.*]

Gen. S. So, Torrington, we shall be able to take the field again, you see.

Tor. But how, in the name of wonder, has your son found out your intention of marrying Miss Walsingham? I looked upon myself as the only person acquainted with the secret.

Gen. S. That thought has marched itself two or three times to my own recollection. For though I gave him some distant hints of the affair, I took particular care to keep behind the works of a proper circumspection.

Tor. Oh! if you gave him any hints at all, I am not surprised at his discovering everything.

Gen. S. I shall be all impatience till I hear of his interview with Miss Walsingham. Suppose, my dear friend, we went to Belville's, 'tis but in the next street, and we shall be there in the lighting of a match.

Tor. Really, this is a pretty business for a man of my age and profession; trot here, trot there. But, as I have been weak enough to make myself a kind of party in the cause, I own that I have curiosity enough to be anxious about the determination.

Gen. S. Come along, my old boy; and remember the song, "Servile spirits," &c. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*Belville's.*

Enter CAPTAIN SAVAGE and Miss WALSHINGHAM.

Capt. S. Nay, but, my dearest Miss Walsingham, the extenuation of my own conduct to Belville made it absolutely necessary for me to discover my engagements with you; and, as happiness is now so fortunately in our reach, I flatter myself you will be prevailed upon to forgive an error which proceeded only from an extravagance of love.

Miss W. To think me capable of such an action, Captain Savage! I am terrified at the idea of a union with you, and it is better for a woman at any time, to sacrifice an insolent lover, than to accept of a suspicious husband.

Capt. S. In the happiest unions, my dearest creature, there must be always something to overlook on both sides.

Miss W. Very civil, truly.

Capt. S. Pardon me, my life, for this frankness; and recollect, that if the lover has, through misconception, been unhappily guilty, he brings a husband altogether reformed to your hands.

Miss W. Well, I see I must forgive you at last, so I may as well make a merit of necessity, your provoking creature. [*Of this hand?*]

Capt. S. And may I hope, indeed, for the blessing

Miss W. Why, you wretch, would you have me force it upon you? I think, after what I have said, a soldier might have ventured to take it without farther ceremony. [*lawful prize.*]

Capt. S. Angelic creature! thus I seize it as my

Miss W. Well, but now you have obtained this inestimable prize, Captain, give me again leave to ask if you have had a certain explanation with the

Capt. S. How can you doubt it? [*General?*]

Miss W. And he is really impatient for our marriage?

Capt. S. 'Tis incredible how earnest he is.

Miss W. What, did he tell you of his interview with me this evening, when he brought Mr. Tor-

Capt. S. He did. [*rington?*]

Miss W. Oh! then, I can have no doubt.

Capt. S. If a shadow of doubt remains, here he comes to remove it. Joy, my dear sir! joy, a thousand times!

Enter GENERAL SAVAGE and TORRINGTON.

Gen. S. What, my dear boy, have you carried the day?

Miss W. I have been weak enough to indulge him with a victory, indeed, General.

Gen. S. (Sings.) "None but the brave, none but the brave, &c." [*General.*]

Tor. I congratulate you heartily on this decree, Gen. S. This had nearly proved a day of disappointment, but the stars have fortunately turned it in my favour, and now I reap the rich reward of my victory. (*Salutes her.*)

Capt. S. And here I take her from you, as the greatest good which heaven can send me.

Miss W. Oh, Captain!

Gen. S. You take her as the greatest good which heaven can send you, sirrah! I take her as the greatest good which heaven can send me; and now what have you to say to her?

Miss W. General Savage!

Tor. Here will be a fresh injunction to stop proceedings. [*taken?*]

Miss W. Are we never to have done with mis-

Gen. S. What mistakes can have happened now, my sweetest? You delivered up your dear hand to me this moment.

Miss W. True, sir; but I thought you were going to bestow my dear hand upon this dear gentleman.

Gen. S. How! that dear gentleman!

Capt. S. I am thunderstruck! [*&c.*]

Tor, General—(Sings.)—"None but the brave,

Gen. S. So the covert way is cleared at last; and you have imagined that I was all along negotiating for this fellow, when I was gravely soliciting for myself?

Miss W. No other idea, sir, ever once entered my imagination. [ne'er despair, &c.]

Tor. General—(Sings.)—“Noble minds should

Gen. S. Zounds! here's all the company pouring upon us in full gallop, and I shall be the laughing-stock of the whole town.

Enter MR. and MRS. BELVILLE, LADY RACHEL, LEESON, and CONNOLLY.

Bel. Well, General, we have left you a long time together. Shall I give you joy?

Gen. S. No; wish me demolished in the fortifications of Dunkirk.

Mrs. B. What's the matter?

Lady R. The General appears disconcerted.

Lee. The gentleman looks as if he had fought a hard battle. [dear.]

Con. Ay, and gained nothing but a defeat, my *Tor.* I'll shew cause for his behaviour.

Gen. S. Death and d—n! not for the world. I am taken by surprise here; let me consider a moment how to cut my way through the enemy.

Miss W. How could you be deceived in this manner. (To *Capt. S.*)

Lady R. Oh! Mr. Torrington, we are much obliged to you; you have been in town ever since last night, and only see us now by accident.

Tor. I have been very busy, madam; but you look sadly, very sadly, indeed; your old disorder, the jaundice, I suppose, has been very troublesome to you!

Lady R. Sir, you have a very extraordinary mode of complimenting your acquaintance.

Con. I don't believe, for all that, that there's a word of a lie in the truth he speaks. (Aside.)

Mrs. B. Miss Walsingham, Captain Savage, has been telling Mr. Belville and me of a very extraordinary mistake. [mistake.]

Miss W. 'Tis very strange, indeed, mistake on *Bel.* 'Tis no way strange to find everybody properly struck with the merit of Miss Walsingham.

Miss W. A compliment from you, now, Mr. Belville, is really worth accepting.

Gen. S. If I thought the affair could be kept a secret, by making the town over to my son, since I am utterly shut out myself.

Capt. S. He seems exceedingly embarrassed.

Gen. S. If I thought that; why, mortified as I must be in giving it up, I think I could resolve upon the manœuvre, to save myself from universal ridicule; but it can't be, it can't be; and I only double my own disappointment in rewarding the disobedience of the rascal who has supplanted me. There! there! they are all talking of it, all laughing at me, and I shall run mad!

Mrs. T. (Without.) I say, you feather-headed puppy! he is in this house; my own servant saw him come in, and I will not stir till I find him.

Gen. S. She here! then deliberation is over, and I am entirely blown up.

Lady R. I'll take notes of this affair.

Enter MRS. TEMPEST.

Mrs. T. Mighty well, sir. So you are in love, it seems; and you want to be married, it seems?

Lee. My blessed aunt! Oh! how proud I am of the relation. [company.]

Gen. S. Dear Bab, give me quarter before all this

Mrs. T. You are in love, you old fool, are you? and you want to marry Miss Walsingham, indeed!

Con. I never heard a pleasanter spoken gentleman. Oh! honey, if I had the taming of her, she should never be abusive, without keeping a civil tongue in her head. [to be fixed]

Mrs. T. Well, sir, and when is the happy day?

Bel. What the devil, is this true, General?

Gen. S. True; can you believe such an absurdity?

Mrs. T. Why, will you deny, you miserable old mummy, that you made proposal of marriage to her? [riage!]

Gen. S. Yes I do—no I don't—proposals of marriage—*Miss W.* In favour of your son. I'll help him out a little. (Aside.)

Gen. S. Yes, in favour of my son. What the devil shall I do? (Aside.)

Mrs. B. Shall I take a lesson from this lady, Mr. Belville? Perhaps, if the women of virtue were to pluck up a little spirit, they might be soon as well treated as kept mistresses.

Mrs. T. Harkye, General Savage, I believe you assert a falsehood; but if you speak the truth, give your son this moment to Miss Walsingham, and let me be fairly rid of my rival.

Gen. S. My son, Miss Walsingham! Miss Walsingham, my son!

Bel. It will do, Horace, it will do.

Mrs. T. No prevarications, General Savage; do what I bid you instantly, or by all the wrongs of an enraged woman, I'll so expose you.

Con. What a fine fellow this is, to have the command of an army! [upon.]

Gen. S. If Miss Walsingham can be prevailed

Tor. Oh! she'll oblige you readily. But you must settle a good fortune upon your son.

Mrs. T. That he shall do.

Mrs. B. Miss Walsingham, my dear—

Miss W. I can refuse nothing, either to your request, or to the request of the General.

Gen. S. Oblige me with your hand, then, madam. Come here, you—come here, Captain. There, there is Miss Walsingham's hand for you.

Con. And as pretty a little fist it is, as any in the three kingdoms.

Gen. S. Torrington shall settle the fortune.

Lee. I give you joy most heartily, madam.

Bel. We all give her joy.

Capt. S. Mine is beyond the power of expression.

Miss W. (Aside to the company.) And so is the General's, I believe.

Con. Oh! 'faith! that may be easily seen by the sweetness of his countenance.

Tor. Well, the cause being now at last determined, I think we may retire from the court.

Gen. S. And without any great credit, I fear, to the General.

Con. By my soul, you may say that.

Mrs. T. Do you murmur, sir? Come this moment home with me.

Gen. S. I'll go anywhere to hide this miserable head of mine. What a d—d campaign have I made of it! [Exeunt *Gen. S.* and *Mrs. T.*]

Con. Upon my soul, if I was in the General's place, I'd divide the house with this devil; I'd keep within doors myself, and make her take the outside.

Bel. The day has been a busy one, thanks to the communicative disposition of the Captain.

Mrs. B. And the evening should be cheerful.

Bel. I shan't, therefore, part with one of you, 'till we have had a hearty laugh at our adventures.

Miss W. They have been very whimsical, indeed; yet, if represented on the stage, I hope they would be found not only entertaining, but instructive.

Lady R. Instructive! why the modern critics say, that the only business of Comedy is to make people laugh.

Bel. That is degrading the dignity of letters exceedingly, as well as lessening the utility of the stage. A good comedy is a capital effort of genius, and should, therefore, be directed to the noblest purposes.

Miss W. Very true; and unless we learn something while we chuckle, the carpenter who sells a pantomime machine will be entitled to more applause, than the best comic poet in the kingdom.

[Exeunt.]

THE CASTLE OF SORRENTO;

A MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT—BY HENRY HEARTWELL.



Act II—Scene 2

CHARACTERS

COUNT MUFVILL
GOVERNOR OF SORRENTO
BINVAL

GERMAIN
OFFICER
CORPORAL

FOOTMAN
MRS. BISMONT
ROSINA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—On the right hand, one of the towers of the Castle of Sorrento, a ditch and parapet wall dividing it from a large house placed on the left, with a latticed window over the door opening to a balcony. In the tower, a grated window about the height of the balcony. A picturesque view of the country in the distance, mountainous, and with meadows.

ROSINA appears at the latticed window.

SONG.—ROSINA

Evening's shadows now appear,
All is hush'd and calm around—
Hark! his well known voice I hear,
Let me fly to catch the sound.
No, 'tis past, and silence reigns,
Pensive, still, I mourn his fate
In his tower he still remains,
Here, alas! in vain I wait.
Evening's shadows now appear,
All is hush'd and calm around—
Hark! again his voice I hear,
Yes, I've caught the well-known sound.

BINVAL, in a red hussar jacket, his hair dishevelled, and his whole appearance neglected, appears at the grated window of the prison.

DUETT.—BINVAL and ROSINA.

Bina., Hark! again that heavenly voice.
Ros., Yes, 'tis he; why throbs my heart?
By turns I sigh, by turns rejoice;
I'm fix'd, though reason says depart

Blin. Oh! what joy what bliss I feel!
Ros. Ah! could my prayers your anguish heal!
Blin. Sweet, heavenly maid, my griefs are past,
My prison now a palace seems,
Speak, will the pleasing vision last?
Or are my raptures fleeting dreams?
Ros. Ah! could Rosina's prayers avail,
How soon those heavy bars should fall!
Ah! could Rosina's tears prevail,
How swift you'd pass the hated wall!
Blin. Ye gods, I'm bless'd, what raptures mine!
I forgive that late I dar'd repine.
Ros. Compassion's tear—
Blin. The joys I feel,—
Ros. Bids me my check.
Blin. No words reveal.
Ros. Alas! poor youth,—
Blin. How bless'd my lot!—
Ros. How hard your fate!
Blin. My grief's forgot.
I'm bless'd beyond what mortals know,
Though fate has mark'd the world my foe;
That cheering glance, that heavenly smile,
Would e'er y human care beguile.
Ros. Alas! how had the prisoner's lot!
Forsaken, by the world forgot.
Blin. What joys I feel!
Ros. How hard his lot!—
Blin. I'm bless'd, indeed.
Ros. By all forgot.
Blin. My griefs are past.
Ros. Compassion's tear—
Blin. Transporting sounds!
Ros. Your woes shall cheer.

*Ah! would my fervent prayers ascend,
Your painful sufferings soon should end.*
Blin. *The prayers of virtue swift ascend,
I feel my sufferings soon must end.*

[*Blinval retires.*]

Rosina. Heigho! he sings no more. No, he is gone, and I am still left in incoertitude. It's very wicked of the Governor to keep so sweet a man cooped up in that huge ugly tower.

Enter GERMAIN with a portmanteau and hat-box.

Ger. (*Knocks and calls at the door of the house.*)
Hallo, ho, ho! Within there, ho!

Rosina. What can that be?

Ger. Are you all dead? Rub down my hack, and let me have a spanking supper, for I'm considerably sharp set.

Rosina. Pray, where do you suppose yourself, that you're so much at home? This is no inn.

Ger. (*Looking up and taking off his hat.*) Bumpers and Burgundy! there's a rogue's eye! (*Aside.*)
Inn! Oh! no; Lord love your pretty face! the Widow Belmont would be quite shocked if I went to an inn.

Rosina. Indeed! And who are you?

Ger. One of king Cupid's corps diplomatique; ambassador of love; courier of Hymen; the faithful follower, though I precede my master, of Count Murville, captain in the death's head hussars, *et cetera*—Germain, at your service. (*Bowing.*)

Rosina. Oh! from our cousin Murville. Well, I'll inform mamma. Provoking puppy!—at this moment—he has chosen this time. (*Aside, and exit.*)

Ger. She might as well have asked me to walk in. Mighty pleasant, no doubt, this *al fresco*, to those who relish it; but for a gentleman who does Count Murville, captain in the death's head hussars, *et cetera*, the honour to adjust his mustachios, and to adorn his head, why, it's d—d scurvy treatment. Hip, hallo! house! within there! (*Knocks at the door.*)

Enter Footman, from the house.

Foot. Hallo! Who thunders so loudly?

Ger. Why, me, to be sure.

Foot. You! and who the devil are you?

Ger. Is that your respect to a valet-de-chambre? Here, take my baggage, and know your distance.

[*Snatches up the portmanteau and hat-box, places them on the Footman's shoulders, pushes him in, and follows.*]

SCENE II.—A Drawing-room at the Widow Belmont's.

Enter the Footman and GERMAIN.

Foot. My mistress is at the Governor's, and you must wait. She will speak with you here. (*Going.*)

Ger. But sir, respected sir, (*bowing*) if you are pleased to take your own sweet company away, can't you send me an omelet and a salad, with a few of your half-emptied flasks? You understand? and I don't think, without offence, I should lament your absence.

Foot. Oh! sir, your most obedient. But I am never purveyor except where I'm a guest: you understand? [*Exit.*]

Ger. Well, now, as I'm a Christian sinner, that fellow deserves the gallies. I wish my master would appear. Somehow, I'm never respected but for his sake. What can detain him at Naples? Oh! I have it: the imprisonment of his young friend Blinval; that fire-eating, mad rattlecap, who had nearly sabred his own colonel. What a cursed sorape! Death by the articles of war. But he performed such prodigies in the last battle, and saved Count Murville's life, so he'll move heaven, earth, and the minister for his release. Oh! now I recol-

lect, he is in this district, close prisoner in the old castle of Sorrento: if I could speak to him—No, no, poor devil, he is trapped like a rat and can only be peeped at through his gratings.

Enter BLINVAL, in the red hussar's jacket, without a sword.

Blinval. (*Looking about, but not perceiving Germain.*) This apartment excels the last; am I awake, or is it all a dream?

Ger. (*Not seeing him.*) He is as wild as a young Tartar, as obstinate as a young devil, but as sound-hearted as a young Englishman. Oh! a fine fellow that Blinval.

Blinval. (*Turning quick round.*) Blinval! who calls me?

Ger. (*Starting.*) Eh! what! No, sure—yes, but it is; it is our mad lieutenant. (*Runs and leaps on his neck.*)

Blinval. Germain! not hanged yet, but don't strangle me, man. I'm here, you see, in spite of our old fusty colonel, safe, sound, and hearty, boy.

Ger. But by what miracle? I thought you snug in one of the four towers of that d—d castle.

Blinval. So thinks the governor, heaven help him, at this hour. But tell me, whose is this house?

Ger. The Widow Belmont's.

Blinval. Has she a daughter?

Ger. Rosina; a great beauty; fresh, blooming, and sixteen.

Blinval. Huzza! Then I shall bless the day I heard the rusty hinges of Sorrento creak.

Ger. And were I in your place I should curse it most furiously. But what with hunger, thirst, and curiosity, I'm in a desperate case; pity me, sir, I have a craving appetite for your adventures.

Blinval. Shut up in the south tower, I one day saw the daughter of this house at a latticed balcony; woodbines and jessamines were round the wall, but they weren't half so fresh as the sweet little creature who eclipsed them.

Ger. Oh Lord! oh Lord! I'm likely to be famished still, if we're to creep through the woodbines.

Blinval. To the point, then: she kept her eyes long fixed on me; I tried to move her by croaking in my d—d hoarse voice, some melancholy ditties about captivity and so on. Every day fresh attentions, fresh songs. This very evening my gaoler called me from a charming interview. I thrust him out, and, in a moment of passion, dashed an old wardrobe in a dark corner of my room to atoms. A folded paper caught my eye, I seized it eagerly, it was directed—

Ger. How?

Blinval. "To the unfortunate who succeeds me."

Ger. And the contents?

Blin. A legacy from my poor devil of a predecessor: he had been shut up in the same part of the tower ten years; but love had softened the hardships of his captivity. In short, the paper marked a secret avenue leading to the next house. I descended, crept through a subterraneous passage, climbed a cork-sorew stair-case, reached a small door, and, upon pressing back a spring, jumped into that bed-room.

Ger. And the entrance—

Blinval. Is concealed by that looking-glass. But tell me now, what brings your rogue's face to Sorrento?

Ger. Marriage. Your friend Murville, is cousin to the Widow; they have been long involved in a law-suit, and were compelled to correspond: the first letters were cold, the second more civil, the third touched on arrangements, and in the last they settled it, to wind up all in the old-fashioned way, by a marriage.

Blinval. Excellent! When will they solemnize?

Ger. The day's not fixed, for they have never met.

Blinval. Not seen each other! Then I'm established in the house.

Ger. Eh! how do you make that out?

Blinval. Dolt, dunderhead! I shall pass for Murville; the Widow Belmont will receive, caress, feed, lodge, and—

Ger. Marry you?

Blinval. No, no; but I'll obtain an interview with my Rosina; speak to her frequently, and breathe my vows of love and constancy in a purer air.

Ger. In the meantime, they'll visit the south tower, find the bird flown, and send him back to whistle his soft notes in a foul air and a close cage.

Blinval. They visit me but twice a day; and till to-morrow's noon I'm safe.

Ger. Granted; but will that negligée suit the lover?

Blinval. Oh! let me see. (*Pauses.*) I have been stopped by a banditti.

Ger. Ha, ha, ha! You're never at a loss; always a tale at your tongue's end. But my scruples—

Blinval. Have, like all other things, their price. (*Shaking a purse.*) Fifty louis for their repose.

Ger. They're hushed. (*Taking the purse.*)

Blinval. But if I appear in this identical dress, I shall be known instantly by Rosina, and it would not be prudent to discover myself, even to her, too soon.

Ger. What say you to my master's riding-coat and military hat?

Blinval. The very thing; run and fetch them; quick, quick. (*Germain runs out and returns with them immediately.*)

Ger. (*Helping Blinval on with his hat and coat.*) So. And here comes the Widow, too, most opportune.

Blinval. Attention, then, and to our posts. Remember, I have been robbed.

Enter MRS. BELMONT.

Mrs. B. (*To Germain.*) Is it you, sir, who wish to speak with me?

Ger. Yes, madam, it was I who galloped on joyfully to announce Count Murville, but—oh, heavens!

Mrs. B. You alarm me. What has befallen him?

Ger. Oh! bitter news! Speak, sir, yourself, for I want words, and—impudence. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. B. What, is it you, cousin?

Blinval. As you perceive, and in no better plight. (*Looking at his dress.*)

Mrs. B. What has happened?

Blinval. Friendship, love, and anxiety, all urged me to hasten here; unfortunately, a banditti—

Mrs. B. Robbers?

Blinval. Stopped me some leagues from this.

Ger. Five minutes later, and I had shared his fate. Oh, terrible!

Mrs. B. Robbers!

TRJO.—BLINVAL, GERMAIN, and MRS. BELMONT.

Blinval. Affection induced me all dangers to brave, I mounted my horse in the dead of the night.

Ger. This love had nigh shewn him the way to his grave;

When you hear his escape, you'll be seised with affright.

Mrs. B. Such a hazard was wrong.

Ger. But his reasons were strong.

Blinval. From the forest they rush'd, full a score, at the least—

Ger. How he brags, how he lies! (*Aside.*)

Blinval. Taken thus by surprise—

Mrs. B. Alas! all my fears, my alarms are increas'd.

Blinval. With my back to a tree,

At one thrust despatch'd three;

Seventeen with drawn swords remain'd circling me round—

Ger. Seventeen with drawn swords remain'd circling him round.

Mrs. B. Alas! could no aid, could no succour be found?

Such a risk, such a state!

'Faith! his perils were great.

Blinval. The blood of six others soon reddened my sword—

Ger. What a bounce, what a lie! (*Aside.*)

Blinval. Not a creature came by—

Mrs. B. Alas! sure, such numbers at last overpowered.

Blinval. With ten wounds gaping wide,

And six thrusts in the side,

I fought till my blood in a torrent was pour'd.

Ger. He fought till his blood in a torrent was pour'd.

Blinval. Then faintly I sank, by such odds overpowered.

Mrs. B. Alas! what a state, by such odds overpowered!

Blinval. Stretched on the ground for dead, the cowards rifled me, but fled on the approach of travellers, who, coming up, gave me every assistance in their power.

Mrs. B. Good heavens! I fear you must have suffered much from the wounds you received. Have you kept your chamber long?

Blinval. Hum! I have been a good while confined; haven't I, Germain?

Ger. That you have; I can prove it.

Blinval. But, excepting a weakness, no inconvenience follows.

Mrs. B. He is younger than I conceived, well made, and elegant. (*Aside.*) My last letter must have convinced you I was desirous to have all points explained.

Blinval. Oh! we'll explain ourselves off hand. Germain, endeavour to get me some decent clothes; I am ashamed to see myself; I have the appearance—

Ger. Of a mountebank, precisely. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. B. Now we're alone, we can discourse on business.

Blinval. Certainly; but at this moment, I'm so confused; the blows those rascals dealt, have made me so light-headed, so absent—

Mrs. B. Only one thing: it will be right to send a settlement to an attorney's.

Blinval. Why, yes, it will be certainly quite right and necessary.

Mrs. B. You consent, then, to keep the farm?

Blinval. The farm! Oh! decided. Yes, yes, we'll keep the farm.

Mrs. B. But we must recollect my daughter: she has just claims.

Blinval. The greatest possible. She is so beautiful! such a soft, tender air! so interesting, so charming!

Mrs. B. Really! How can you tell all this? Have you seen her?

Blinval. Seen her! Yes, I—Oh! no; but I speak from report which is loud in her praise; so, oblige me, and drop the suit.

Mrs. B. Why, you forget—you drop the suit.

Blinval. Do I? True, true: but my head's so confused, I can think only of our approaching happiness.

Mrs. B. But I expected, I confess, a man of middle age, and you appear quite young.

Blinval. True; I have ever been thought young, and surely, cousin, that's no misfortune.

Mrs. B. No; but as reason and friendship form the basis of our union, though tempted to regard it as a defect, I am willing to hope we shall be both happy. I shall now leave you to give directions for your comfort and accommodation.

Enter GERMAIN.

Germain, that room will be your master's. (*Pointing.*)

Blinval. (Aside.) By all that's fortunate, the secret door.

Mrs. B. I'll prepare my daughter to receive you immediately; but recollect, a father-in-law should be grave and sedate. Adieu! [*Exit.*]

Blinval. Allons, Germain! the day's our own. Victory, my boy! I'm grown so grave and steady, they'll not suspect I could invent this trick.

Ger. Steady, with a vengeance! Ah! if you're other than Blinval, I shall look out for the world's end.

Blinval. But I'm determined to reform.

Ger. Which way?

Blinval. By marrying.

Ger. Why, faith! if anything can tame a man, I believe that may.

Blinval. My stars all shine propitious; and every time my presence is required, I'll lock my door, glide to my prison, and whip back, no one the wiser.

Ger. But my master, in the meantime, appears; off goes my livery, and I'm cooped up in your agreeable south tower, for having touched upon the secret spring.

Blinval. I shall rejoice in such good company. But see, the sun peeps forth; fogs, mists, and vapours fly; here comes Rosina.

Ger. Then you'll dispense with me; so I'll escape to the more foggy regions, where savoury fumes exhale from the stew-pans, and the jolly butler distributes his rich gifts from the Widow's cellar. [*Exit.*]

Enter ROSINA.

Rosina. (Aside.) This, then, is my step-father; and I must be respectful, and so forth: so says mamma. Heigho!

Blinval. (Aside.) She'll be astonished when she perceives the prisoner. (*Going towards her.*)

Rosina. (Starting.) Oh, heavens! Can I believe my eyes? His very features!

Blinval. What startles you, my little cousin? have I already the misfortune to displease?

Rosina. No, sir; no, certainly not that; but I was struck with the resemblance to a friend, yes, sir, an absent friend, too little known, and, alas! too unfortunate. Pardon me, sir, but my tongue falters, my heart throbs, and my face burns. I must beg to retire. (*Going.*)

Blinval. Don't leave me, coz. (*Taking her hand.*) Why withdraw your hand? You would not be so coy to my resemblance.

Rosina. Oh! yes, I should, because I ought to be so.

Blinval. But I shall be your father-in-law soon.

Rosina. True; but you are so like this friend, I should think still of him.

Blinval. You tremble. Happy Blinval! (*Aside.*)

Rosina. Yes, and my heart beats quick, just as it does when I see him.

Blinval. And mine just as it does when I see you—I mean your mother. She is like you.

Rosina. My mother! Ah! you are as young as your likeness.

Blinval. Looks are deceitful. But, Rosina, you

must love me, if not for my own sake, for the sake of my likeness.

Rosina. Ah! but I don't love him; he is unfortunate, and I feel interested in his fate, that's all.

Blinval. You pity him! I'll avow myself at once, and—(*Aside.*) Dearest Rosina, I—I—(*A footstep is heard.*) Oh! here's this teasing, amorous Widow; she haunts me. (*Aside, and walking about.*)

Enter MRS. BELMONT, with an unfolded note.

Mrs. B. We shall have an addition to our party. Cousin, you'll not object to an old friend of mine, whom I prepare you to esteem.

Blinval. A friend of your's? I shall be happy to see him. I wish him at the devil with all my heart. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. B. An honest, plain, rough Irishman. The laws of his country forbade him, as a catholic, serving in the armies of his own monarch, whom he adores as the father of a great, free, and happy people.

Blinval. We have many brave Irish with our troops, all much esteemed: but who is your friend?

Mrs. B. A singular character; eccentric, and, at times, warm to a degree. His employment gives him an appearance of harsh authority, while, in reality, he is mild and humane. After this sketch, you will allow for a rough diamond. He wishes to be introduced to a soldier of your merit, and being within five minutes walk, comes without form—the Governor of the castle.

Blinval. (Starting.) Eh! who? the Governor? (*Walks about agitated.*) All my unlucky planets must have joined. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. B. Run, haste, Rosina, give directions that the supper suit our guests. (*Rosina, with her eyes fixed on Blinval, does not attend.*) Why aren't you gone?

Rosina. Oh! the resemblance is astonishing.

[*Aside and exit.*]
Mrs. B. How kind of our good friend, the very first hour you arrive.

Blinval. (Still walking about.) Oh, kind! Yes, yes—d—d kind! (*aside*)—kind to a degree; but I'm so dreadfully fatigued after fighting with the robbers, that I feel oppressed with sleep.

Mrs. B. Well, we'll sup early, then.

Blinval. But can't we sup alone? On the footing we stand, a third is the devil.

Mrs. B. (Smiling.) We shall have opportunities enough of being tête-à-tête.

Blinval. We have so much to say; the farm, the settlements, the attorney, the suit—

Mrs. B. But your head is so confused. However, there is no help, for he is already on the stairs.

Gov. (Without.) Easy, friend, easy; 'sblood! you'll have arm and all; there, hang up my roque-laure, and let the sergeant wait.

Blinval. (Aside.) Now impudence stand my ally. There's no alternative. (*Turns on one side, draws up the collar of his coat round his face, pulls his hat over his eyes, and stands with his arms folded.*)

Enter the GOVERNOR OF SORRENTO.

Gov. (Speaking as he enters.) If they ask for me here, tell 'em, remember, I'm just gone there, honey. Well, here and I'm come, quicker than my billet which got here first. 'Faith! and the captain will rejoice to be made known to an old veteran who has had some hard knocks to secure him a snug retreat, and a good flask of lachryma christi to fight his battles over. Be introducing us, Widow; I must tell him about my last campaign.

Mrs. B. Cousin; our friend, the Governor,

cousin. Count Murville! the Governor of the castle.

Blinval. (Still with his back to them.) Three thousand, and the enemy thought five, with the advantage of a wood, but his right flank left in the air.

Gov. Eh! what? By Saint Patrick, the most extraordinary fellow! how long will he keep in the air? Hallo! Count Murville, here's ould O'Rourke O'Donnel, Governor of Sorrento, and—whew! (Whistling.) 'Shlood! he's as deaf as my invalid sergeant of artillery. Och! and you'll have a nice husband.

Blinval. (Aside.) Psha! 'tis absurd, and I'll e'en brave the storm.

Mrs. B. Cousin, cousin! our friend, the Governor. How provoking!

Blinval. Eh! who? Oh! I beg pardon; I was absorbed in a dull calculation.

Gov. (Advancing.) No excuses, jewel, to ould O'Donnel. (Starts back on seeing his face.) Och! what?—devil burn me!—yet, how could he get from the south tower! the strongest part of the whole castle, sure! Och! it's impossible! haven't I had the keys all under locks in my own room?

Blinval. (All this time looks the Governor full in the face, and turns occasionally, with affected surprise, to Mrs. Belmont.) I'm fortunate in attracting your notice. Prythee, widow, what can this mean!

Gov. That Count Murville! Hubaboo! Botheration! 'Faith! it's a young wild devil of the death's heads, I have now snug enough there, between four walls, not a stone's throw from us. (Strutting up to him.) Sir, let me tell you, sir, that while O'Rourke O'Donnel governs the castle, he will govern and keep his prisoners safe, though they do break out.

Blinval. Ha, ha, ha! Widow, is your friend often thus? What upon earth have I to say to your prisoner? Here I'm Count Murville.

Gov. No, sir—'shlood! here you are—zounds! here you are not Count Murville. Widow, he is as like one of my prisoners as two drops of whiskey.

Mrs. B. And this prisoner—

Gov. Is a wild rogue that found the world not wide enough for his mad pranks; and has the happiness of exercising them at his liberty, in a nice room, five yards by ten, in the south tower.

Blinval. Ha, ha, ha! And you supposed he'd leaped your barrier, swam the wet ditch, and given your whiskered sentries sleeping draughts.

Gov. Och! he's as safe as bolts, walls, bars and chains can keep him. Sure, I know that, though he stands here just now.

Mrs. B. Ah! poor young man! you treat him too harshly.

Gov. 'Faith! my orders are positive. But I soften as much as possible. Humanity has a command over me strict as the king's, and I obey both masters with pleasure. But this Blinval—

Blinval. Blinval! We served in the same corps, and were never asunder; he is as like me as if we'd been twins.

Gov. Twins! Zounds! he's yourself. Well, well, as it's explained, you can't be he, and you're well off; he's in a pretty mess.

Blinval. I'm as much grieved and suffer as much as if I were in his place, we were such friends.

Gov. Were you so? 'Faith! I have a mind—but you must take your oath—No, no, I won't be satisfied with that; you must give me your honour.

Blinval. What do you mean?

Gov. (To Mrs. B.) I can't be satisfied till I see them both in one spot, standing there, cheek by jaw, like two double cherries. He shall sup here.

Blinval. Who?

Gov. Blinval.

Blinval. Sup here! Blinval!

Mrs. B. It will be very kind.

Blinval. You must not think of it. If it were known—his confinement's so strict—

Gov. 'Faith! and I ran some risk; but to oblige a friend—Och! be easy, he shall sup here.

Blinval. There will be bloodshed, then; we have quarrelled most furiously.

Gov. Quarrelled! Aha! that's the best news I have heard. It's the sure road to be as thick as mustard. You shall be friends.

Blinval. I can never see him.

Gov. You shall be friends.

Blinval. We two can't meet.

Gov. Och! be easy; I am the best hand in Italy at an accommodation. Didn't I make up the quarrel at Balmuddery, when honest Pat Holloway had put Captain Noraghan's nose clean out of joint.

Blinval. And how had he done that?

Gov. 'Faith! he had squeezed it tight, between his finger and thumb a little.

SONG.—GOVERNOR. • •

Arrah! what a big nose had the bold Captain Noraghan!

Pat Holloway he pull'd it till he made him to roar again.

Whack fal de diddle! Shoot him through the middle.

Whack fal de diddle! Well-a-day!

Whack fal de diddle! Captain, through the middle,

Och! shoot Paddy Holloway.

Both they chose me their seconds, and I gave my word to both;

For second man to two men, is one man that's third to both.

Whack ful de diddle! &c.

We met by a duck-pond; cries bold Captain Noraghan,

"Pat Holloway I'll shoot you, you never shall snore again."

Whack fal de diddle! &c.

The Captain miss'd Pat, for it was not a lucky shot,

Pat Holloway fired next, and a very fine duck he shot.

Whack fal de diddle! &c.

Then I stepp'd in between 'em; 'twas full time to take it up;

For a duel now is one shot a-piece, and then make it up.

Whack fal de diddle! Shoot him through the middle.

Whack fal de diddle! Well-a-day!

Whack fal de raddle! Shake each other's daddles, And fast friends they walk'd away. [Exit.]

Blinval. (Aside.) I've no alternative; back to my prison.

Mrs. B. How happy this will make poor Blinval! Come, you must oblige me and be reconciled; it is my first request, and I insist on your compliance.

Blinval. Insist, madam! My injured honour brooks no interference. Seek not to thwart me; some dreadful consequences might ensue, some consequences you cannot foresee. Insist, madam! I wish you a good night. (Rushes into the bed-chamber, and locks the door.)

Mrs. B. What madness and rudeness! I thought in Murville to have found mildness and sensibility. Oh! man, man! tax us not with deceit, when in

your own proud sex there's such a proof of the wide difference between professions and actions.

Enter ROSINA.

Rosina. Alone, madam! where is your company?

Mrs. B. Oh! Count Murville has retired to his apartment for the night.

Rosina. He is unwell, then; poor young man!

Mrs. B. No, no; he is quite well; but he chose to retire.

Rosina. Sure, that's a little ungallant. Then our nice supper's of no use.

Mrs. B. His place will be supplied. The Governor conceives there's a resemblance between Murville and one of his prisoners, and is gone for the captive.

Rosina. What, the gay prisoner in the tower? Oh! there's a great resemblance; so striking! there's no mistaking it.

Mrs. B. Indeed! Pray, Rosina, how came you to remark it?

Rosina. (*Embarrassed.*) I heard it. Ah! dear madam, I'll tell you all: every evening I've seen the prisoner from the staircase balcony. I have sat there whole hours to hear him sing. He bewails his captivity. Complains that all the world forsakes him, except me. Could I hear this and not be sorry for his fate?

Mrs. B. Rosina, your simplicity affects me; to pity him in his distress is amiable; but to love him would be imprudent. Be cautious, then, Rosina; nor sully with a fault one of the heart's best virtues—compassion for the unfortunate.

SONG.—MRS. BELMONT.

*From pity's power thou need'st not fly;
The tear she sheds adorns the eye;
And when down beauty's cheek it flows,
More bright its radiant crimson glows.*

*But there's a sigh, and there's a tear,
That bids youth's roses disappear;
Beware lest thine their influence prove,
Beware lest pity turn to love.*

*That tear is love's, and love's that sigh;
They fade the cheek, they dim the eye.
Ah! let not, then, thy artless bloom
In sighs and tears so dire consume.*

*Then, if thy heart tumultuous beat
Where'er thine eyes yon captive's meet,
Away, nor more such danger prove,
For soon thy pity would be love.* [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Blinval's Room in the Prison. A large stone seen rolled from one corner of a trap-door, and open opposite to it; the ordinary prison door closed and secured by iron plates, large nails, &c. The tables and chairs in confusion, a bureau overturned and broken.*

Enter BLINVAL by the trap-door. He hurries in, rolls the stone back, and puts the tables and chairs in their places.

Blinval. There, then, I'm safe. Now, Mr. Governor, one instant to derange this mad head, and I'm at your service. (*Pulls his hair out of form, and gives as much disorder as he can to his appearance. A clanking heard of a chain.*) Hark! Oh! my old buck, I must have had a few dips in the Shannon, too, not to outwit your excellence. (*Walks about in a melancholy manner with his arms crossed.*)

Enter the GOVERNOR OF SORRENTO.

Gov. Oh! and you're there. Well, then, I'm an odd blockhead, and that's all. You may go back. (*To the Guard outside.*) Ah! what, my little Kill

Colonel! Well, but what makes you so dismal? Don't be faint-hearted, boy; joy sometimes penetrates even the walls of a prison.

Blinval. Joy! You are too generous, too much a man of honour, to add the pangs of railery to my distress. Am I released?

Gov. Faith! and who told it you? Fair and softly; only six months, and tired so soon! That's no great compliment I must confess.

Blinval. Psha! why, then, am I thus teased. (*Dashes down one of the chairs in a passion.*)

Gov. And is there any other part of the king's furniture you would like to destroy? Pray, make as free as with your own.

Blinval. I beg pardon; you've been very kind to me, Governor; you've been very kind.

Gov. Oh! my dear boy, not a word more, I would attend you to the scaffold with the greatest pleasure imaginable; only don't break the furniture, that's all. But I've some pleasure in reserve: there's an old friend hard by, though you've quarrelled, and you shall sup with him to-night; I am determined you shall be reconciled; and, though Murville—

Blinval. (*With affected surprise.*) Murville! I esteem him more than I can express; but I cannot forget having cheated him out of a fine girl. It was my fault; we are so alike, I easily passed in his place.

Gov. Like! 'Slife! but you had the same father. How it happened that's not my business, but you're brothers, or I'm not governor. Come, shall we march?

Blinval. Willingly; and if you bring us together, you will have worked a miracle.

Gov. Hubaboo! honey, leave all to me. 'Faith! I'll not rest till you are face to face.

Blinval. Then your rest's gone in this world, take my word.

Gov. Adieu, donc. Nous verrons. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*Mrs. Belmont's.*

Enter MRS. BELMONT and ROSINA, GERMAIN following.

Mrs. B. Acquaint your master, Count Murville, and from me, that the sooner he attends to his affairs elsewhere, the better. It must be equally unpleasant to us both while he remains.

Ger. Dear, dear! was there ever such an unlucky son of Adam? (*Aside.*)—Most honoured madam, my master would break my head if I were so impertinent; and you yourself—Lovers' quarrels are, you know, madam—(*goes to the bed-room, and tries the door*)—Lord! it's no use; I could as soon get at—even the prisoner in the south tower.

Mrs. B. Well, when the Governor comes, we shall see.

Ger. (*Alarmed.*) The—the—the what, ma'am? Didn't you say the Governor?

Mrs. B. Certainly. What can that be to you?

Ger. Oh! nothing, ma'am; nothing to me.—(*Aside.*) Here's a cursed scrape—But I have such a kind of a sort of a dread of a prison ever since an old hag of a gipsy told me I should live to be hanged.—(*Aside.*) And, if I could make him hear—And, madam, the very name (*loud*) of a Governor makes my teeth chatter, madam.

Mrs. B. Well, well, you may retire. Desire my people to take care of you; and, when your master chooses to appear, you shall be called.

Ger. Truly, most benevolent lady, I most punctually obey your orders. What, ho! Gaspard, Diego, Janfron! here, you must take care of me. (*Goes near the bed-room door, and calls loudly.*) The Governor's coming. Some more champagne.—(*As he goes out, he meets BLINVAL and the GOVERNOR OF SORRENTO entering: Blinval in his Hussar*

jacket. Germain starts back, and Blinval catches his arm, and threatens him.)

Blinval. (Speaking as he enters.) Ah! my head's giddy with confinement. I feel oppressed with the pure air.

Rosina. It is the prisoner.

Mrs. B. The resemblance is striking.

Ger. (Aside.) The resemblance! then all is safe. *(Advancing to Blinval.)* Ah! sir, I am glad to see you.

Gov. (Putting him back.) And who the devil told you to be glad? Arrah! stand back, or I'll—stand back, I say! Ladies, I bring you a recluse, who, for some time, has virtuously renounced the fickle vanities and false allurements of this life; and, like most penitents, per force.

Blinval. Past troubles are but as dreams, and this blessed moment *(looking at Rosina)* cheaply purchased by ages of captivity.

Gov. But where's Murville? Surely, he's not obstinate still.

Blinval. I was in hopes a difference in our youth—

Gov. 'Slife! and my government. Scarcely an hour passes without such disputes at a mess dinner; 'faith, and they're commoner than toasts, ay, and pass off as quickly.

Mrs. B. He refuses all overtures. *(The Governor and Mrs. B. talk apart.)*

Blinval. I lament it; but my misfortunes and my acknowledgments must, in the end, prevail.

Rosina. (Aside.) Charming young man! What a good heart.—*(To Blinval, first in a faultering voice, then more firmly.)* I really tremble when I reflect, sir, how you have suffered in that ugly tower.

Blinval. My captivity would have been insupportable, but I was soothed by such an agreeable object.

Rosina. (Aside.) Heigho! I hope that agreeable object presented itself from my balcony.

Gov. (Advancing with Mrs. B.) Shut up! But it sha'n't be; I am determined to see whether they be the same person, as they stand separately face to face.

Mrs. B. (Smiling.) Your prisoner appears younger.

Rosina. He has a softer voice.

Gov. 'Faith! and I see no difference. But I'll not stir till he comes out; and, if he won't capitulate, by your leave, Widow, we must proceed to storm.

QUARTETTO.—MRS. BELMONT, BLINVAL, and ROSINA.

Gov. Knock, knock, knock! Knock at his door. Knock, thunder away! (They all knock loudly at the door.)

The Governor commands, his voice obey. Blin. I doubt him much, but soon you'll see He'll ne'er come face to face with me; Yet on the watch he's forc'd to keep, While Blinval wakes—he'll never sleep.

Gov. A headstrong devil, won't he stir? (Knocking.) High time, I swear, this strife to close! Peep from your covert, surely—The Governor must interpose.

(Knocking.) Ros. & Our joint endeavours must prevail, Mrs. B. When we request, he can't refuse; Their enmity's of no avail; They must be friends, they can't but choose.

Blin. Be silent, friends, his voice I hear. AN. He answers—listen, listen—so. Be silent! draw, with caution, near. Be silent—

Blin. Hark! He answers—No.

Ros. He doesn't stir—I'm sure 'tis so.

Blin. Be satisfied, he answers—No.

Ros. Did you hear him? (To Belmont.)

Mrs. B. No. Did you hear him?

Gov. No. Did you hear him?

Blin. No.

Ros. He didn't stir—I'm sure 'tis so.

Blin. Be satisfied, he answers—No.

Mrs. B. } He didn't stir—I'm sure 'tis so.

Gov. }

Ros. }

Blin. Be satisfied, he answers—No. [Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—An Apartment at Mrs. Belmont's. A table spread with wines and a dessert.

The GOVERNOR, MRS. BELMONT, ROSINA, and BLINVAL in his own character, seated at supper.

Gov. 'Faith, and upon my honour, but it's the most extraordinary thing I ever saw, either in England, Ireland, or all Italy. Such an obstinate mule! Oh! if I had him for a few weeks in the castle!

Blinval. Things more unlikely have happened.

Gov. Well, let me catch him there, and he shall be in charity with all mankind before I let him loose. There's nothing on the whole earth so bad as obstinacy! I'm resolved never to quit this spot till he comes from that room. If I give up this point, it will be for the first time since I was christened by my surname O'Flagherty.

Blinval. He will no more come from that room than I shall—who sit here.

Gov. Then, by your leave, Widow, here I'm posted. He shall come out, by the god of war!

Enter the Corporal of the Guard.

Now what the devil brings your impudence into this house?

Corp. Governor, a stranger's arrived, and brings orders about the prisoner Blinval.

Gov. Ah! this looks serious. *(They all rise.)* 'Faith, my young gentleman, I am concerned; but you must make up your mind to the worst; and, for the present, back to the south tower.

Rosina. I'm distressed at this cross accident.

Blinval. Indeed! then I'm happy.—Blinval is not indifferent. *(Aside.)*

Gov. Come, come, this is all very pleasant; but we've no time to lose. You must give up the ladies for the corporal.

Mrs. B. Through the indulgence of the Governor, we shall soon meet.

Gov. Oh! I'll be as indulgent as you please. Corporal, conduct the prisoner to the guard-room, and bid your officer lodge him safe in the south tower, and post a sentry at his door. I'll follow presently. *(Exeunt Blinval and Corporal.)*

It's a bad business, I'm afraid. Drawn on his Colonel's breach of subordination. Charge upon charge! These young fellows are so hot-brained, they think a dash of bravery comprises all military duties; it's the least part. Who obeys best, best commands, too; that is the soldier's creed. But this Murville—I'm resolved to keep up the blockade: here I'm posted.

Rosina. Heigho!

Gov. 'Sblood! my fair-violet, what makes you say "heigho!" Oh! if I could but knock off thirty of these hard years, 'faith, I'd soon change your note.

Mrs. B. (Smiling.) You'd have no chance.

Gov. No chance! 'Slife! but an honest Irish heart is worth the conquest. (*Rosina shakes her head, and sighs.*) Again! Widow, the little blird urchin has been at work. Come, child, confess what happy name would have been wafted on that deep-drawn sigh: make me your confidant, and you'll find me a good ally.

Mrs. B. Rosina, child, the Governor is an old friend; your confidence will be well placed.—(*During the end of this dialogue, the bed-room door opens, and Blinval with the great coat on, disguised as Murville, peeps through, stealing in quietly, and unperceived by any of the party.*)

Gov. And has this lover of your's, my little dear, no name?

Blinval. Oh! yes, yes, yes; he has a name, and I know it. (*They all turn round towards Blinval.*)

Gov. Och! Are you there at last, Mr. Murville? Come, if you please; you shall just step with me to the castle, where you shall shake hands with my prisoner; and let me see you both in the same person, and together, and then I will believe you are not him. (*Blinval creeps back to the bed-chamber, and nearly gains the door, when the Governor, perceiving his intention, catches his arm, and brings him back.*)—No, honey, no! not quite so young. You must come fairly, or I shall call the guard.

Blinval. (*Struggling.*) Sir, do you know, I am—

Gov. (*Holding him.*) Och! now be easy, friend, it is to know whether you are my prisoner or yourself; and to make you both come together, while you are separate, that I oblige you with my company to the south tower. So, now be easy, or I must call the guard. Come, come—och! to be sure, now, and you're not friends.

Blinval. Well, sir—(*Aside.*) Zounds! what shall I hit on, now?—Well, sir, I'll attend you; I'll follow—follow you presently.

Gov. Follow! 'Faith, in my country, friends always link themselves so doatingly—so, if you please, I must desire your arm. (*Keeps hold of Blinval, and drags him off.*)

Mrs. B. (*Having been previously talking apart with Rosina.*) Rosina, I must now have some serious talk with you. Follow me to my dressing-room, and look for the indulgence of a fond mother, if I experience the candour and truth of a dutiful child. [*Exit.*]

Rosina. Ah! my heart beats so quick! If I could steal for an instant to my balcony, and catch one good, fair view—But my mamma needn't mind poor Blinval, he will soon be removed.—These despatches make me tremble. Oh! if I could but steal him fairly from that ugly tower, they should never see him again.

SONG.—ROSINA.

Together, then, we'd fondly stray,
O'er meadows green, thro' woodlands deep,
Rejoicing view the lambskins play,
And in the gurgling streamlet peep:
No cankering cares our sleep molest,
No frowning gaoler part;
Above the world, supremely blest,
His throne Rosina's heart.

From haunts of surly man we'd fly,
My prisoner safe I'd guard;
Secure from envy's prying eye,
And love our bright reward.
For him I'd cull Pomona's store,
Nor from his side depart;
Thus blest'd, could Blinval ask for more?
His throne Rosina's heart. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*Blinval's Apartment in the prison. The stone is so removed as just to admit of the possibility of his passing. A lamp burning on the table. The camp bed, near the secret avenue. Curtains drawn close and opposite to the common entrance.*

Gov. (*Without.*) Well, well! I shall be satisfied in a moment. Sentry, your prisoner's safe?

Sentry. (*Without.*) All's well!

Gov. Safe, you say; pretty well? Corporal, post your guard on the stairs, and let nobody pass. (*The keys are heard turning, the bars removing, and the chains falling, &c.*)

Enter the GOVERNOR OF SORRENTO holding BLINVAL, who is wrapped in his surcoat.

Gov. Come, come—'faith! and you've been more tractable than I had hoped—But what makes you tremble? (*Blinval appears smothering a laugh.*) Oh! he's a mighty, pretty, well-behaved, civil spoken fellow, and will make you any apology you please.—(*Looking round.*) Hallo! Why, sblood and ouns! where has he hidden himself? Zounds! is it possible? Oh! no, no, no; he must be gone to bed. Stand here a moment, Count, while I wake him. (*Goes towards the bed. Blinval watches his opportunity; and, at the instant the Governor has reached the bed, whips off the great coat, throws it into the opening behind the stone, which he moves back to its right place, concealing the trap-door, and slips behind the bed, and into it.*)—Ay, ay, poor devil! he has just laid down to take a comfortable bit of a nap. Blinval, Blinval! 'Faith, he sleeps like a top! Who'd think a man could sleep so sound in misfortune? Blinval! (*Throwing open the curtains.*)

Blinval. (*Putting his head from the bed.*) What do you want?

Gov. Och! and you're there! Well, and why did you not spake out, when you first saw my voice in your sleep?

Blinval. (*Coming forward.*) What can this mean? Governor, let me tell you, your behaviour, to a man in distress, is inexcusable. Why am I thus tormented, sir? Leave me this instant, I insist!

Gov. Leave you! Faith and be easy, boy! Haven't I brought Murville? You shall be friends.—(*Turning to the spot where he had left Blinval.*) Why, zounds! how! that other fellow is off!—There, I see him! Hallo! Sentry, sergeant, corporal! bring him back here.

Enter Corporal.

Why did you let that fellow pass, and not shoot him for forcing you? You a soldier! I'll have you all at the halberts, or I am not Governor, by St. Patrick!

Corporal. Governor, no one passed us.

Gov. (*Raising his cane.*) Ah! and get out with your d—e lies! Didn't I see him here, through my own eyes? And didn't I see the tail of his brown coat, as he skipped through the door? Make yourself scarce, or I shall break my cane over your d—d thick head. (*Advances on the Corporal, who runs off.*) Well, well, you shall meet yet; I'll not be treated so by any Count in the kingdom! I'll after him this instant; ay, and he shall give me the satisfaction of a gentleman, when he has made friends with you, which shall be here, here, and before you're shot. [*Exit.*]

Blinval. Governor! Governor! (*Following him.*) Huzza! I'm safe again. Love is like hunger, and will break through stone walls.

[*Watches the Governor fairly out. When the prison door closes, listens a moment, then runs to the mooseable stone, pulls it away, and exit through the trap-door.*]

SCENE III.—*A Grove leading to the castle.*

Enter GERMAIN, stealing along in silence, and alarmed.

Ger. Oh, dear! oh, dear! All must out now, and the reward of my labour will be bestowed with interest. Germain, thou art a fool; and a court-martial would decide it, and I'll prove it. "Gentlemen, the prisoner was a free man; and, for fifty Louis, he abetted, assisted, connived at, and advised Lieutenant Blinval, of the death's-head hussars, then and there prisoner in the castle—(Starting, and looking round)—to represent the Count Murville"—Oh, lord! oh, lord! Talk of the devil, and he's at your elbow. *[Exit.]*

SCENE IV.—*The Outside of the Castle; an antique building, with four towers, enclosed by a wet ditch. A draw-bridge up; cannon mounted, &c. A view across the Bay of Naples, Mount Vesuvius in the distance. The scene is by moonlight, and the reflection thrown upon the water. A Sentinel placed upon the ramparts.*

Enter COUNT MURVILLE in the same uniform as Blinval's, the dress jacket of an hussar officer, and the cloak on the shoulder. He views the castle with attention, and then comes forward.

Mur. Here, then, I am at last; and with the pardon I had despaired of obtaining. His warm temper hurried Blinval into an act, which, though excusable in a young man, is death to a soldier. I can, in my turn, now give life. Yes, to the generous feelings of a monarch I am indebted for success, when interest and court favour failed. Blinval, how rich the gift! First, I'll embrace my friend; see him at liberty; then fly to my cousin, and seek that settled happiness her character bids me expect.

Enter GERMAIN.

Ger. (Aside, stealing forward.) Not quite so fast, or I'm ruined.—(To Murville.) Sir, you're welcome. I have obeyed all your orders; nay, sir, exceeded them, in my impatience to oblige—(aside) myself: no lie there.

Mur. Germain, I have no doubt of your fidelity. I am expected, then?

Ger. No, sir, not yet; and if you could delay your visit for a short time, all things would be better arranged; at present, sir, the apartment, which has been occupied, is not ready; and—in short, sir, you are not expected yet.

Mur. This appears strange.—However, I have more serious business at present. Attend me here; I shall despatch you with a message in a few moments.

Ger. (Aside.) Serious business! Dear, dear! that's no lucky! If I can keep him at an inn all night, there will be time for invention.

Mur. (Pulling out his watch.) This loitering Governor! Could I impart to him my feeling and anxiety, he would be swift, indeed; but the scenes that he is accustomed to, deaden his sensibility.—(The drawbridge is lowered.) Hark! the bridge lowers; then there are some hopes.

Ger. (Aside.) Hopes! Oh! that I could but creep into a snail's house to escape. He'll have discovered all, and I shall live to see the gipsy's prophecy fulfilled—I shall be hanged!

Enter the GOVERNOR OF SORRENTO from the Castle, followed by the Lieutenant and an Officer; when they are on the bridge, the Governor directs the Officer to return to the castle; the bridge is again raised, and the Governor and the Lieutenant come forward to Murville.

Mur. I presume, sir, the Governor?

Gov. 'Faith, sir, you have guessed right. I am O'Rourke O'Flagherty of the kingdom, and, as you say, governor of the castle. You have despatches from Naples.

Mur. For the release of one of your state prisoners: I have the packet in my hand.

Gov. Welcome, sir, to Sorrento. I am seldom so pleased as when I wish my old acquaintances a good journey; though they are never grateful enough to wish to pay me a second visit.

Mur. I'm impatient to afford you that enjoyment. Here are my orders; inspect them. Here's the king's seal; they are correct. *(Delivering despatches.)*

Gov. (Reading.) "Blinval!"—Ooh! I am rejoiced—But we lose time. Lower the bridge!—Come, sir; a man's liberty must not be trifled with.

Ger. (Who has been skulking about with signs of fear.—Aside.) Oh! then, all's safe.—*(Runs up to the bridge.)* Hallo! within! Are you all deaf? Lower the bridge.

TRIO AND CHORUS.

The GOVERNOR, MURVILLE, and GERMAIN.

Lower the bridge, what ho! attend.

Lower the bridge—

Officer. Who's there?

Gov. & } A friend.

Ger. & }

(The bridge is lowered again.)

Gov. The strictest discipline, you see,
Within Sorrento's castle reigns:
My rule is—regularity,
And I'm rewarded for my pains.

(When the bridge is down, a guard comes from the castle, leaving a sentinel at the other side of the bridge, and returns again into the castle.)

Officer. Advance! The countersign!

(The Governor makes signs to Murville and Germain to remain still.)

Gov. Rochelle! *(Going to the Officer.)*

Officer. Correct! Pass friends, and all is well.

Gov. Lieutenant, hasten, Blinval's free.

(Giving the keys to the Lieutenant.)

Mur. & } Fly! soothe his anxious mind to peace.

Gov. & }

Gov. Roar like a lion—liberty!

Mur. & } Fly, quick, and hasten his release!

Gov. & }

Mur. Tell him a friend, whose life he sav'd,
Has joyous tidings to impart.

Gov. Tell him he's been so well behav'd,
He's my permission to depart.

[Exit the Lieutenant over the bridge into the castle, ordering the Officer from the ramparts to follow him.]

Gov. Ooh! honey sweet, what joys we feel—

Mur. Transporting moment! yes, I feel—

Ger. I'm glad he's free, but still I feel—

Gov. When gratitude the bosom warms.

Mur. A generous act the bosom warms.

Ger. Some symptoms strong of fierce alarms.

Gov. Its glowing ardour you reveal.

Mur. Ah! could my tongue my joys reveal—

Ger. Ah! could my tongue my fears reveal—

Gov. Humanity, how bright thy charms!

Mur. & } 'Twould soon destroy those fancied
Ger. & } charms.

THE CONTRIVANCES;

A BALLAD OPERA, IN ONE ACT.—BY HENRY CAREY.



Scene 3.

CHARACTERS.

ROVEWELL
ARGUS

HEARTY
ROBIN

ARETHUSA
BETTY

SCENE I.—Rovewell's Lodgings.

ROBIN discovered.

Robin. Well, though pimping is the most honourable and profitable of all professions, it is certainly the most dangerous and fatiguing; but of all fatigues there's none like following a virtuous mistress. There's not one letter I carry, but I run the risk of kicking, caning, or pumping; nay, often hanging. Let me see: I have committed three burglaries to get one letter to her. Now, if my master should not get the gipsy at last, I have ventured my sweet person to a fair purpose. But, basta! here comes my master and his friend Mr. Hearty. I must hasten and get our disguises.

*And if dame Fortune fail us now to win her,
Oh! all ye gods above! the devil's in her.* [Exit.

Enter ROVEWELL and HEARTY.

Hearty. Why so melancholy, Captain? Come, come, a man of your gaiety and courage should never take a disappointment so much to heart.

Rove. 'Sdeath! to be prevented when I had brought my design so near perfection!

Hearty. Were you less open and daring in your attempts, you might hope to succeed. The old gentleman, you know, is cautious to a degree; his daughter is under a strict confinement: would you

use more of the fox than the lion, fortune, perhaps, might throw an opportunity in your way. But you must have patience.

Rove. Who can have patience when danger is so near? Read this letter, and then tell me what room there is for patience.

Hearty. (Reads.) "To-morrow will prevent all our vain struggles to get to each other. I am then to be married to my eternal aversion; you know the fop, 'tis Cuckoo, who, having a large estate, is forced upon me; but my heart can be none but Rovewell's. Immediately after the receipt of this, meet Betty at the old place; there is yet one invention left; if you pursue it closely, you may, perhaps, release her who would be your—ARETHUSA."

Rove. Yes, Arethusa, I will release thee, or die in the attempt. Dear friend, excuse my rudeness; you know the reason.

•AIR.—ROVEWELL.

*I'll face ev'ry danger
To rescue my dear,
For fear is a stranger
Where love is sincere.
Repulses but fire us,
Despair we despise,
If beauty inspire us
To pant for the prize.*

[Exit.

Hearty. Well, go thy way, and get her; for thou

deserves her, o' my conscience. How have I been deceived in this boy! I find him the very reverse of what his step-mother represented him; and am now sensible it was only her ill-usage that forced my child away. His not having seen me since he was five years old, renders me a perfect stranger to him: under that pretence I have got into his acquaintance, and find him all I wish. If this plot of his fail, I believe my money must buy him the girl at last. *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—*A Chamber in Argus's house.*

ARETHUSA discovered.

AIR.—ARETHUSA.

*See, the radiant queen of night
Sheds on all her kindly beams;
Gilds the plains with cheerful light,
And sparkles in the silver streams.
Smiles adorn the face of nature,
Tasteless! all things yet appear,
Unto me a hopeless creature,
In the absence of my dear.*

Enter ARGUS.

Argus. Pray, daughter, what lingo is that same you chant and sputter out at this rate?

Are. English, sir.

Argus. English, quotha! adod! I took it to be nonsense.

Are. 'Tis a hymn to the moon.

Argus. A hymn to the moon! I'll have none of your hymns in my house. Give me the book, housewife.

Are. I hope, sir, there is no crime in reading a harmless poem.

Argus. Give me the book, I say poems, with a plague! what are they good for, but to blow up the fire of love, and make young wenches wanton? But I have taken care of you, mistress, for to-morrow you shall have a husband to stay your stomach, and no less a person than 'Squire Cuckoo.

Are. You will not, surely, be so cruel as to marry me to a man I cannot love.

Argus. Why, what sort of a man would you have, Mrs. Mix?

AIR.—ARETHUSA.

*Gentle in personage,
Conduct, and equipage,
Noble by heritage,
Generous and free.
Brave, not romantic;
Learn'd, not pedantic;
Frolic, not frantic;
This must be he.*

*Honour maintaining,
Meanness disdaining,
Still entertaining,
Engaging, and new.
Neat, but not finical;
Sage, but not cynical;
Never tyrannical;
But ever true.*

Argus. Why, is not Mr. Cuckoo all this? Adod! he's a brisk young fellow, and a little feather-bed doctrine will soon put the Captain out of your head, and to put you out of his power, you shall be given over to the 'squire to-morrow.

Are. Surely, sir, you will, at least, defer it one day.

Argus. No, nor one hour. To-morrow morning, at eight of the clock, precisely. In the meantime, take notice, the 'squire's sister is hourly expected; so, pray, do you be civil and sociable with her, and

let me have none of your posits and glouts, as you tender my displeasure. *[Exit.]*

Are. To-morrow is short warning; but we may be too cunning for you yet, old gentleman.

Enter BETTY.

Oh! Betty, welcome a thousand times! What news? have you seen the Captain?

Betty. Yes, madam; and if you were to see him in his new rigging, you'd split your sides with laughing. Such a hoyden! such a piece of country stuff, you never set your eyes on! But the petticoats are soon thrown off, and if good luck attend us, you may easily conjure Miss Malkin, the 'squire's sister, into your own dear Captain.

Are. But when will they come?

Betty. Instantly, madam; he only stays to settle matters for our escape. He's in deep consultation with his privy-counsellor Robin, who is to attend him in the quality of a country put. They'll both be here in a moment; so, let's in, and pack up the jewels, that we may be ready at once to leap into the saddle of liberty, and ride full speed to your desires.

Are. Dear Betty, let's make haste; I think every moment an age till I'm free from this bondage.

AIR.—ARETHUSA.

*When parents obstinate and cruel prove,
And force us to a man we cannot love,
'Tis fit we disappoint the sordid elves,
And wisely get us husbands for our selves.*

(A knocking without.)

Betty. There they are, in, in. *[Exit.]*

Enter ARGUS.

Argus. You're woundy hasty, methinks, to knock at that rate. This is certainly some courtier come to borrow money, I know it by the saucy rapping of the footman. Who's at the door?

Robin. *(Without.)* Tummos.

Argus. Tummos! who's Tummos? Who would you speak with, friend?

Robin. *(Without.)* With young master's vather-in-law, that mun be, Master Hardguts.

Argus. And what's your business with Master Hardguts?

Robin. *(Without.)* Why, young mistress is come out o' the country to see brother's wife that mun be, that's all.

Argus. Odso! the 'squire's sister; I'm sorry I made her wait so long.

SCENE III.—*A Chamber.*

Enter ARGUS introducing ROVEWILL in woman's clothes, followed by ROBIN, as a clown.

Argus. Save you, fair lady, you're welcome to town. *(Rovevell curtsies.)* A very modest maiden, truly. How long have you been in town?

Robin. Why, an hour and a bit or so; we just put up horses at King's Arms yonder, and stayed a crum to zee poor things feed, for your London osters give little enough to poor beasts, an' you stond not by 'em yourzel, and zee 'em fed, as soon as your back's turned, adod! they'll cheat you afore your face.

Argus. Why, how now, Clodpate? are you to speak before your mistress, and with your hat on, too? Is that your country breeding?

Robin. Why, an' 'tis on, 'tis on; an' 'tis off, 'tis off. what cares Tummos for your false-hearted London compliments? An' you'd have an answer from young mistress, you mun look to Tummos; for she's so main bashful, she never speaks one word

but her prayers, and thou'st so softly that nobody can hear her.

Argus. I like her the better for that; silence is a heavenly virtue in a woman, but very rare to be found in this wicked place. Have you seen your brother, pretty lady, since you came to town? (*Roswell curtsies.*) Oh! miraculous modesty! would all women were thus! Can't you speak, madam? (*Roswell curtsies again.*)

Robin. An' you get a word from her, 'tis more nor she has spoken to us these fourscore and seven long miles; but young mistress will prate fast enough, an' you set her among your women folk.

Argus. Say'st thou so, honest fellow? I'll send her to those that have tongue enough, I'll warrant you. Here, Betty!

Enter BETTY.

Take this young lady to my daughter; 'tis 'Squire Cuckoo's sister; and, d'y'e hear? make much of her, I charge you.

Betty. Yes, sir. Please to follow me, madam.

Ros. (*Aside to Robin.*) Now, you rogue, for a lie an hour and a half long, to keep the old fellow in suspense. [*Exit with Betty.*]

Robin. Well, master, don't you think my mistress a dainty young woman? She's wonderfully bemired in our country for her shapes.

Argus. Oh! she's a fine creature, indeed! But where's the 'squire, honest friend?

Robin. Why, one cannot find a man out in this same Londonshire, there are so many taverns and chocking-houses; you may as well seek a needle in a hay fardel, as they say'n i' the country. I was at 'squire's lodging yonder, and there was nobody but a prate-spacè whoreson of a foot-boy, and he told me maister was at chocking-house, and all the while the vixen did nothing but taunt and laugh at me: eood! I could have found in my heart to have gi'n him a good whirrit in the chops. So I went to one chocking-house, and t'other chocking-house, till I was quite weary; and I could see nothing but a many people supping hot suppings, and reading your gazing papers: we had much ado to find out your worship's house; the vixen boys set us o' thic side, and that side, till we were almost quite lost; an' it were not for an honest fellow that knowed your worship, and set us i' the right way.

Argus. 'Tis pity they should use strangers so; but as to your young mistress, does she never speak?

Robin. Adod! sir, never to a mon; why, she wo't not speak to her own father, she's so main bashful.

Argus. That's strange, indeed! But how does my friend, Sir Roger? he's well, I hope.

Robin. Hearty still, sir. He has drunk down six fox-hunters sin last Lammas. He holds his old course still; twenty pipes a-day, a cup of mum in the morning, a tankard of ale at noon, and three bottles of s'ingo at night. The same mon now he was thirty years ago; and young 'squire Yedward is just come from 'varsity: he's mainly growed sin you saw him; he's a fine, proper, tall gentleman now; why, he's near upon as tall as you or I, mun.

Argus. Good now, good now! But wouldst drink, honest friend?

Robin. I don't care an' I do, a bit or so; for, to say truth, I'm mortal dry.

Argus. Here, John!

Enter a Servant.

Take this honest fellow down, and make him welcome. When your mistress is ready to go, we'll call you.

Robin. Ah! pray, take care and make much of me, for I am a bitter honest fellow, and you did but know me. [*Exit with Serv.*]

Argus. These country fellows are very blunt but very honest. I would fain hear his mistress talk. He said she'd find her tongue when she was once amongst those of her own sex. I'll go listen for once, and hear what the young tits have to say to one another. [*Exit.*]

Enter ROSEWELL, ARETHUSA, and BETTY.

Ros. Dear Arethusa, delay not the time thus; your father will certainly come in and surprise us.

Betty. Let us make hay while the sun shines, madam: I long to be out of this prison.

Are. So do I; but not on the Captain's conditions, to be his prisoner for life.

Ros. I shall run mad if you trifle thus: name your conditions; I sign my consent before-hand. (*Kisses her.*)

Are. Indeed, Captain, I'm afraid to trust you.

AIR.—ARETHUSA.

*Cease to persuade,
Nor say you love sincerely;
When you've betray'd,
You'll treat me most severely,
And softly what once you did pursue.
Happy the fair
Who ne'er believes you;
But gives despair,
Or else deceives you,
And learns inconstancy from you.*

Ros. Unkind Arethusa! I little expected this usage from you.

AIR.—ROSEWELL.

*When did you see
Any falsehood in me,
That thus you unkindly suspect me?
Speak, speak your mind;
For I fear you're inclin'd,
In spite of my truth, to reject me.
If it must be so,
To the wars I will go,
Where danger my passion shall smother;
I'd rather perish there
Than linger in despair,
Or see you in the arms of another.*

Enter ARGUS behind.

Argus. So, so; this is as it should be; they are as gracious as can be already. How the young tit smuggles her! Adod! she kisses with a hearty good will. (*Aside.*)

Are. I must confess, Captain, I am half inclined to believe you.

Argus. Captain! how's this? bless my eyesight! I know the villain now; but I'll be even with him. (*Aside.*)

Betty. Dear madam, don't trifle so; the parson's at the very next door, you'll be tacked together in an instant; and then I'll trust you to come back to your cage again, if you can do it with a safe conscience.

Argus. Here's a treacherous jade! but I'll do your business for you, Mrs. Jemabel. (*Aside.*)

Betty. Consider, madam, what a life you lead here; what a jealous, ill-natured, watchful, covetous, barbarous, old cuff of a father you have to deal with! What a glorious opportunity this is, and what a sad, sad, very sad thing it is to die a maid!

Argus. If that jade die a maid, I'll die a martyr. (*Aside.*)

Betty. In short, madam, if you stay much longer, you may repent it in every vein in your heart. The old hawk will undoubtedly pop in upon us and discover all, and then we're undone for ever.

Argus. You may go to the devil for ever, *Mrs. Impudence.* (*Aside.*)

Are. Well, Captain, if you should deceive me—

Rove. If I do, may heaven—

Are. Nay, no swearing, Captain, for fear you should prove like the rest of your sex.

Rove. How can you doubt me, *Arethusa*, when you know how much I love you?

Argus. A wheedling dog! But I'll spoil his sport, anon. (*Aside.*)

Betty. Come, come away, dear madam. I have the jewels: but stay, I'll go first and see if the coast be clear.

Argus. (*Meeting her.*) Where are you going, pretty maiden?

Betty. Only do—do—do—down stairs, sir.

Argus. And what hast thou got there, child?

Betty. Nothing but pi—pi—pi—pins, sir.

Argus. Here, give me the pins, and do you go to h—, *Mrs. Minx*. D'y'e hear? out of my house this moment. [*Exit Betty.*] These are your chamber jades, forsooth. *O tempora! O mores!* What an age is this! Get you in, forsooth; I'll talk with you anon. [*Exit Arethusa.*] So, Captain, are those your regimental clothes? I'll assure you they become you mightily. If you did but see yourself now, how much like a hero you look! *Ecce signum!* Ha, ha, ha!

Rove. Blood and fury! stop your grinning, or I'll stretch your mouth with a vengeance.

Argus. Nay, nay, Captain Belswagger, if you're so passionate, 'tis high time to call aid and assistance. Here, *Richard*, *Thomas*, *John!* help me to lay hold of this fellow. You have no sword now, Captain; no sword; d'y'e mark me?

Enter Servants and ROBIN.

Robin. But I have a pistol, sir, at your service. (*Pulls out a pistol.*)

Argus. Oh Lord! oh Lord!

Rove. And I'll unload it in your breast, if you stir one step after me.

Argus. A bloody-minded dog! But lay hold on that rogue there, that country cheat.

Robin. See here, gentlemen, are two little bulldogs of the same breed; (*presenting two pistols*) they are wonderful scorers of the brain; so that if you offer to molest or follow me—you understand me, gentlemen; you understand me.

[*Exit with Rovevell.*]

I Serv. Yes, yes, we understand you, with a plague!

2 Serv. The devil go with 'em, I say.

Argus. Ay, ay, good b'ye to you, in the devil's name. A terrible dog! What a fright he has put me in! I sha'n't be myself this month. And you, ye cowardly rascals, to stand by and see my life in danger; get out, ye slaves; out of my house, I say. I'll put an end to all this; for I'll not have a servant in the house. I'll carry all the keys in my pocket, and never sleep more. What a murdering son of a w— this is! But I'll prevent him; for to-morrow she shall be married certainly, and then my furious gentleman can have no hopes left. A Jezabel! to have a red-coat without any money! Had he but money, if he want sense, manners, or even manhood itself, it mattered not a pin; but to want money is the devil. Well, I'll secure her under lock and key till to-morrow; and if her husband can't keep her from captain-hunting, e'en let her bring him home a fresh pair of horns every time she goes out upon the chase. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—A Chamber.

ARETHUSA discovered, sitting melancholy on a couch.

AIR.—ARETHUSA.

Oh! leave me to complain

My loss of liberty;

*I never more shall see my soul,
Nor ever more be free.*

Oh! cruel, cruel fate!

*What joy can I receive,
When in the arms of one I hate,*

I'm doom'd, alas! to live?

Ye pitying pow'rs above,

That see my soul's dismay,

Or bring me back the man I love,

Or take my life away.

Enter ARGUS.

Argus. So, lady, you're welcome home! See, how the pretty turtle sits moaning the loss of her mate! What, not a word, *Thusy*? not a word, child? Come, come, don't be in the dumps now, and I'll fetch the Captain, or the 'squire's sister; perhaps they may make it prattle a bit. Ah! ungracious girl! Is all my care come to this? Is this the gratitude you shew your uncle's memory, to throw away what he had bussed so hard for at so mad a rate? Did he leave you twelve thousand pounds, think you, to make you no better than a soldier's trull? to follow a camp? to carry a knapsack? This is what you'd have, mistress, is it not?

Are. This, and ten thousand times worse, were better with the man I love, than to be chained to the nauseous embraces of one I hate.

Argus. A very dutiful lady, indeed! I'll make you sing another song to-morrow; and till then, I'll leave you in *salva custodia*, to consider. B'ye, *Thusy*!

Are. How barbarous is the covetousness and caution of ill-natured parents! They toil for estates with a view to make posterity happy; and then, by a mistaken prudence, they match us to our aversion. But I am resolved not to suffer tamely, however: they shall see, though my body's weak, my resolution's strong; and I may yet find spirit enough to plague them.

AIR.—ARETHUSA.

Sooner than I'll my love forego,

And lose the man I prize,

I'll bravely combat ev'ry woe,

Or fall a sacrifice.

Nor bolts nor bars shall me control,

I death and danger dare;

Restraint but fires the active soul,

And urges fierce despair.

The window now shall be my gate,

I'll either fall or fly;

Before I'll live with him I hate,

For him I love I'll die.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE V.—The Street.

Enter ROVEVELL and Boy.

Boy. Sir, sir, I want to speak with you.

Rove. Is your mistress locked up, say you?

Boy. Yes, sir; and *Betty's* turned away, and all the men-servants; and there's no living soul in the house but our old cook-maid, and I, and my master, and *Mrs. Thusy*; and she cries, and cries her eyes out almost.

Rove. Oh! the tormenting news! But if the garrison be so weak, the castle may be the sooner stormed. How did you get out?

Boy. Through the kitchen-window, sir.

Rove. Shew me the window presently.

Boy. Alack-a-day! it won't do, sir. That plot won't take.

Rove. Why, sirrah?

Boy. You are something too big, sir.

Rove. I'll try that, however.

Boy. Indeed, sir, you can't get your leg in; but I could put you in a way.

Rove. How, dear boy?

Boy. I can lend you the key of Mrs. Thway's chamber; if you can contrive to get into the house: but you must be sure to let my mistress out.

Rose. How couldst thou get it? This is almost a miracle.

Boy. I picked it out of my master's coat-pocket this morning, sir, as I was a-brushing him.

Rose. That's my boy! There's money for you. This child will come to good in time.

Boy. My master will miss me, sir; I must go; but I wish you good luck. *[Exit.]*

ARETHUSA appears at the window above.

DUETT.—ROSEWELL and ARETHUSA.

Ros. Make haste and away, my only dear;
Make haste, and away, away!

For all at the gate,
Your true lover does wait,
And I pr'ythee, make no delay.

Are. Oh! how shall I steal away, my love?

Oh! how shall I steal away?
My daddy is near,
And I dare not, I fear;
Pray, come, then, another day.

Ros. Oh! this is the only day, my life;
Oh! this is the only day.

I'll draw him aside,
While you throw the gates wide,
And then you may steal away.

Are. Then, pr'ythee, make no delay, my dear;
Then, pr'ythee, make no delay:

We'll serve him a trick;
For I'll slip in the nick,
And with my true love away.

Cho. Oh! Cupid, befriend a loving pair;
Oh! Cupid, befriend us, we pray.
May our stratagem take,
For thine own sweet sake;
And, amen! let all true lovers say.

[Exit Arethusa.]

Enter ROBIN, disguised as a lawyer, and Soldiera.

Robin. So, my hearts of oak, are you all ready?
Sold. Yes, an't please your honour.

Rose. You know your cue, then, to your posts.
(They retire to a corner of the stage; Robin knocks smartly at the door.)

Robin. What, are you all asleep, or dead in the house, that you can't hear?

Enter ARGUS.

Argus. Sir, you are very hasty, methinks.

Robin. Sir, my business requires haste.

Argus. Sir, you had better make haste about it, for I know no business you have here.

Robin. Sir, I am come to talk with you on an affair of consequence.

Argus. Sir, I don't love talking; I know you not; and, consequently, can have no affairs with you.

Robin. Sir, not know me?

Argus. Sir, 'tis enough for me to know myself.

Robin. A d—d thwarting old dog this same.
(Aside.) Sir, I live but just in the next street.

Argus. Sir, if you lived at Jamaica, 'tis the same thing to me.

Robin. I find coaxing won't do. I must change my note, or I shall never unkennel the old fox. *(Aside.)* Well, Mr. Argus, there's no harm done, so take your leave of three thousand pounds. You have enough of your own already. *(Going.)*

Argus. How! three thousand pounds! I must inquire into this. *(Aside.)* Sir, a word with you.

Robin. Sir, I have nothing to say to you. I took you to be a prudent person, that knew the worth of money, and how to improve it; but I find I'm deceived.

Argus. Sir, I hope you'll excuse my rudeness; but, you know, a man cannot be too cautious.

Robin. Sir, that's true, and therefore I excuse you; but I'd take such treatment from no man in England besides yourself.

Argus. Sir, I beg your pardon; but to the business.

Robin. Why, thus it is: a spendthrift young fellow is galloping through a plentiful fortune; I have lent two thousand pounds upon it already; and if you'll advance an equivalent, we'll foreclose the whole estate, and share it between us; for I know he can never redeem it.

Argus. A very judicious man; I'm sorry I affronted him. *(Aside.)* But how is this to be done?

Robin. Very easily, sir. A word in your ear; a little more this way. *(Draws Argus aside; the Soldiers get between him and the door.)*

Argus. But the title, sir, the title?

Robin. Do you doubt my veracity?

Argus. Not in the least, sir; but one cannot be too sure.

Robin. That's very true, sir; and, therefore, I'll make sure of you now I have you.

[Robin tips up his heels; the Soldiers blindfold and gag him, and stand over him; while Rosewell carries off Arethusa; after which they leave him, he making a great noise.]

Enter Mob.

All. What's the matter? what's the matter?
(They sing him.)

Argus. Oh! neighbours, I'm robbed and murdered, ruined, and undone for ever.

1 Mob. Why, what's the matter, master?

Argus. There's a whole legion of thieves in the house, they gagged and blindfolded me, and offered forty naked swords at my breast. I beg of you to assist me, or they'll strip the house in a minute.

2 Mob. Forty drawn swords, say you, sir?

Argus. Ay, and more, I think, on my conscience.

2 Mob. Then look you, sir, I'm a married man, and have a large family, I would not venture amongst such a parcel of blood-thirsty rogues for the world; but, if you please, I'll run and call a constable.

All. Ay, ay, call a constable, call a constable.

Argus. I sha'n't have a penny left, if we stay for a constable. I am but one man, and, as old as I am, I'll lead the way, if you'll follow me. *[Exit.]*

All. Ay, ay; in, in; follow, follow; hurra!

1 Mob. Pr'ythee, Jack, do you go in, if you come to that.

4 Mob. I go in! what should I go in for? I have lost nothing.

Woman. What, nobody to help the poor old gentleman? oddsbobs! if I were a man I'd follow him myself.

3 Mob. Why don't you, then? What occasion-ableness have I to be killed for him or you either?

Enter ROBIN, as constable.

All. Here's Mr. Constable, here's Mr. Constable.

Robin. Silence, in the king's name.

All. Ay, silence, silence.

Robin. What's the meaning of this riot? Who makes all this disturbance?

1 Mob. I'll tell you, Mr. Constable—

3 Mob. An't please your worship, let me speak.

Robin. Ay, this man talks like a man of parts. What's the matter, friend?

3 Mob. An't please your noble worship's honour and glory, we are his majesty's liege subjects, and

was hurried out of our habitation and dwelling place, by a cry from within; which your noble presence must understand was occasioned by the gentleman of this house, who was so unfortunately to be killed by thieves, who are now in his house to the number of above forty, as't please your worship, all completely armed with powder and ball, back-swords, pistols, bayonets, and blunderbusses.

Robin. But what is to be done in this case?

S Mob. Way, an't please your worship, knowing your noble honour to be the king's majesty's noble officer of this place, we thought 'twas best your honour should come and terrify these rogues away with your noble authority.

Robin. Well said, very well said, indeed. Gentlemen, I am the king's officer, and I command you, in the king's name, to aid and assist me to call those rogues out of the house. Who's within there? I charge you come out in the king's name, and commit yourselves to our royal authority.

2 Mob. This is the gentleman that was killed, an't please your worship.

Enter ARGUS.

Argus. Oh! neighbours, I'm ruined and undone for ever. They have taken away all that's dear to me in the world.

1 Mob. That's his money; 'tis a sad covetous dog.

Robin. Why, what's the matter? What have they done?

Argus. Oh! they have taken my child from me, my Thusy!

Robin. Good lack!

S Mob. Marry come up, what valuation can she be? But have they taken nothing else?

Argus. Would they had stripped my house of every pennyworth, so they had left my child.

1 Mob. That's a lie, I believe, for he loves his money more than his soul, and would sooner part with that than a great.

Argus. This is the Captain's doings, but I'll have him hanged.

Robin. But where are the thieves?

Argus. Gone, gone, beyond all hopes of pursuit.

2 Mob. What, are they gone? Then, come, neighbours, let's go in, and kill every mother's child of them.

Robin. Hold, I charge you to commit no murder, follow me, and we'll apprehend them.

Argus. Go, villains, cowards, scoundrels, or, I shall suspect you are the thieves that mean to rob me of what is yet left. How brave you are, now all the danger's over! Oh! surrah, you dog! (looking at Robin) you are that rogue, Robin, the Captain's man. Seize him, neighbours, seize him!

Robin. (Aside) I don't care what you do, for the job's over, I see my master coming.

Argus. Why don't you seize him, I say?

1 Mob. Now we, we have lost too much time about an old fool already.

2 Mob. Ay, the more time you are bound and bound to stay, the more time you are bound to stay for me.

S Mob. Ay, and the more, some along, neighbours, some along. [Exeunt Mob.]

Enter ROVELLWELL, HEARTY, ARETHUSA, and

Argus. Where are you? Have we not here? Oh! Hearty, where? I have never never have seen thee since thou wast bound in such company.

Hearty. I have my husband's company is not unusual.

Argus. Your husband? who's your husband, housewife? that sounds well! Captain—Out of my sight, thou ungracious wretch! I'll go make my will this instant. And you, you villain, how dare you look me in the face after all this? I'll have you hanged, surrah, I will so.

Hearty. Oh, brother Argus, moderate your passion. It ill becomes the friendship between Ned Worthy, to vilify and affront his only child, and for no other crime than improving this friendship which has ever been between us.

Argus. Ha! my dear friend alive! I heard thou wert dead in the ladies. And is that thy son? and my godson, too, if I am not mistaken.

Hearty. The very same the last and best remains of our family, forced by my wife's cruelty, and my absence, to the army. My wife is since dead, and the son she had by her former husband, who she intended to heir my estate, but fortune guided me by chance to my dear boy, who, after twenty years' absence, and changing my name, knew me not, till I just now discovered myself to him and your fair daughter, who I will make him deserve by thirty thousand pounds, which I brought from India, besides what real estate I may leave at my death.

Argus. And to match that old boy, my daughter shall have every penny of mine, besides her uncle's legacy. Ah! you young rogue, had I known you, I would not have used you so roughly. However, since you have won my girl so bravely, take her, and welcome. But you must excuse all faults the old man meant all for the best, you must not be angry.

Rove. Sir, on the contrary, we ought to beg your pardon for the many disquiets we have given you, and with your pardon, we crave your blessing. (They kneel.)

Argus. You have it, children, with all my heart. Adod! I am so transported, I don't know whether I walk or fly.

Are. May your joy be everlasting!

DUETT — ROVELLWELL and ARETHUSA.

*Thy fondly caressing,
My idol, my treasure,
How great is the blessing!
How sweet is the pleasure!
With joy I behold thee,
And doat on thy charms;
Thus, while I enfold thee,
I've hidden in my arms.*

[Exeunt.]

THE LAW OF LOMBARDY;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS—BY ROBERT JEFFERSON.



Act V.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

THE KING
BIRENO,
PALADORE
RINALDO

ASCANIO
LUCIO
SENATOR
ESQUIRE

SHEPHERD
FORESTERS
PRINCESS
ALINDA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Chamber in the Palace.

Enter BIRENO and ALINDA.

Alinda. I wonder not you should suspect me
slow

In this strange office had you but enjoin'd me,
Shut out the sun ten times his annual rounds,
Feed all my life on pulse, or with coarse weeds
Obscure the little grace which nature's hand
Has lent my outside, then, without a wherefore,
(From the meek humbleness of love I bear you,) *My obedience would have follow'd.*

Bireno. Sweet impatience,
Smooth that contracted brow—

Alinda. But to commend
To any other woman those fond vows
I hop'd to own unpartner'd, is it less
Than to expect my tongue unborn'd, should plead
Against the dearest interest of my life,
And make me earnest for my own undoing?

Bireno. Must I again call down the saints to
witness,

That for convenience only, not from love,
I seek to wed the princess? My ambition
Aims at the crown, her dower, were that bright
gem

Heir'd by a pigmy, the meer mock of sight,

By idiot drawing, and a shrew's perverseness,
No less should I desire it. If I prosper,
My heart, as ever, shall be thine; and hers,
The dull legitimate languor of the husband.

Alinda. But when to royal state Sophia joins
Such rare endowments, as make doubtful strife
'Twixt nature's gifts and fortune's, can I hope
More than some grateful note from memory,
How much Alinda lov'd you?

Bireno. Trust me, fair one,
Beauty's degrees are in the lover's fancy,
Not in a seal'd perfection. Varying nature
Has lineaments for every appetite.
Not her arch'd brow, nor stature Juno-like,
Her crisped tresses spun from honest gold,
Nor the intelligent lustre of her eye,
To me have half such charms as thy soft mien,
The pure carapation of thy dumpling cheek,
And unassuming sweet simplicity.
But hast thou urg'd my suit?

Alinda. Spite of ourselves,
The tongue interprets from the abundant heart.
Bireno's image filling all my thought,
Could I be silent on a theme so lov'd?

Bireno. And how does she receive the gentle
tale?

Alinda. Sometimes she obides, and sometimes
smiling tells me,

But that she knows me vain, such lavish praise
Might hurt a heart touch'd deeply, and ill suits

The sober preference of an humble maid,
Who cannot hope to call you here in honour.
Then with discreetest lessons will she school me,
To guard my breast 'gainst love; forgetting still
How much she wants the counsel she bestows.

Bireno. Does she then love?

Alinda. She never told me so;
But signs far more significant than speech
Reveal it hourly.

Bireno. Let me know my rival,
Though my foreboding heart already whispers
It must be Paladore.

Alinda. Oh! rightly guess'd:
Her love for him makes her unjust to you.

Bireno. Curses o'ertake him! Near his brighter
fires

My star shines dimly; I was wonder'd at,
Till this new meteor shot across men's eyes,
And drew all gaze to follow. At our tournaments
He foils me like a novice; in grave council
I prate unmark'd, while hoary heads bow down
In reverence to his weighty utterance;
And thus the upstart heresy of opinion
Runs on this smooth impostor. By what signs
Take you this note of her affection towards him?

Alinda. By such we women deem infallible.
If unexpectedly she hear him nam'd,
Sweet discomposure seizes all her frame;
Suffusion, softer than Aurora's blush,
Spreads o'er her beauteous cheek. If she expect
His presence at the court, studious to please,
Beyond her wonted elegance of dress,
With nicer care she counsels at her glass,
To make the daintiest workmanship of nature
By ornament more winning.

Bireno. Indications
That speak, and shrewdly; yet their vanity
To catch the flattery of the fool they scorn,
Will bait such books as these. Have you no proof
More unequivocal?

Alinda. What would you more?
We reason from ourselves; looking within,
We find in our own breasts the according springs
Of motions similar: when first I lov'd,
So did I wish to please, so doubt my power.
Yet more than this; her eye still follows him,
And when the unwelcome hour of parting comes,
The cheerful flame that lighted up her countenance
Expires; sighs heave, and a soft silent tear
Steals down her cheek.

Bireno. Enough, I'm satisfied
She loves him, and the frost of my reception
Conspires in proof. Now, then, my best Alinda,
You must assist me; on this single push
Hang all my fortunes. If my rival wed her,
Farewell my hopes, my country—

Alinda. How! your country!
A voluntary exile for the loss
Of one you swear you love not?

Bireno. My possessions,
The means of pleasure to my thriftless youth,
Moulder in confiscation; thus my dukedom,
My royal ancestry, and rank in the state,
So scantily supported, will but mock me.
A marriage with the princess would heal all.
But if I fail, I will not stay to see
Upstarts made rich by my inheritance;
Nor the proud finger of the slave I scorn
Point at the princely beggar.

Alinda. Oh! good heaven!
Devise, command—Can my best industry
Prevent this ruin? Tell me but the means,
And bid me fly.

Bireno. No more of jealousy;
But with appliance dextrous call her thoughts
To me, and my deservings; speak with slight
(Yet not as by suggestion) of my rival.
I've known more way made in a woman's grace

By such confederate arts, than could be won
By a long siege of desperate sanguine,
Soft flatteries, signs, protesting infinities,
And all the fervour of impatient love.

Alinda. But should this fail?

Bireno. I'll spread a finer snare,
Subtle as fabled Vulcan forg'd in Lemnos,
To enmesh them: thy soft hand, my dear Alinda,
Must help to hold the toils.

Alinda. But see, she comes;
The king, too, and her lover.

Bireno. I'll retire,
And seek thee presently: rivet thine ear
Meantime to what they utter: thy report
Shall somewhat shape my course. High-flighted
fool!

Check thy bold soaring, else my hot revenge
Shall melt thy waxen plumes, and hurl thee down
To a devouring sea that roars beneath thee.

[Exit. *Alinda* retires.]

Enter the KING, PRINCESS, PALADORE, and
Attendants.

King. You shall no more, Sophia, to the
chase;
This morning's danger makes my blood run cold.
Had not thy well-sped lance, brave Paladore,
Pierc'd the huge boar that gor'd her foaming
horse,
These eyes, now rais'd in thanks to heaven and
thee,

Had wept her lifeless.

Paladore. Ever prais'd be fortune,
That plac'd me near her! Since a common feat
That daily dyes our weapons, thus ennobled
By bless'd conjunction with her precious safety,
I would not change for the best garland won
By Cæsar's conquering sword.

Princess. We are not nice
In dangers imminent to choose the means
Of our deliverance; yet, believe me, sir,
More than for life preserv'd, I thank the chance
That made you my preserver. Th' unwelcome
hand

Rendering us service, like sharp frost in sunshine,
Chills the fresh blossom of our gratitude,
Which else unchecked'd would put forth all its
sweetness.

King. I have much serious matter for your ear;
(To *Paladore.*)
Our helms must be lac'd close, our swords new
edg'd!

'Gainst fiercer foes than these rude foresters,
That make us sport with peril.

Paladore. By my life,
My cruel heart beats high to give it welcome;
For virtue's test is action.

King. Thus my paper:
(Brief its contents, but fearful) Burgundy,
Stung by refusal of my daughter's love,
Stirs up commotion 'gainst our kingdom's peace;
And soon the golden grain of Lombardy
Shall be trod down beneath the furious heel
Of peasants cas'd in iron.

Princess. Heaven avert it!
For, sure, 'twere better I had ne'er been born,
Than live the fatal cause why war's rude blast
Disturb'd the quiet of my father's age,
Which soft repose should foster. The griev'd
people

Will chide your gentleness, that did not bend
My heart to this obedience; and your virtue,
Seen through th' unwelcome colour of the event,
For reverence find upbraiding.

King. No, Sophia,
I would not violate the meanest right
Of my least subject, for the fear or promise

Of any issue. Is my child, my daughter,
(Sweet, duteous, suitable, born free and royal,)
Less charter'd from oppression than a stranger?
A self-invited wooer here he sojourn'd,
To thrive as your approving gave him license:
I fed him not with promise, you with hope,
Nor shall audacious menace ere extort
What courtesy denied him.

Paladore. To his teeth
Hurl your defiance, King; 'tis proud to threaten,
But baseness to be aw'd by it. From my breast
I'd tear these hallow'd symbols, give this steel
To be a baby's play-thing, could my heart,
Distrustful of the event, forbode one fear,
To cast black prosage on a cause so noble.

King. Thou gem of Britain! Dear in my esteem

As wert thou native here, be Pavia's shield,
Her pride, her pillar; yea, our hardy files,
Led on by thee, shall drive the hoaster back,
To mourn at home his baffled preparations.

Paladore. Oh! would the fortune of this glorious strife
Hung on my arm alone!

King. Our daughter's hand
Is destin'd for a prince who draws his blood
From the same source as mine, our kingdom's
heir,

(Did not this sweet prevention stand between,)
To bless Bireno with two matchless gifts,
Her beauty and a royal diadem.

Princess. Bireno, sir!
King. Even he, I know his worth—
But is there poison in my kinsman's name?
It pales the brightful vermeil of your cheek,
Dims your bright eye, and veils your wonted
smiles.

Princess. Alas! I cannot speak.
King. Why, then, hereafter
Will better suit this subject. Sir, farewell!
We shall expect your aid to counsel with us,
What present wounds our wisdom best may raise
'Gainst this loud torrent that at distance roars,
Ere it rush down to spread its ruin round us.

[Exit.

Princess. Oh! stay, and hear me now. Alas!
he's gone
Who smiles on me, and kills me; bids my heart
Be traitor to itself, yet with soft words
Fetters my tongue, which, free, would boldly
answer:

Such kindness but destroys me.

Paladore. My soul's idol,
I was, indeed, presumptuous to believe
These humble arms were destin'd to enfold
So vast a treasure, yet aspiring love
Hopes things impossible.

Princess. Bireno! He!
I'd rather waste my life in singleness;
Like the pale votarist, pour faint orisons
At the cold shrines of senseless marble saints,
And wear the eternal pavement with my knees,
Than at the sacred altar load my soul
With holy perjuries, to love the man,
At whose approach my heart alarm'd shrinks
back,

While thought confirms instinctive nature's hate.

Paladore. See, like a haughty conqueror he
comes;

Pleasure and pride on his exulting brow
At distance speak his triumph.

Princess. Arm me, disdain,
To meet the bold intruder. Gentle Paladore,
'Tis thus thy rival wooes me. Courtship's season
Is the short date of woman's sovereignty.
For liberty, we have but in exchange
The little tribute of a lover's sighs,
His humble seeming, and soft courtesy;

Yet these, he thinks too rich a sacrifice,
And owns no advocate but pride in love.

Enter BIRENO.

Bireno. Confirm'd, fair princess, by the king's
command

You see me here a joyful visitant.
'Tis not unknown why warlike Burgundy,
Spreading his hostile banners to the wind,
Makes sword and fire his dreadful harbingers.

Princess. The cause I have heard: but on.

Paladore. Down, swelling heart! (Aside.)

Bireno. Your yet unlighted hand gives to this
war

Its edge and colour; to remove that prize
Beyond the invader's reach, my sovereign's wisdom
Deems the best means to blunt his hostile sword;
Therefore, on me he deigns—

Princess. I understand;
But have no present ear for such a theme.
My father's goodness left my choice unforc'd
Of one unwelcome suitor; the same justice
Secures me from compulsion in a second.

Bireno. And must I bear this answer to the
King?

Princess. Myself will be my own interpreter,
And save your trouble. Once more, sir, I thank
you. [To Paladore. Exit.

Bireno. Well, go thy ways; woman's epitome!
Beauteous enigma! Who would solve you rightly,
Must thus interpret: make your outward seem-
blance

An index pointing to its contrary.
When your smooth polish'd vizors beam in smiles,
Displeasure's at your hearts; the moody brow
Tells inward sun-shine; tears are joy, not sorrow;
You soothe where you approve not, and look gall
When sweet content honies your appetites.

Paladore. These common railings 'gainst that
gentle sex,

Denote his humour more who utters them,
Than their defect, or any deep conception.
But you have chosen a season for hard thoughts,
Rebukes, and censure; still the chamber's air
Winnows her balmy breathing; from our eyes
Scarcely glides her beauteous form, when your dark
spleen,

As venom'd things suck poison from sweet flowers,
Find matter for distemper's nourishment,
And food for calumny in excellence.

Bireno. Her form, indeed, is fair.

Paladore. Ay, and her mind
(If more can be) more fair, more amiable.

The never-render'd snow-cold Apennine,
Is not so free from taint, as from offence
Her spotless bosom; yet has she a tear,
Healing as balm for others' frailties,
That makes remission heavenly; sweet persuasion
Hangs on her words with power oracular,
To shame the cynic's chiding. Spirit of truth!
She is thy visible divinity,

And 'tis thy reverence to pay homage to her.

Bireno. 'Tis to my wish. (Aside.) I grant her
well endow'd,

And in fair seeming most pre-eminent;
But for these other virtues you have nam'd,
They are of different climes, and earlier ages;
Our Pavia's ladies, cast in earthly moulds,
They make the most of nature's liberal gifts,
Put pleasure out to usury, and love
As ease, convenience, or the moment sways them.

Paladore. You're pleasant, lord.

Bireno. No, soberly thy friend.

Shall I be plain?

Paladore. What call you your past measure?
Was it a courtier's strain?

Bireno. You love the Princess?

Paladore. And heaven may be belov'd—

Bireno. Ay, and hep'd, too;
For heaven has many mansions, and receives,
Too large for limitation, all deservers;
But in a lady's heart, there's but one place,
Though many may contend for't: therefore, friend,
Waste not your precious sighs, which might en-
kindle

Bright sparks of equal love in some soft breast
Destin'd to mate your fondness, in hopeless
wooing.

Search not the cause; believe me, on my truth,
'Tis past all reckoning hopeless.

Paladore. Nothing's hopeless,
Though deeds; untried, oft seem impossible;
And craven sloth molting his sleekless plumes
With drowy wonder views the advent'rous wing
That soars the shining azure o'er his head.
What will not yield to daring? Victory
Sits on the helm whose crest is confidence;
And boldness wins success in love's soft strife,
As in the dangerous din of rattling war.

Bireno. How could I make me sport were I
light-minded,

Were I malignant! mischief from this mood,
That runs so contrary to all sober sense!
But here I rest in kindness: be advis'd,
Push not a desperate purpose; by my life,
The Princess loves you not.

Paladore. I'll bear no more.
Matchless audacity! Let me take thee in
From crown to toe; walk round thee, and survey
thee

Like a prodigious thing; for such thou shouldst
be,

To put my course of love in circumscription,
And school me, like a boy, with unsought precept.

Bireno. Lovers are sick with fevers of the
brain;

Diseas'd by airy hope, high-flighted fancy,
Imaginations bred from self-conceit.

An arch deluder, which presents the Juno
Their frenzy grasps at, with a zone unbound;
While, like Ixion's mistress, the coy queen
Slumbers on golden beds in high Olympus.

Paladore. Hear me, proud duke! had I no other
spur

But thy forbidding; were there no incitement
From her transcendent beauty; did no beam
Shoot from her eye to light eternal love
At passion's altar; were she swart, and froward,
(Oh! blasphemy to think it!) in despite,
I would assume an unfelt ecstasy;
Invoke her name, till echo should grow faint
With the perpetual burthen, and devise
All means of contradiction, to proclaim
Scorn of thy counsel, and defiance to thee.

Bireno. Then hear, to dash thy pride, since thus
you urge me:

My experience of her lightness, well she knows,
Would freeze me as her husband, and her hand
(Which, but to save appearances, I ask)
I would reject, if offer'd; so her craft
Sooths you with feign'd endearments. As a mis-
tress,

I find her worth my holding; but a wife,
Fit for a prince, must come with better gifts
Than amorous blood, and beauty. Nay, but mark
me.

Paladore. Trust not too far the reverence of this
place.

Away! thou yet art safe; my sword once drawn—
Bireno. Am I so lost in your esteem, you hold
me

(Your friend profess'd) in malice capable,
Or falsehood, thus to wound you?

Paladore. Both, by heaven!

Bireno. And will maintain this thinking?

Paladore. With my life.

Bireno. 'Tis a deep venture. Mine upon my
truth.

When full-orb'd Phoebe wheels her fleecy car
To silver yon blue concave, 'midst the pines
That wave their green tops o'er the battlement
Of her night-chamber, in the garden meet me
Alone: when we encounter in that place,
You there shall listen to conditions meet
For both our honours. So, till then, farewell.
Paladore. I'll meet thee, be assur'd I will.
Gird on thy keenest edge: if thou hast aught
Unsettled in this world, despatch it quickly;
We stand upon the utmost verge of fate,
And one, or both of us, must plunge for ever.

[Exit.

Bireno. The wise should watch the event on
fortune's wheel,
That for a moment circles at the top,
And, seiz'd not, vanishes. I must about it;
My all's at stake. Ye ministers of vengeance!
That hide your gory locks in mist-hung caves,
And roll your deadly eyeballs o'er the edge
Of your insatiate daggers, shaking ever
Dews of oblivious sleep from your stung brows,
Receive me of your hand! ne'er to know peace
Till this keen writhing vulture quit my heart,
And with blunt beak, and flagging wings out-
stretch'd,

Drowse o'er the mangled victims of my rage.

[Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

The PRINCESS discovered.

Princess. Oh! blessed, most blessed are the in-
sensible!

In the mild zone of calm indifference:
No hatred chills them, and no passion burns;
To feed, and sleep, and do observance due
To the stale ritual of quaint ceremony,
Fills up the humble measure of their hope;
Smooth and unruffled glides their temperate stream,
And one day rounds their whole life's history.
Oh! had my heart been such! but nature pois'd
In distribution, when she gives the touch
Alive to ecstasy, in like extreme
Subjects the sense to anguish: the same soul,
That in the hope of wedding *Paladore*,
Enjoy'd its sum of bliss, with equal pain
Averts me from his rival: thus entranc'd
'Twixt love and fear, I feel the pangs of both,
And the sharp conflict rends me. Ha! my father!
Now comes the trial.

Enter the KING.

King. How! in tears, Sophia?
Come, 'tis not well: I fear, I guess the cause.
This morn I did but hint a purpose to you,
Of import, dear to your own happiness,
And your chang'd brow, reproving my intent,
Cut short my free discourse.

Princess. Oh! good my lord,
I am not practis'd to conceal my thoughts
(And least from you) by calling o'er my looks
The unalter'd vizard of tranquillity,
When perturbation, like a sleepless guest,
Forbids my bosom's quiet.

King. I have lov'd thee
With fondness so un'bated, that 'twere needless,
For confirmation, to attest by words
What all my thoughts, my life's whole carriage
towards thee,
Have set beyond the question.

Princess. Oh! to me,
Your love has been like those perpetual springs,
That ever flow, and waste not; my least wish

Scarcely had its birth ere its accomplishment
In your preventive kindness.

King. Since 'tis so,
If chance the current of my present will
To your's runs contrary, you must not deem
That merely to enforce authority,
Or wake controlment, which might sleep to death,
In its disuse, I now expect the course
Of your desires should lose themselves in mine,
Or flow by my direction.

Princess. As my father,
The giver of my life, I reverence you;
Next, as your subject, my obedience stands
Bound by the general tie; but since your power
Has still been temper'd so with lenity,
That even the stranger's cause, with patient
hearing,

Is weigh'd ere you determine; I, your daughter,
May hope, at least, an equal privilege,
With favour in my audience.

King. I were else
Unnatural, withholding from my child
What aliens claim by justice. Give me hearing.
The Duke Bireno loves you, has my promise
That like a well-grac'd advocate, my tongue
Should win your gentle favour to his suit,
Urging such commendations of his love,
As modesty, though conscious of desert,
May wish you hear, yet cannot speak itself.

Princess. Ah! sir, forbear; he knows my heart
already;

Already he has heard, from my own lips,
I cannot love him; poorly he engages
Your honour'd combination, in a league
That (whatsoever its issue) must conspire
To wound your daughter's peace.

King. By heaven, you wrong him.
To wound your peace! He seeks your happiness,
And so am I his second.

Princess. But these means
Are adverse to the end; for if I wed him,
(This is no raving of rash ecstasy.)
On death, that only can dissolve my chain,
Will hang my future hope: as eagerly
As the poor, weary, sea-beat mariner
Pants for the shore, so shall my outstretch'd
arms

• Embrace the welcome terror. My refusal
To you, the gentlest, kindest, best of fathers,
Must seem repugnance harsh, and o'er my duty,
Before untainted, casts the sickly hue
Of pale suspicion; thus begins his love,
Fearful to me in each alternative.

King. Why, this is infant rhetoric, to protest
The impulse of a strong antipathy,
Which never causeless sways the human breast,
Yet give no reason why.

Princess. Alas! to feel it,
O'ermasters every reason. Need we search
To ground aversion on weigh'd argument,
When instinct cuts the tedious process short,
And makes the heart our umpire?

King. Hear me calmly:
My days are almost number'd; this white head
Bears not in vain its reverend monitors;
Time puts a tongue in every hoary hair,
To warn the wise man of mortality:
When I am gone, behold thy single state
Unhusbanded, unfather'd, stands expos'd,
Ev'n as the tender solitary shrub
On the bleak mountain's summit. Every blast
May bend or break thy sweetness: this strong
fence,

This union, would enroot its shelter round,
And, like a forest, shield thee.

Princess. Let me hope
A stronger fence in a whole people's love.
Their grateful memory of my father's virtue,

And loyalty hereditarily mine,
Descending, like the sceptre, to your issue.

King. Think'st thou, my aspiring kinsman, whose
ambition,

Impatient, waits till my declining beam
Give place to his meridian; who already
Wins from my side a moiety of my court,
By his succession's hope, will tamely view
That sceptre wielded by a woman's hand,
Nor wrest it from thy grasp? No, my fair kingdom!
I see the meeting torrents of contention
Deluge thy peaceful vales, while her weak sex,
Unable to direct, or stem the tide,
Will be borne down, and swept to ruin with it.

Princess. These evils, but in possibility,
May never come: but, oh! 'tis certain sorrow
To promise love, obedience, duty, honour,
When the heart's record vouches 'gainst the
tongue:

It changes order's course; the holy tie
Of well-proportion'd marriage still supposes
These bonds have gone before; nor is there power
Creative in the simple ceremony,
The seed unsown, to give that harvest growth.

King. Hero break we off. To snee, and sue in
vain.

But ill becomes a father: may my agony
Be more in fear than wisdom. Hold; to-morrow
The council meets to scan this threaten'd war:
The people call it thine: then be thou present
To thank and animate their zeal to serve us. [Exit.

Princess. I shall attend your order. This cold
parting,

Speaks his displeasure; and my heart accustom'd
To the kind sunshine of approving smiles,
Droops at the chilling change. Ye gentle breasts,
Strangers as yet to love, be warn'd by me.
Soft as the printless step of midnight sleep,
The subtle tyrant steals into the soul:
Once seated there, securely he controls
The idle strife of unimpassion'd ties,
And laughs to scorn their sober impotence,
As feeble vasaals lift their arms in vain,
In the unequal conflict soon o'erthrown,
They prove their weakness, and his power supreme. [Exit.

SCENE II.—A Garden.

RINALDO discovered.

Rinaldo. He must pass this way: through the
postern-gate
That leads here only, with distemper'd pace
I saw him hasten. Since the evening banquet
His wild demeanour has put on more change
Than yonder fickle planet in her orb.
Just now he seiz'd his sword, look'd at, and pois'd
it,

Then girt it round him, while his bloodshot eye,
And heaving bosom, spoke the big conception
Of some dire purpose. There is mischief towards;
I may perhaps prevent it: these tall shrubs
Will hide me from his view. Soft, soft, 'tis he.

(Retires.)

Enter PALADORE.

Paladore. Why do I shake thus? If, indeed,
she's false,
I should rejoice to have the spell unbound
That chains me to delusion. He swears deeply:
But bad men's oaths are breath, and their base
lies

With holiest adjurations stronger vouch'd
Than native truth, which, center'd in itself,
Fests in its simplicity; then this bold carriage
Urging the proof by test infallible,
The witness of my sight. Why, these combin'd,
(Spite of my steady seeming,) viper-tooth'd,
Gnaw at my constancy, and inward spread

Suggestions, which unmaster'd, soon would change
The ruddy heart to blackness. But, oh, shame!
These doubts are slander's liegers. Sweetest inno-
cence!

That now, perhaps, lapp'd in Elysian sleep,
Seest heaven in vision, let not these base sounds
Creep on thy slumber, lest they startle rest,
And change thy trance to horror. Lo! he comes:
You light that glimmers 'twixt the quivering
leaves

(Like a small star) directs his footsteps hither.

Enter BIRENO, with a lanthorn.

Bireno. Your pardon, sir; I fear I've made you
wait.

But here, beneath the window of his mistress,
A lover favour'd, and assur'd like you,
Must have a thousand pleasant phantasies
To entertain his musing.

Paladore. Sir, my fancy
Has various meditations; no one thought
Mix'd with disloyalty of her whose honour
Your boldness would attain.

Bireno. Then you hold firm,
I am a boaster?

Paladore. 'Tis my present creed.

Bireno. 'Twere kind, perhaps, to leave you in
that error.

The wretch who dreams of bliss, while his sleep
lasts,

Is happy as in waking certainty;
But if he's rous'd, and rous'd to misery,
He sure must curse the hand that shook his
curtain.

Paladore. I have no time for maxims, and your
mirth

Is most unseasonable. Thus far to endure,
Perhaps is too much tameness. To the purpose.

Bireno. With all convenient speed. You're not
to learn,

We have a law peculiar to this realm,
That subjects to a mortal penalty
All women nobly born (be their estate
Single or husbanded) who to the shame
Of chastity, o'erleap its thorny bounds,
To wanton in the flowery path of pleasure.
Nor is the proper issue of the king
By royalty exempted.

Paladore. So I have heard.

But wherefore urge you this?

Bireno. Not without reason.

I draw my sword in peace. Now place your lips
Here on this sacred cross. By this deep oath,
Most binding to our order, you must swear,
Whate'er you see, or whatsoever your wrath
From what you see, that never shall your tongue
Reveal it to the danger of the Princess.

Paladore. A most superfluous bond! But on; I
swear.

Bireno. Hold yet a little. Now, sir, once again
Let this be touch'd. Your enmity to me,
If by the process it should be provok'd,
Must in your breast be smother'd, not break out
In tilting at my life, nor your gage thrown
For any after quarrel. The cause weigh'd,
I might expect your love: but 'tis the stuff,
And proper quality of hoodwink'd rage,
To wrest offence from kindness.

Paladore. Should your proof

Keep pace with your assurance, soorn, not rage,
Will here be paramount, and your sword sleep,
From my indifference to a worthless toy,
Valued but in my untried ignorance.

Bireno. So you determine wisely. I must bind
you

To one condition more. If I make palpable
Her preference in my favour, you must turn

Your back on Lombardy, and never more
Seek her encounter.

Paladore. By a soldier's faith,
Should it be so, I would not breathe your air
A moment longer, for the sov'reignty
Of all the soil wash'd by your wand'ring Po.

Bireno. Summon your patience now, for sure
you'll need it.

Paladore. You have tried it to the last: dully no
more;

I shiver in expectation. Come, your proofs.

Bireno. Well, you will have them. Know you
first this writing? (*Gives a paper.*)

Paladore. It is the character of fair Sophia.

Bireno. I think so, and as such receiv'd it from
her;

Convey'd with such sweet action to my hand,
As wak'd the nimble spirit of my blood,
Whispering how kind were the contents within.
This light will aid the moon, though now she shines
In her full splendour. At your leisure read it.

Paladore. Kind words, indeed! I fear, I fear too
common. (*Reading.*)

Bireno. It works as I could wish. How his
cheek whitens!

His fiery eye darts through each tender word
As it would burn the paper.

Paladore. "Ever constant"— (*Reading.*)
Let me look once again. Is my sight false?

Oh! would it were! Pain would I cast the blame,
To save her crime, on my imperfect sense.

But did she give you this?

Bireno. Look to the address.

Paladore. Oh! darkness on my eyes! I've seen
too much.

There's not a letter but, like necromancy,
Withers my corporal functions. Shame confound
her!

Bireno. As you before were tardy of belief,
You now are rash. Behold these little shadows.
These you have seen before.

(*Producing two pictures.*)
Paladore. What's this, what's this?

My picture as I live, I gave the false one,
And her's she promis'd me. Oh! woman's faith!
I was your champion once, deceitful sex;
Thought your fair minds—But, hold! I may be
rash:

This letter, and these pictures, might be your's
By the king's power, compelling her reluctant
To write and send them; therefore, let me see
All you have promis'd. You expect her summons
At yon Miranda—

Bireno. Yes, the time draws near;
She ever is most punctual. This small light
Our wonted signal: stand without its ray;
For should she spy more than myself beneath,
Fearing discovery, she'll retire again
Into her chamber. When her beauteous form
Breaks like the moon, as fair, though not so cold,
From yonder window.

Paladore. Ha! by hell, it opens!

Bireno. Stand you apart a moment. While I
climb,

Yon orb, now braz'd to this accustom'd scene,
Will show you who invites me. I'll detain her,
To give you ample leisure for such note
As counterfeits abide not. (*Retires.*)

Paladore. Death! 'tis she!

There's not a silken braid that binds her hair,
One little shred of all that known attire
That wantons in the wind, but to my heart
Has sent such sweet disturbance, that it beats
Instinctive of her coming, ere my sight
Enjoy'd the beauteous wonder. Soft! What now!
See she lets down the cordage of her shame,
To hoist him to her arms. I'll look no more.
Distraction! Devil! How she welcomes him!

That's well, that's well! Again: grow to her lips—
Poison and aspics rot them! Now she woos him,
Points to her chamber, and invites him inward.
May adders hiss around their guilty couch!
And ghosts of injur'd lovers rise to scare them!
Ay, get you gone. Oh! for a griffin's wing,
To bear me through the casement! Deeds like
this

Should startle every spirit of the grove,
And wake enchantment from her spell-hung grot,
To shake the conscious roof about their heads,
And bare them to the scoff of modest eyes
Twin'd in the wanton fold. Oh! wretch accurs'd!
See there the blasted promise of thy joys,
Thy best hopes bankrupt. Do I linger still?
Here find a grave, and let thy mangled corse,
When her lascivious eye peers o'er the lawn,
Satisfy the harlot's gaze.

(*Going to fall on his sword, Rinaldo rushes
forward and prevents him.*)

Rinaldo. What frenzy's this!
Arm'd 'gainst your life! In pity turn the point
On your old faithful servant, whose heart heaves
Almost to bursting to behold you thus.

Paladore. Hast seen it then?

Rinaldo. I have seen your wild despair;
And bless'd be the kind monitor within
That led me here to save you.

Paladore. Rather, curs'd
Be thy officious fondness, since it dooms me
To lingering misery. Give me back my sword.
Is't come to this? Oh! I could tear my hair;
Rip up this credulous breast. Blind dotard! fool!
Did wit or malice ere devise a legend
To parallel this vile reality?

Rinaldo. Disgrace not the best gift of manly
nature,

- Your reason, in this wild extravagance.

Paladore. And think'st thou I am mad without a
cause!

I'll tell thee—'Sdeath! it chokes me—Lead me
hence.

I will walk boldly on the billowy deep,
Or blindfold tread the sharp and perilous ridge
Of icy Caucasus, nor fear my footing;
Play with a fasting lion's fangs unharmed,
And stroke his rage to tameness. But hereafter,
When men would try impossibilities,
Let them seek faith in woman. Furies seize them!
[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Hall.

Enter BIRENO.

Bireno. Her death must be the means. If these
be crimes,
Thou bright ambition, whose rare alchymy,
Like Midas' palm, turns all it grasps to gold,
Give them thy glorious splendour! What a coil
Does puny conscience make in little minds,
Ere they o'erleap obstruction! Fear, not virtue,
Keeps mankind honest. Each inordinate wish
Is guilt unacted, and the canon points
More 'gainst the coward heart that would and dare
not,
Than the bold deed that braves the penalty.

Enter ASCANIO.

Welcome, Ascanio! Thanks for this kind speed
To meet my summons. I have business for thee,
Worthy thy subtle genius; thou shalt aid me
To spread a banquet forth, where two sharp guests,
Ambition and revenge, shall both be feasted,
Even to satiety.

Ascanio. I will not pall
Performance by protesting. Is there aught

In which a pliant tongue and ready hand
(No despicable engines) may do service?
To their best cunning use them; your poor bond-
man

Will think himself much honour'd in obedience.

Bireno. I have profess'd myself thy friend,
Ascanio;

And when the golden autumn of my hopes
(Whose rich maturity I now would hasten)
Is ripe for bearing, thou shalt taste the fruit
That tends my swelling branches.

Ascanio. I have liv'd
The creature of your bounty; and my life
I would cast from me, like a useless load,
When to your gracious ends unprofitable.

Bireno. My means have hitherto been poor and
scanty,

My power confin'd; but I shall be, Ascanio,
Like a great river, whose large urns dispense
Abundance to the subject rills around him,
Till they o'erpeer their banks.

Ascanio. Oh! my good lord.

Bireno. I'll trust thee, as I know thee—for a
villain. [*Aside.*]

Place thyself near me when the council meets,
(I shall make matter for them they foresee not,)—
Whate'er I urge, or whomsoever I charge,
Be ready thou with the grave mockery
Of uplift eyes, thy hand thus on thy breast,
And heaven-attesting oaths, to second me.

Ascanio. Prime in the catalogue of mortal sins
I hold unthankfulness, and a friend's need
Makes a fiction virtue when its end is kindness.

Bireno. To give more ready credence to the im-
posture,

Put on reluctant seeming; earnestly
Entreat they urge you not; sadden thy brow,
And cry, "Alas! compel me not to speak;
I know not what I saw." Mumble some cant,
Of frailty, and compassion, sins of youth,
The danger of the law, if it were urg'd
'Gainst all transgressions: thus shall thy doctored
lie eke out to a stubborn certainty
In each suspended hearer.

Ascanio. Nay, my lord,
Disparage not the good gifts were born with me,
To think I can want schooling for this office.

Bireno. I pray you pardon me. Oh! nature,
nature! [*Aside.*]

There is a pride even in stark villainy
Which flattery's heat must soften, ere the metal
Bend to our purposes. Come this way with me,
The hall will soon be throng'd; what more remains
I will impart within. No ceremony. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter LUCIO and an Officer.

Officer. See, where they pass; what bodes that
conference?

Lucio. Danger, my life on't. That smooth knave,
Ascanio,

Is the Duke's crucible, his breast receives
The mass of his crude projects, and his brain
A subtle fire, refines the drossy ore,
To bear the ready stamp for present mischief.

Officer. The Duke of late grows past his custom
contemuous,

Joins hands with us, and calls us by our names,
Gives praise, and largess to the soldiery,
Whom he was wont to style state caterpillars,
Burthens of peace, and but endur'd in war
As necessary evils.

Lucio. It denotes
(Or I lack charity) trouble to the state.
I know him proud, subtle, and pitiless;
Nor will his nature change these elements,
However for a season he puts on
A smoother guise, and fashion suitable
To the end he aims at.

Officer. Best conceal these thoughts,
For one day he may rule us.

Lucio. Ay, that may,
If I mistake not, he will snatch from chance,
And make a certainty. But see, the king.
The providence of heaven be ever round him!

Enter the KING, Counsellors, Knights, and Attendants.

Health to your majesty!

King. Thanks, gentle friends!
But why this faintness in your salutations?
Why wear your brows that ominous livery?
I trust our gallant spirits will not palter,
Because a rash invader threatens us.
When I was young as you, to hear of war
Made my blood dance: but these good days are
past,
This sapless trunk shrinks from its mailed bark;
Yet age has still its use, count me your steward,
Holding the honours of the state in trust
For all deservers. She shall better thank you;

Enter the PRINCESS, and Attendants.

More retribution dwells in beauty's smile
Than in whole volumes of an old man's praise.
Approach, my child! Come, grace thy father's
side:

These are thy champions; give your women
tasks,

Bid all the looms of Pavia ply their labours.
A scarf for every warrior, they'll deserve them.

Princess. They will not want my thanks, nor
such poor tokens

How much I prize their worth; their high-touch'd
virtue

Finds in itself the source and end of action;
Secures its right to praise, but scorns to take it.

Enter BIRENO and ASCANIO.

King. Welcome, my cousin! Doubt not of my
zeal;

Though ill has the success kept pace with it,
To speed your amorous suit; still let us hope,
Time, and your fair pretensions, will have weight
To win her to our wishes.

Bireno. Let it pass;
I must take comfort: women's appetites
Will be their own purveyors. Are we met?
The hall, methinks, seems full.

King. Where's Paladore?
He had our summons, yet I see him not.
His skill in war, and wisdom to advise,
Have been most tutelary to our realm,
And well deserve the waiting.

Bireno. Take your place;
He cannot now be present; when we are seated,
I will declare the reason.

Princess. Ha! not present! (*Aside.*)
What fatal bar prevents him? Oh! my heart!
Is Paladore the fountain of thy life,
That thy stream scarce can flow when sever'd from
him?

(*They take their places; the Princess on the
King's right hand, a little beneath him.
Bireno and Ascanio in the front of the
stage, some seated, others standing.*)

Bireno. The danger of our frontiers, you, sage
lords,

Calls this assembly; but, as wise physicians,
The heart being touch'd, neglect the extremities,
Giving their first care to the seat of life,
So now the wounded vitals of our honour
Demand our prior tendance.

King. Speak, good cousin,
Do dark conspiracy and home-bred treason

(Unnatural leaguers with a foreign foe)
Bid the sharp sword of vengeance turn its edge
'Gainst our own children?

Bireno. Yes; though nature bleeds,
Justice will take her course; I see before me
The prime of the kingdom; and from some among
you,

Since they, in whose authority abides
The executive of power, best can tell,
I now would hear, why do our registers
Contain that rigorous ordinance, which respects
The chastity of women?

1 Sen. To that question,
The law's preamble answers. 'Tis rehears'd,
That the wild licence of our countrywomen
O'erleap'd all modest bounds. Sweet prudence
(That ruby of the sex) had been cast by
For casual wantonness, till our name abroad
Became a by-word, and confusion strange
Disturb'd domestic peace. A spurious issue,
The slips of chance and wildness, were engrafted
In rich inheritances, while the sire
Cares'd the child not his, and left to fortune
The true heirs of his fondness: these abuses
Required an iron curb; so pass'd the law,
Making transgression death, with no remittance
To high rank or degree in the offender,
But in its bloody gripe comprising all.

Bireno. And is this so allow'd?

1 Sen. 'Tis so allow'd:
Nor is there a decretal in our rolls
Of less ambiguous import, or more known.

King. This is beyond divining: I have mark'd
His changing feature; some strong passion shakes
him. (*Apart to the Princess.*)

Princess. He plays emotion well, most masterly,
Even to the life of feigning.

Bireno. May I on?
Or must I, like a novice to your forms,
First prove my right of audience?

King. Be not anger'd;
We questioned not your right: all counsellors
Speak what they list with freedom; you, our
cousin,

Have with your right pre-audience.

Princess. Pray, proceed.

Bireno. Most learned lord, now please you to
recite

The dangerous predicament of those
Who do awake this statute?

1 Sen. Willingly.

'Tis there provided that, the accuser being cited
In the king's presence, he who brings the charge,
Should state each circumstance; that done, the
herald

Thrice in six hours, first, in the market-place,
Next, in the hippodrome, last, in the porch
Of the great temple, must invite all knights
(Whether impell'd by pity, love, or justice)
To appear her champions in the marsh'd lists:
There, if the accuser falls, she is held free,
And her fair fame restor'd; but, if he conquers,
The event confirms her guilt, and the sharp axe
Severs the wanton's life.

Bireno. Then in this peril
Stand I at present. Bid your trumpets sound,
And call forth every bold adventurer,
To try what desperate valour may achieve
'Gainst truth and my keen sword.

King. But whither wouldst thou?
Suspense and horror sit on every brow;
Like the red comet, thy denouncing eye
Forebodes disaster.

Bireno. Oh! relentless justice!
If these be drops of weakness, let them fall;
'Tis the last tribute of a human sorrow,
And now I am wholly thine.

King. Pr'ythee, go on.

Bireno. 'Twere vain to waste your patience in persuasion;
I would not wantonly play with the fangs
Of such a lion law, whose terrible roar
Must be appeas'd with blood. So rests my truth.
A lover's fondness, last night, prompted me,
Attended by this gentleman—

(Pointing to Ascanio.)

Ascanio. Curs'd chance!
Oh! would the darkness of the delving mole
Had been my portion; then I had not seen—
What have I said? Nay, do not call on me.
Was it for this I was commanded hither?
I'll close my lips for ever.

I Sen. We have ways
To force a necessary truth. My lord,
Please you, proceed—The rack shall make him
answer:

Have eye upon him—He was your companion?

Bireno. He was, he was, when love or destiny
Led me a wanderer, in the palace garden,
To gaze upon the window of the Princess;
When, oh! sad object for a lover's eyes!
The casement open'd, and the full-orb'd moon,
Bright as the radiance of meridian day,
Shew'd me a lusty rival in her arms,
Embracing, and embrac'd.

(All rise.)

King. Shame! Death! Confusion!

My daughter! Oh! my daughter!

Princess. Host of heaven!
Does not deep thunder roll, no lightning flash?
Can the tremendous couriers of your wrath
Sleep o'er this perjury?

Bireno. My gage is thrown;
And here I stand to answer with my life,
If I have charg'd her falsely.

Ascanio. On my knees, (Kneeling.)
If ever pity touch'd your noble breast,
I beg you speak no more.

Princess. Thou vile confederate (To *Ascanio*.)
Of his blood-thirsty malice! Have I liv'd
To hear a wretch suborn'd, his sycophant,
Mock me with intercession? I behold thee,

(To *Bireno*.)

And scorn so struggles with astonishment,
That my full heart and intercepted tongue
Almost refuse their active offices,
Till passion's chok'd in silence.

King. Powers of mercy!

Am I reserv'd for this? My only child,
The pride, the joy, the treasure of my soul,
My age's cordial, and my life's best prop,
In the sweet spring and blossom of her youth,
Thus blasted in my sight! But, oh! dark fiend!

(To *Bireno*.)

Whom hell lets loose to spread destruction round
thee,

Why does thy vengeance fasten upon me?

Have I deserv'd this from thee? Well thou
know'st,

I strove to make her thine; I would have given
thee

My crown and daughter. Thou requit'st my love
By daggers steep'd in poison to my heart.

Bireno. I thank thy kindness, and forgive thy
rage;

The father shall have license. Honour, witness!
Nor malice nor ambition loos'd my tongue,
To this heart-rending office. Reverend lords,
Let your unclouded wisdom judge between us.

Princess. Can I be patient? Most abandon'd
ruffian!

Thou scoffer at all ties! with the same breath
That violates a virgin's sanctity,
(Holy and pure beyond thy gross conceiving.)
Thou conscious of thy lie, dar'st thou invoke
Honour to witness for thee? Wherefore call
On these to judge between us? See, barbarian,

Amaz'd, and struck with horror, they have heard
thee;

Too well thou know'st they must pronounce me
guilty;

Thy oath must be their law: but there is One,
An unseen Judge, an all-discerning Eye:
Now, if thou dar'st, look up, poor shivering
wretch!

He views the dark recesses of thy soul:
Tremble at him thy judge.

Bireno. I were a slave,
Fit for abuses, could I tamely bear
To see the rich reversion of my blood
Seiz'd by a base and spurious progeny;
An alien Briton, in his sport of lust,
Stamping a brood of illegitimate kings,
To bend our necks to bastard tyranny.

King. An alien Briton!

Bireno. Bid her answer thee;
Call for her paramour, her Paladore.
Say, why is he not present?

Princess. Why, indeed!
Hast thou not practis'd on his precious life?
And to consummate this day's guilt and horror,
Crown'd perjury with murder?

King. Paladore!
Search, find him out; put pinions to your speed,
And bear him to our presence.

Bireno. Spare your labour:
Fear will outstrip their haste. The dastard's gone;
He had my challenge for this injury,
And answer'd it by flight.

King. Confusion! Fled!
Am I, then, doubly wretched? Must she die?
And die dishonour'd, too?

Princess. All-seeing heaven! (Kneeling.)

If e'er thy interposing providence
Dash'd the audacious councils of the wicked;
If innocence, enanar'd, may raise its eye,
In humble hope, to thy eternal throne,
Look down, and succour me! I kneel before thee,
Distress'd, forlorn, abandon'd to despair,
By all deserted, and my life beset;
The man my soul adores, traduc'd and wrong'd:
Yet, oh! there is a pang surpassing all!
While the envenom'd rancour of this fiend
Casts its contagion on my spotless fame,
And, unrebuk'd, persists to blast my virtue.

Bireno. Hear, she avows her love.

Princess. Yes, glory in it.

King. Ha! have a care, rash girl! nor turn thy
grief

To curses on thy head. Dar'st thou confirm
Thy doubtful infancy?

Princess. A love so pure,
What bosom might not feel, what tongue not own?
It was a fault to hide the secret from you:
But are such sighs as ventral breasts might heave,
Such spotless vows as angels might record,
Pollution worthy death? These are my crimes;
And if I labour with a guilt more black,
May the full malice of that villain reach me.

King. What can I think? His absence—yet thy
truth,

Thy nature's modesty, plead strongly for thee.
Away with doubt. Oh! thou obdurate heart!

Bireno. We trifle time. The lists must be pre-
par'd;

The herald sounds defiance—

Princess. Hold a moment!

I'll tell thee how to arm thee for the combat:
Sleep thy keen sword in poison, that no balm
May heal the wounds it gives, but each be mortal;
Let a staunch blood-bond, with devouring fangs,
And eye-balls fiery red, couch o'er thy helm;
The deadly sable of thy mail besmeer'd
With scaffold, wheels, and engines, virgin's heads
Fresh bleeding from the axe's severing stroke:

Scorn thou the mean device of vulgar knights,
Who fight for what they reverence,—truth and
nour;

But be profess'd their champion whom thou serv'st,
And write in bloody letters, hell and falsehood.

Bireno. This passion, lady, ill becomes your
state:

Shame is wash'd out by sorrow, not by anger.

King. Hence, from my sight, detested parri-
cide!

Assassin! butcher! lest these feeble hands,
Brac'd by my wrongs to more than mortal strength,
Fix on thy throat, and bare thy treacherous
heart.

Bireno. Old man, I go. Compassion for thy
grief

Forbids me retort these outrages.

Let frenzy take its course. When next we meet,
Summon thy fortitude; and learn, meantime,
Crowns cannot save the wearer from affliction;
But kings, like meaner men, were born to suffer.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter the KING and the PRINCESS.

King. Morality from thee! He braves high
heaven,

And well may scorn my anger. Oh! my child,
This little hour, while I can call thee mine,
Close let me strain thee to my bursting heart:
Alas! thy aged father can no more
Than thus to fold thee; pour these scalding tears,
And drench thy tender bosom with his sorrows.

Princess. By my best hopes of happiness here-
after,
To see that reverend frame thus torn with an-
guish;

To hear those heart-fetch'd groans, is greater mi-
sery,

Than all the horrors of the doom that waits me.
I could put on a Roman constancy,
And go to death like sleep, did no soft sorrow
Hang on the mourning of surviving friends,
And wake a keener pang for their affliction.

Enter LUCIO.

Lucio. Forgive the obedience of reluctant duty:
I have the council's order to commit
The Princess to a guard's close custody.

King. Thou art my subject, Lucio, and my sol-
dier;

Do thy unhappy master one last service—
Draw forth thy sword, and strike it through my
heart.

Princess. No; let our grief be sacred. If we
weep,

Let them not see and triumph in our tears.

Martyrs have died in voluntary flames,
And heroes rush'd on death inevitable,
By faith inspir'd or glory. Thou, Sophia,
Sustain'd alone by peace and innocence,
Meet fate as firmly, and transcend their daring.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Forest.

Enter PALADORE; RINALDO following.

Paladore. Am I the slave of sense, that know
her fickle,

Ungrateful, perjur'd, yet still doat thus fondly?

Faith, prudence, honour, govern'd appetites,
(Whose everlasting bonds make passion wise,)

In her were only seeming; or, like ornament
Thrown by, or worn at pleasure: then this sorrow
Hangs on her outside only; that's unchang'd;
For falsehood did not dim her radiant eyes:
Her cheek was damask'd with as pure a rose;

Her breath as odorous, when she most deceiv'd,
As when her virtue, like her specious form,
Seem'd spotless and unparagon'd.

Rinaldo. My lord,

Court not this solitude. Speak out your grief;
Mine is no flinty breast. This dangerous spleen,
That makes your bane its nurture, then shews
worst,

When nothing spent in loudness and complaint;
Like a deep stream, it rolls its noiseless way,
Mining the banks in silence.

Paladore. Would the pain

Vanish with the exposure of the cause,
I should make blunt the patience of your ear
By endless iteration. But why tell thee?

Think'st thou there is a charm in soothing words
To pluck the sting from anguish? Good Rinaldo,
Thou hadst a son, and lost him.

Rinaldo. True, I had so.

Paladore. See there, his very name provokes
thy tears.

Say, can wise counsel stop them? Shall I tell
thee

The lot of mortals is mortality?

That fate will take its course; 'twas heaven's high
will;

And man is born to sorrow? This is wise;
The sum of consolation. Strains like these
Flow smoothly from the tongues of moralists;
Patient as sleep in others' sufferings,
But vex'd as wasps and hornets in their own.

Rinaldo. From these imperfect starts I cannot
answer;

They speak but passion. If my guess deceive
not,

A woman, sure, has wrong'd you.

Paladore. A true woman,—

I thought her angel once,—most basely wrong'd
me:

Yet if revenge kept measure with her shame,
I could wash out in her polluted blood
This stain to modesty. Yes, fair falsehood!
Should I appeal thee of the incontinence
My blasted eyes have witness'd, the stern law
Would give me ample vengeance.

Rinaldo. Your great spirit

(Whoe'er she be that thus has injur'd you)

Would scorn your reparation from that law,

The shame even of justice.

Paladore. Fear not. Still she twines

Here round my heart-strings. No; let late re-
morse

(For, sure, it will o'ertake) punish her sin:—

But hie thee back to Pavia presently;

Dismiss my attendants; (useless pageantry

To my now alter'd state;) send hither to me

My arms and horses; these may hasten death

Fitting a soldier; then return and seek me.

A little longer will I hold in life;

Till, in requital of her father's kindness,

I render some brave service. 'Midst these oaks,

Till you return, I'll keep my lonely haunt.

Rinaldo. There stands an humble hamlet in your
glade,

Own'd by some simple peasants, who supply

The western suburbs with such homely fare

As their few fields afford; thither bestow you,

And take some nourishment. I will return

With my best diligence.

Paladore. Go, get thee gone.

Sorrow's my food; I'll drink my falling tears.

Ye savage denizens of this wild wood,

Gaunt wolves, and tawny boars! no more my
hounds

Shall dash the spangled dew-drops from your
brakes!

No more with echoing cries, or mellow horn,

I'll rouse your dreadful slumber! Sleep securely:

With disposition deadly as your own,
I go to mingle with you.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter two Foresters.

1 *For.* This place will suit our purpose; 'twere
lost time

To lead her further: so we but despatch her,
No matter for the spot. The deed once done,
The Duke will not be nice, but pay us nobly.

2 *For.* Half of our hire's to come. How shall
we do it—

Stab her, or strangle?

1 *For.* Make this cord her necklace:
Blood may beget suspicion. When she's dead,
We'll drag her body to yon hazel copse,
And leave the maws of wolves to bury it.
There's scarce a hush in this green labyrinth
But is familiar to me. Many a traveller,
When I was master of as stout a gang
As e'er defy'd the law, here has paid down
His life in conflict for the gold I wanted,
And never more was heard of.

2 *For.* Sound your horn.

I told her, we'd a little on before
To give our horses forage, and directed
Her way to follow: should she miss the path,
Her ear will be her guide.—See, Carlo, see!
The pretty innocent, caught by her eye,
Stops for awhile to pluck the velvet bells
That blow beneath her feet, then forward bounds,
Light as the roe, till some fresh floweret
Lures her again.

1 *For.* Ay, like the lamb that plays,
And crops his pasture, in the butcher's eye,
Even while the knife's a whetting.—Hush! She's
here.

Enter ALINDA.

Alinda. Beneath a rugged thorn I found this
flower,

Blushing, unmark'd, its odorous life away:
I'll wear it in my breast, and all who see
Will praise its beauty, modest worth's sweet em-
blem,

That first must be conspicuous ere 'tis priz'd.
Oh! are you there? I'm ready, my good guides.
Where is our equipage? The way's but short;
We shall be there ere moonshine.

1 *For.* Pretty lady,

You have a longer journey than you wot off
And a dark, dreary road to travel through.

Alinda. Why, then, the Duke deceiv'd me; for
he said

The way was pleasant, and the distance nothing.

2 *For.* We have help'd many forward the same
way,

And all were much averse to travel it.

Alinda. They had no lover to obey like me;
For I am light, and were it ten times further,
To please my lord, I'd go it blithesomely.
Come, come, to horse!

1 *For.* Are you prepar'd to die?

Alinda. Mercy defend me! How? Prepar'd to
die?

'Tis a strange question.

1 *For.* But most reasonable:

As if your couch were spread at midnight,
To find you were weary. With our will
We do not; for we were gently bred,
And hope to with gallants once: but this rough
trade

Necessity enforces. Come, prepare.

Alinda. What do you search for? And why turn
you pale?

You make me shake to see your steadfast eye.
Does this become the servants of the Duke,
To frighten whom they should protect from fear?

2 *For.* We are, indeed, the servants of the
Duke;

For we receive his hire: then for your fears,
We mean to rid you of them by your death.

Alinda. Can this be sport? Alas! what have I
done,

That such detested thoughts should rise in you?

1 *For.* You are troublesome. Our business is
to kill you.

If you have a ready prayer, and brief, kneel
there,

And say it presently. We run great hazard
To let you live so long.

Alinda. I'll kneel to you,

Make you my saint, if you'll have mercy on me.

I never injur'd you, nay, could not injure;
For till this hour that I was made your charge,
I never saw you. Do not turn away.

Think how you'll answer this to him whose love

Trusted me to your care. He will require

A strict account.

2 *For.* Pr'ythee, let go my arm.

Alinda. May I not know why you do wish to
kill me?

If for these sparkling banbles, take them freely:
Rob me of all, but do not murder me.

I am not fit to die.

1 *For.* We need not thank you

For what you can't withhold. Fall to your
prayers.

Alinda. But are you not the servants of the
Duke?

Think how you swore to tend me faithfully;
How he enjoin'd you, as you priz'd his favour,
Ev'n in your looks he'll read this cruelty,
And find how you have abus'd him. Think on
that.

1 *For.* 'Twere pity she should die in ignorance.
Caught in the falcon's pounce, the dove as well
Might gurggle to the kite to stoop, and save her,
As you cry to Bireno. Know, 'tis he
Who laid this snare, and pays us for your blood.

Alinda. The Duke Bireno!

2 *For.* Yes, the Duke Bireno.

You have been privy to some passages
Require concealment. Being wise, he thinks
They are safest when you are dumb; so, gives us
gold

To stop your blabbing. If you doubt our word,
Peruse that paper. Are you satisfied?

(*Shows a paper.*)

Alinda. Yes, if 'tis satisfaction to be torn
With worse than death, ere death, I'm satisfied.
But yet you will not kill me.

1 *For.* There's no end:

She'll prate us from our purpose. Bind her arms.
All strife is vain.

Alinda. Oh, sir!—yet hold a moment;
You murder more than one. An innocent pledge
Of my disastrous love leaps at my side,
And joins his speechless prayer.

2 *For.* And not his wife!

Why, then, your head's a forfeit to the law;
And we but take before, what sport or malice
Might make you render at the bloody block,
With process more afflicting.

Alinda. Barbarous villains!

Is there no help? Oh! spare me. With my cries,
I'll wake the dead.

2 *For.* Despatch her with your dagger.

Be quick!

1 *For.* 'Tis done!

(*Stabs her.*)

Enter PALADORE.

Paladore. Sure, 'twas the scream of woe!
A woman struggling! Villains, loose your hold!
Dogs! hell-hounds!

(*He drives them out, and returns.*)

Alinda. Oh!
Paladore. Guilt has the wings of wind,

My sight can scarce o'ertake them. On the ground!

I came too late to save her. Hearts of stone
Might feel compunction, sure, to mar a form
So soft and fair as this. Thou beauteous marble,
Forgive my tardy succour! Here's a mould
So delicate, 'twere worth a miracle
To give it second life. I've seen this face!
Ha! As I live, 'tis she! the beauteous girl
That waited on the Princess. Soft! the blood
Steals to her cheek again; the azure lids
Begin to open.

Alinda. Oh!

Paladore. Look up, sweet maid!

Alinda. Bless me, where am I?

Paladore. Safe from violence,
Nor in a stranger's arms.

Alinda. Your voice is gentle.

But will you save me from these barbarous men,
Should they again return? I tremble still;
Still feel their ruffian gripe; nor can believe
I yet am safe, tho' I no more behold them.

Paladore. They are fled far.—But, ah! thy side
is pierc'd;

Nor does this houseless solitude afford
The chance of timely succour.

Alinda. Heaven is just,
(For now I know you,) since it bids me die,
Weeping for pardon at your injur'd knees;
For I have basely wrong'd you.

Paladore. Wrong'd me! How?
All who have ever serv'd or lov'd that false one,
As they bring back her irksome memory,
I should avoid in wisdom. So confin'd,
It is not in thy sphere to wake a thought,
More than compassion for thy helpless sex,
And aid my order binds to.

Alinda. Have but patience,
Nor waste the few short moments fate allows me
To doubt my truth: the seal of death is on it.
You left the court on much supposed proof
Of her incontinence—

Paladore. Supposed proof!
By heav'n! I saw her in the falsome twine
Of riotous dalliance with one she swore,
That very noon, (a budding perjury!)
Excited but her loathing.

Alinda. At her window,
I know you think you saw her.

Paladore. Think I saw her!
Is there for visible objects better sense
Than sight to hold by?

Alinda. Oh! most injur'd lady!
My sullied lips would but profane thy virtue,
To say I know it spotless.

Paladore. Do not mock me
With hopes impossible. I see her still:
Her snowy veil and sparkling coronet,
Peculiar in their form—

Alinda. By me were worn,
While she and harmless thoughts slept sound toge-
ther.

Bireno's was the fraud; my boundless love
Made me his instrument.

Paladore. Oh! hold my brain!
But one thing more:—How came he by that
letter?

Her picture, mine?

Alinda. These, too, I found, and gave him,
By her for you intended. 'Midst her notes,
I found his title writ, and trac'd the address
Stroke after stroke agreeing.

Paladore. Wretch! fond wretch!
Have I for this with viperous calumny
Tradu'd her virgin fame? With desperate hand,
Rais'd this sharp sword against my tortur'd breast?
But I will turn an usurer in revenge,
And take such bloody interest for my wrongs—

Alinda. Let heaven be my avenger.—How I
lov'd him!

Oh! savage, merciless! To snare my life,
From mere suspicion my unwary tongue
Might publish his contrivance—

Paladore. How! thy life!

Inhuman dog! Were these his ruffians, then,
I found thee struggling with?

Alinda. I thought they led me,
By his especial care, far from the city,
Where he ordain'd I should remain secure
To hide this swelling witness of my shame,
My fatal passion bears him.

Paladore. Heaven defend me!

Alinda. There lies the bloody contract. Oh!
forgive me!

I have struggled hard to make this last confes-
sion:

The icy grasp of death chill'd my shrunk heart.

Paladore. Would I could save thee!

Alinda. Say but you forgive me.

Paladore. As I would be forgiven.

Alinda. And will you plead

My pardon with my ever-gracious mistress,
When she shall know?—'Tis dark—Let this atone.
(Dies.)

Paladore. Peace to thy hapless shade! Thou
hast wash'd out

Thy offences in thy blood. Unnatural slave!
Hell should invent new torments for thy crimes,
And howling fiends avoid thee. I have heard,
Have read, bold fables of enormity,
Devis'd to make men wonder, and confirm
The abhorrence of our nature; but this hardness
Transcends all fiction. Mover of the world!
Send not thy sulphurous lightning forth to strike,
Nor cleave the ground to gape and swallow him;
But, oh! reserve him for the sharper pangs
My vengeance meditates. Poor blasted flower!
Which way shall I bestow thee? It were cruel
To leave thee thus to insult. Hold! yon peasant
May help to bear her hence. Shepherd, approach.

Enter a Shepherd.

Hast thou a habitation near this place?

Shep. Fair sir, I have. There eastward turn
your eyes;

The curling smoke above you tufted trees
Mounts from my cottage fire.

Paladore. Then call for aid,
And bear this body thither.

Shep. Mercy guard us!
This is a piteous sight. What could provoke
A youth of such a sweet and comely outside,
To act so sad a deed?

Paladore. You wrong me, shepherd;
She fell by ruffians. Pr'ythee, call thy hinds,
And, for thy soul's sake, do this courtesy.

Shep. Good sir, detain me not. I'll haste to the
city,

Where all our villagers flock to behold
A most strange sight, and sad as it is strange.
With their best speed, my old limbs will be
late:

The sun goes down apace.

Paladore. Whate'er the sight,
Respite thy curiosity for gold.

Take this, and give a covering to that corpse.

(Gives a purse.)
I must away. You shall hear further from me.

Enter RINALDO.

Shep. He had a hard heart, lady, struck thee
down.

I would not for the herds that graze these hills
Beyond my eyes,—not?—no, nor for the wealth
Of all who throng the city, I or mine

Should answer for a sin like this at doom's-day.
Oh! if thy father live, what bitter tears
Will this misdeed wring from his watery eyes!
Thou shalt not want what I can do for thee.
I'll make thy bed with leaves, and strew thee
o'er.

With herbs and flowers, wild thyme and lavender,
White lilies, and the prime of all our fields:
And, for thy soul's peace, till thy knell is toll'd,
I'll number many an eve. Come, for help.

Rinaldo. Oh! cursed chance! Vain is my search
to find him!

Yet all his life to come, from one lost moment,
May take its mournful colour. Doom'd to die!
And he alike accus'd, leave her to perish?
Most horrible! Kind shepherd, answer quickly:
Saw'st thou a youth, clad in a shining robe,
Of noble port, wand'ring these tangled woods?

Shep. Even such an one as you describe, but
now,
(Him of your question doubtless,) went from
hence,

And left with me in charge—

Rinaldo. No matter what!
Know you the path he took, which way his
course?

Shep. I follow'd him a little with my eye,
And saw him wind round yonder shrubby hill,
Then pass the row of olives.

Rinaldo. Leads it not
straight to the city?

Shep. As the falcon flies.

Rinaldo. Oh! fortune, guide his steps once more
to Pavia;

Else, never-ending misery awaits him. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Hall.

LUCIO and an Officer discovered.

Officer. Think on the danger.

Lucio. Who sees only that,
Will ne'er surmount it. More than life I owe
her!

Adversity's hard hand had crush'd my hopes,
Doom'd my sweet wife and infant family
To shameful beggary. My affliction reach'd her.
Can I forget her all-dispensing bounty,
That rais'd my soul from comfortless despair;
That bade my cheerful house again receive me;
Bless'd us with plenty? If I fall, and save her,
'Tis well; I ask no nobler epitaph.

Officer. There's virtue in your motive, and your
purpose.

But how effect her rescue?

Lucio. Will you join us?

Officer. Or why these questions?

Lucio. I dare trust your honour,
The bond of soldiers. Know, then, I command
(And sought it with this hope) her prison guard:
I have sounded them; they hate the cruel ser-
vice.

A little, ere the fatal hour's approach,
We mean to pass their unresisting force,
Throw wide the iron gates, and bear her safe
Beyond the danger of this bloody edict.

Officer. It looks success; may fortune second
it!

The throngs assembled to behold the sight,
Will count for idle gazers, and conceal
Your bold design, till 'tis too late to thwart it.
How brooks she her sad plight?

Lucio. With fortitude
So sweet, so even-temper'd, that her death

Seems but a phantom, dress'd by fancy's trick,
To frighten children. All her soul's employ'd
In minist'ring, with softest piety,
To her distracted father.

Officer. There's a spectacle;
Indeed, heart-rending! Cast on the cold ground,
He strews his head with ashes; by the roots
Tears out his silver hair; beats his poor breast;
While the significant dumbness of his gesture,
Beggars all power of words.

Lucio. Thou blind mischance,
Stand neuter! we shall cheer him presently.
I'll to my station. Keep thy sword conceal'd,
Nor sheathe it drawn but in the villain's breast,
That dare oppose us. Be but firm, and fear not.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter BIRENO.

Bireno. By their description, it was Paladore;
The place, the glittering robe, his courage too,
In so assailing them. If their keen daggers
Left her enough of breath to tell the tale,
She has, no doubt, told all, and wing'd him back,
To wreak his vengeance on me; this way only,
Can I be safe; firm as he is, and fearless,
My ambush cuts him off; and, by his death,
The full tide of my prosperous fortune flows,
Never to ebb.

Enter ASCANIO.

Well, the great period comes!
No champion meets my challenge?

Ascanio. No, not one.
Fear puts the livery of conscience on:
They cannot think one of your nobleness,
Would charge a lady falsely to the death;
And few are the examples of success
Against conviction: true, 'tis pitiful,
That one so fair, so young, of royal birth,
For the mere frailty of impulsive nature,
Should meet so sad a doom: the law's to blame,
That bloodily enrols a venial trespass,
With those o'ergrown and huge enormities,
That shake society; but they can no more
Than drop a tear or two, and let her die.

Bireno. True; she must die; and the heart-
wounded king,

Whose age already totters o'er the grave,
Like a crush'd serpent, but a little longer
Will drag his painful being. Yet one fear
Sits like a boding raven o'er my breast,
And flaps its heavy wing to damp my joy.

Ascanio. What fear can reach you now? From
Paladore?

Bireno. Perdition seize him! yes. But, my good
ruffians,

Ere this, I trust, have sent to his account
That ill-starred Briton. Doubly-arm'd they wait
him:

Close by a brambled cavern he must pass,
Returning hither. Yet, should he escape—
It cannot be. Heart, reassume thy seat.

But, come, the time draws on. Bear to the
lists

My martial ensigns; I must seem prepar'd
To oppose a danger that will never meet me.

Enter a Servant, who delivers a paper.

The hand of Bernardine, my trusty spy. (*Reads.*)
Confusion! Rescue her! Come back, Ascanio!
Fly to St. Mark's, collect the cohort there;
Go, place them instantly around the prison!
Bid them disarm the guard that holds that place;
And, on their lives, drive back the populace.
I'll to Honorias. These stout veterans
Will sweep the rabble like vile chaff before
them.

Away! A moment may be fatal to us. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Prison.

The PRINCESS, attended by Women, discovered.

Princess. Nay, dry these tears: the awful eve of death

Is but profan'd by shews of common sorrow:
I have a triple armour round my heart,
'Gainst all the shapes of terror; yet it owns
The soft contagion of affection's drops,
And melts at kindness. Come, this must not be.
You, Laura, must be near me at the block,
And help to disarray me. What, more tears?
Stop them, for shame! I must have strangers

else,
For this last office. When the axe has fallen,
They have no further power. Save from disgrace

My poor remains; and, on your loves I charge you,

When I am dead, see that they touch me not.
I have not been unmindful of your service.
It is not much: there were too many poor,
Too many comfortless, to leave me rich.
But you will find a father in the king;
And, for my sake, he will be bounteous to you.
Retire, and-weep; I dare not look upon you.

(Takes a picture from her bosom.)

Thou dear, dumb image of a form belov'd!
Soul of my soul, and precious even in death,
Awake be sensible! receive this sigh,
And take my last farewell. When thou shalt know

My truth and sufferings, let not the sad tale
Blast the fair promise of thy noble youth;
But, with a sweet, a sacred melancholy,
Embalm the soft remembrance of my love.
My father! oh! angelic host support me,
To bear this parting, and death's pang is past!

Enter the KING.

I am indeed subdu'd to see thee thus!

King. They would not let me die—

Princess. These few short hours,
Alas! how have they chang'd thee. Murderous sorrow!

Thy furrows sink more deep than age or time.
Your cheek is ashy pale, your eyes quite sunk.
Will you not look upon me?

King. Oh! no, no;

I came to give thee comfort, to sustain thee;
But, looking on thee, I shall weep again,
And add my load of misery to thine.
Yet teach me to be patient.

Princess. View me well;

Nor think these tears fall for my own distress;
The throbbings of my heart are for my father.
'Tis apprehension makes death terrible.
Cowards, from weakness, tremble; guilt, from

conscience;
But the firm bosom, innocence invests,
Knows it a fix'd, inevitable end,
Meets the pale guest, nor startles at the encounter.

King. Thou wert my all: a mote that vex'd thy eye,
A thorn that ras'd thy finger, snatch'd my thoughts
From ev'ry care but thee. And thus to lose thee!

Princess. Oh! were our being circumscrib'd by earth,

This end, indeed, might shake my constancy.
But, faith apart, think what bright evidence
Shines here within of immortality.
Who has not felt the heavenly overflow
Of thought congenial to the eternal mind?
Why are there tears of virtuous sympathy?
Whence that celestial fluid of the eye,

That sheds such full, such satisfied delight?
But that the God of all benevolence

Thus gives a glimpse of blessedness to come,
In joys refin'd from sense, and far transcending?

King. What has old age to lose? Is the poor remnant

Of life, worn threadbare, precious for itself?
Can we be fond of pain and feebleness?
No; but our second spring, our soul's renew'd
In our dear children; there we cling to life.
Mortality! thy last, thy heaviest curse,
Bids us remain the mournful monument,
The living tomb of all our comforts buried,
Telling no more in our sepulchral sorrow,
Than that they were, and are not.

Princess. You must live
(For sure the hour will come) to see this cloud
Pass from my memory; and the shame he merits,
Fall on my base accuser.

King. Hear me, heaven!
On the devoted murderer of my child,
With tenfold visitation pour my sorrow!
Let fear, mistrust, and horror ever haunt him;
Slumber forsake his couch, and joy his table!
If he must reign, oh! line his crown with thorns;
Turn reverence to contempt; the friend he trusts,
Meet him for smiles with daggers; war abroad,
Treason at home, pursue and harass him;
And may the steam that mounts from innocent blood,

Make heavier the dire thunderbolt,
Lanc'd from thy red right arm, at last, to crush him!

Princess. Spirit of peace, on his distemper'd rage,
Oh! shed thy healing balm!—*(A noise without.)*—

What mean these shouts?
This wild tumultuous noise?

Enter an Attendant.

Attend. Our prayers are heard.
The guard gives way, the massy bars are forc'd;
And, like delivering angels, the rous'd people,
Burst in to lead you from this den of horror.

King. Oh! joy unhop'd! Millions of blessings crown them!

Attend. Led by the gallant Lucio, they advance.

King. The tiger, then, may seek his prey in vain,
My brave, my generous people!—Hark! they come.

Princess. Ah! sir, retire. Your heart must thank their purpose:
Yet, sure, 'twere most unmeet for royalty,

Whose sway and throne are hallow'd in obedience,
To countenance this outrage. Pray, retire.

King. Yes, I will go; but, oh! be swift, my child;
Nor dally with this blessed chance to save thee.

[Exit.]
Enter LUCIO, with his sword drawn.

Princess. Your purpose, quickly? *(Advancing.)*
Lucio. Your deliverance, lady! *(Kneeling.)*

I owe a debt of boundless gratitude,
And thus in part would pay it. Madam, fly!
The people all are yours; a chosen band,
Faithful and brave, wait to conduct you hence:
This smiling moment seiz'd, may place you safe,
Beyond the dreadful fate that threatens you.

Princess. But not beyond the reach of foul disgrace,
The noble mind's worst fate. I know thee, Lucio,
And thank thy kind intention. Could my flight
Restore my name to its original whiteness;

Make palpable his lie who slanders me;
I'd think thee thus commission'd from above,
And welcome life with transport.

Lucio. Do I wake!

When your good angel thus by me invites you,
Is this a time to doubt? Can you devote
That rosy youth, that all commanding beauty,
To voluntary death?

Princess. Were it a pain,
Worse than the fear of cowards can conceive,
I would abide it. Have I not endur'd
A greater horror,—heard myself proclaim'd
The thing I scorn to utter? Shall I live
To bear about a disputable fame,
Scattering the eternal seeds of strife and war
Over my country, for the privilege
To draw a little transitory breath,
And be consign'd to infamy or honour,
But as the sword of conquest arbitrates?

Lucio. These are suggestions of your generous
anger,

And not your reason. Oh! most honour'd lady,
Again behold me prostrate at your feet!
Thus, thus, by me the people supplicate.

(*Kneels.*)

We have but one short moment left to save you;
Seize it, and live, live to be still rever'd
Your country's pride, her boast, her ornament.

Princess. I am not to be chang'd. But, oh! my
father!—

The good, old king, he wants a friend like thee.

Ascanio. (*Without.*) Force down the bridge;
kill all who dare oppose!

They fly! Stand fast—

Princess. He cuts my purpose short.

Enter ASCANIO, with Soldiers.

Lucio. Oh! death to all our hopes! 'tis now too
late.

I cast thee from my hand, vile instrument!
Since she disdains thy service.

(*Throws down his sword.*)

Ascanio. Seize that traitor!
Quick, hear him hence! Madam, I grieve to
speak it,
The herald, to the temple porch, has issued
For final proclamation.

Princess. Spare your sorrow:
A shameful world, disgrac'd by souls like thine,
Turns grief to joy, when noble natures leave it.

(*Exit Princess, guarded.*)

Enter BIRENO.

Bireno. Oh! let me clasp thee. This was wor-
thy service.

But for thy zeal, the high-raised edifice,
So near complete, had tumbled to the earth,
And crush'd me in its fall.

Ascanio. Haste to the lists.

A moment more consummates our design,
And fate itself may strive in vain to shake us.

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE III.—*A Scaffold; Guards and Executioner
in attendance.*

*Enter the Spectators, Officers, and Senators, fol-
lowed by the PRINCESS, supported by Women.*
*BIRENO with ASCANIO, who bears his shield and
sword. Herald, with trumpets.*

Officer. Make room; fall back. Let the proces-
sion pass.

Bireno. 'Tis known why I stand here; yet, once
again,
And for the last time, herald, sound my challenge.

(*Bireno's trumpet sounds.*)

Princess. I would have it so.

You, generous people, who behold with horror

These gloomy preparations, do not deem me
Cold and unthankful for my offer'd safety,
The I prefer'd this dire alternative.

Before the tongue of slander struck my fame,
The rude hand of affliction never touch'd me;
Life had a thousand bonds to tie me to it:

Young spirits, royal birth, fortune, and great-
ness:

But honour was the prop, round which, like
stalks

Tender and weak, these accessories twin'd:

When calamity's sharp edge cut down that trunk,
Then these poor tendrils lost their hue, and with-
ther'd.

With that great ruin fell my happiness!

I now stand on eternity's dark verge;

Nor dare I to the God and Judge of Truth,

Bring lips with falsehood sullied. Of the offence

Cast on me by vile malice, I am free,

Even to abhorrence; this to heaven is known,

My own heart, and my accuser; therefore, boldly,

And for your sakes, will I arraign the law,

Which thus has pass'd upon me.

1 Sen. Gracious lady,

If in this censure we too stand accus'd,

Think we pronounc'd but did not make the law:

And let my bleeding heart bear witness for me,

I would lay down the dearest thing I own,

To save you from the forfeit.

Princess. Good, my lord,

All forms of justice have been well observ'd;

My blame lights on the law, not on your office,

Which you with truth and mercy minister.

But let these mute spectators mark my counsel:

Fall at the king's feet, clasp at the senate's

knees,

And pray them, they wipe out clear from their

rolls,

This more than cruel edict; else, be sure

From every roof there hangs a dangerous sword,

(Hangs by a thread) which each dark hand may

drop

To pierce and sever nature's dearest ties.

She who profanes her honour's sanctity,

Upbraided by her heart, by her own sex

Shunn'd or neglected, nay, held cheap and vile,

Even to the loathing of the lover's sense,

Who wrought her easy nature to transgress;

These are sharp penalties; but added death,

Turns the clear stream of justice into blood,

And makes such law more curs'd than anarchy.

Forget not my example; let me perish;

But if you pluck your safety from my ruin,

I shall not die in vain. Farewell! Lead on.

(*Goes towards the scaffold. A trumpet sounds.*)

1 Sen. Hold, on your lives!

Bireno. What means that trumpet's voice?

It sounds a shrill alarm.

Enter an Esquire.

Esquire. Arrest your sentence!

I come in the name of one who hears with horror

This barbarous process, to proclaim the accuser

Of that most innocent and royal lady,

A slanderer and villain; who accepts

Her just defence, and by the law of arms

Throws down this gage, and claims the combat for

her.

Bireno. Take it, Ascanio. Bid your knight ap-
pear,

(If such his order) for to none beneath

Am I thus bound to answer. Speak his titles.

Esquire. He will not I reveal him: but suf-
fice it,

He has a name in arms that will not shame

The noble cause he fights for.

Bireno. Bid him enter.

My shield and sword. Say, I am deck'd to meet
him. *[Exit the Murderers.]*
Some rash adventurer, prodigal of life,
Brib'd by her father's gold to grace her fall,
And add an easy trophy to my banners.—
Confusion! Paladore!

Enter PALADORE.

Princess. 'Tis he, 'tis he!
Then, life, thou art welcome!
(A loud murmur among the People.)

Bireno. Marshal, do your office!
Furies and hell!—Keep order in the lists!—
Silence that uproar!

Paladore. Yes, behold me, villain!
I have thee in the toils, thou canst not 'scape
me—

But, oh! most wrong'd and heavenly excellence!
(To the Princess.)

How shall I plead for pardon? Can the abuse
Of his deep craft and devilish artifice,
Fooling my nature's plainness, blanch my cheek
From the deep shame that my too easy faith
Combin'd with hell against thee?

Princess. Rise, my soldier!
Though yet I know not by what subtle practice
Thy nobleness was wrought on, nor the means
That since reveal'd his fraud,—praise be to hea-
ven!—

Thy presence plucks my honour from the grave:
Thou liv'st, thou know'st my truth, thou wilt
avenge me.

Paladore. Avenge thee! yes. Did his right
hand grasp thunder;
Did yelling furies combat on his side,
(Pal'd in with circling fires,) I would assail him;
Nor cast a look to fortune for the event.

Bireno. Presumptuous Briton! think not that
bold mien,

A wanton's favour, or thy threats, have power
To shrink the sinews of a soldier's arm.

Paladore. A soldier's arm! Thou double mur-
derer!

Assassin in thy intention and in act.

But, ere my falchion cleave thy treacherous
breast,

I will divulge thee.—Bring that ruffian forth.

One of the Murderers of Alinda brought in.

Two hell-bounds, such as this, he set upon me—
One fell beneath my sword; that wretch I spar'd,
Kneeling for mercy. Let your justice doom him.

Look you amen'd! Peruse that paper, lords:
His contempt for the blood of a fair maiden
He taught to sin, and made her waste death.
Ha! Does it shake thee? See Alinda's form,
Thy panting image mangled in her arms,
Stalks from her sanguine bed, and ghastly smiles,
To aid the prowess of this dauntless soldier.

Bireno. Destruction! All's reveal'd!

Ascanio. What, turn'd to stone? *(To Bireno.)*
Droop not, for shame! Be quick, retort the
charge!

Bireno. All false as hell! And thou—Defend
thyself;
Nor blast me thus with thy detested presence.—
This to thy heart. *(They fight. Bireno falls.)*

Paladore. Oh! impotence of guilt!
An infant's lath hath fell'd him. Villain, die!
And know thy shame, and the deep wound that
writhes thee,

Are but a feeble earnest of the pangs
Reserv'd beneath for giant crimes like thine.

Princess. Haste to the King, proclaim this bless'd
event!

Bireno. Perfidious chance! Caught in my own
device!
Accurs'd!—Ha! they drag me, tear me!—Oh!—
(Dies.)

Princess. I have a thousand things to ask, to
hear:

But, oh! the joy to see thee thus again;
To owe my life, my honour, to thy love—
These tears, these rapturous tears, let them speak
for me.

Paladore. I could endure the malice of my fate;
But this full tide of such excessive bias,
Sure, 'tis allusion all! It quite transports me.
When I have borne thee from this scene of horror,
Perhaps I may grow calm, and talk with reason.

Enter the KING, LUCIO, and Attendants.

King. Where is she? Let me strain her to my
heart.

They cannot part us now, my joy, my comfort!
Thou generous youth, how can my overflowing
soul

Find words to thank thee? Words! poor recom-
pense!

Here I invest thee with the forfeit lands,
The wealth and honours of that prostrate traitor.

This, too, is little—then receive her hand,
Due to thy love, thy courage, and thy virtue;
And joys unutterable crown your union. *[Exeunt.]*

THE CHEATS OF SCAPIN;

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS. BY THOMAS OTWAY.



Act II.—Scene 1

CHARACTERS

THRIFT
GRIFE
OCTAVIAN

LIANDR
SCAPIN
SHIFT

SIX
LUCIA
CLARA

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter OCTAVIAN and SHIFT.

Oct. This is unhappy news; I did not expect my father in two months, and yet you say he is returned already.

Shift. 'Tis but too true.

Oct. That he arrived this morning?

Shift. This very morning

Oct. And that he is come with a resolution to marry me?

Shift. Yes, sir, to marry you.

Oct. I am ruined and undone, pr'ythee, advise me.

Shift. Advise you?

Oct. Yes, advise me. Thou art as curly as if thou really couldst do me no good. Speak, has necessity taught thee no wit? hast thou no shift?

Shift. Lord! sir, I am at present very busy in contriving some trick to save myself, I am first prudent, and then good-natured.

Oct. How will my father rage and storm, when he understands what things have happened in his absence! I dread his anger and reproaches.

Shift. Reproaches! Would I could be quit of him so easily; methinks I feel him already on my shoulders.

Oct. Disinheriting is the least I can expect.

Shift. You should have thought of this before, and not have fallen in love with I know not whom, one that you met by chance in the Dover coach.

She is, indeed, a good smug lass, but God knows what she is besides, perhaps, some—

Oct. Villain!

Shift. I have done, sir, I have done.

Oct. I have no friend that can appease my father's anger, and now I shall be betrayed to want and misery.

Shift. For my part, I know but one remedy in our misfortunes.

Oct. Pr'ythee, what is it?

Shift. You know that rogue and arch-cheat, Scapin?

Oct. Well, what of him?

Shift. There is not a more subtle fellow breathing, so cunning, he can cheat one newly cheated; 'tis such a wheeling rogue, I'd undertake in two hours he shall make your father forgive you all; nay, allow you money for your necessary debauches. I saw him, in three days, make an old cautious lawyer turn chymist and projector.

Oct. He is the fittest person in the world for my business: the impudent varlet can do anything with the peevish old man. Pr'ythee, go look him out; we'll set him to work immediately.

Shift. See where he comes. *Monsieur Scapin!*

Enter SCAPIN.

Scapin. Worthy sir!

Shift. I have been giving my master a brief account of thy most noble qualities. I told him thou wert as valiant as a ridden cockold, sincere as whores, honest as pimps in want.

Scapin. Alas! sir, I but copy you. *Tis you are*

brave; you scorn the gibbets, halters, and prisons which threaten you, and valiantly proceed in cheats and robberies.

Oct. Oh! Scapin, I am utterly ruined without thy assistance.

Scapin. Why, what's the matter, good Mr. Octavian?

Oct. My father is this day arrived at Dover, with old Mr. Gripe, with a resolution to marry me.

Scapin. Very well.

Oct. Thou knowest I am already married. How will my father resent my disobedience? I am for ever lost, unless thou canst find some means to reconcile me to him.

Scapin. Does your father know of your marriage? *Oct.* I am afraid he is, by this time, acquainted with it.

Scapin. No matter, no matter; all shall be well: I am public-spirited; I love to help distressed young gentlemen; and, thank heaven, I have had good success enough.

Oct. Besides, my present want must be considered; I am in rebellion without any money.

Scap. I have tricks and shifts, too, to get that. I can cheat upon occasion; but cheating is now grown an ill trade; yet, heaven be thanked, there were never more cullies and fools; but the great rooks and cheats, allowed by public authority, ruin such little under-traders as I am.

Oct. Well, get thee straight about thy business. Canst thou make no use of my rogue here?

Scap. Yes, I shall want his assistance; the knave has cunning, and may be useful.

Shift. Ay, sir; but, like other wise men, I am not over-valiant. Pray, leave me out of this business; my fears will betray you; you shall execute, I'll sit at home and advise.

Scapin. I stand not in need of thy courage, but thy impudence, and thou hast enough of that. Come, come, thou shalt along. What, man, stand out for a beating? that's the worst can happen.

Shift. Well, well.

Enter CLARA.

Oct. Here comes my dearest Clara.

Clara. Ah me! Octavian, I hear sad news: they say your father is returned.

Oct. Alas! 'tis true, and I am the most unfortunate person in the world; but 'tis not my own misery that I consider, but your's: how can you bear those wants to which we must be both reduced?

Clara. Love shall teach me, that can make all things easy to us; which is a sign it is the chiefest good. But I have other cares. Will you be ever constant? Shall not your father's severity constrain you to be false?

Oct. Never, my dearest, never.

Clara. They that love much may be allowed some fears.

Scapin. Come, come; we have now no time to hear you speak fine tender things to one another. Pray, do you prepare to encounter with your father.

Clara. I tremble at the thoughts of it.

Scapin. You must appear resolute at first: tell him you can live without troubling him; threaten him to turn soldier; or, what will frighten him worse, say you'll turn poet. Come, I'll warrant you, we bring him to composition.

Oct. What would I give 'twere over!

Scapin. Let us practise a little what you are to do. Suppose me your father; very grave, and very angry.

Oct. Well.

Scap. Do you look very carelessly, like a small swarthy upon his country acquaintance; a little more smiling; very well. Now I come, full of my fatherly authority:—Octavian, thou makest me weep to see thee; but, alas! they are not tears of joy, but tears of sorrow. Did ever so good a father begot so lewd

a son? Nay, but for that I think thy mother virtuous, I should pronounce thou art not mine. Newgate-bird, rogue, villain, what a trick hast thou played me in my absence! married! Yes; but to whom? Nay, that thou knowest not. I'll warrant you, some waiting-woman, corrupted in a civil family, and reduced to one of the playhouses, removed from thence by some keeping coxcomb, or—

Clara. Hold, Scapin, hold.

Scapin. No offence, lady, I speak but another's words.—Thou abominable rascal, thou shalt not have a groat, not a groat. Besides, I will break all thy bones ten times over; get thee out of my house.—Why, sir, you reply not a word.

Oct. Look, yonder comes my father.

Scapin. Stay, Shift, and get you two gone: let me alone to manage the old fellow.

[*Exit Octavian with Clara.*]

Enter THRIFTY.

Thrift. Was there ever such a rash action?

Scapin. He has been informed of the business, and is now so full of it that he vents it to himself. (*Aside.*)

Thrift. I would fain hear what they can say for themselves.

Scapin. We are not unprovided. (*Aside.*)

Thrift. Will they be so impudent to deny the thing?

Scapin. We never intend it. (*Aside.*)

Thrift. Or will they endeavour to excuse it?

Scapin. That, perhaps, we may do. (*Aside.*)

Thrift. But all shall be in vain.

Scapin. We'll try that. (*Aside.*)

Thrift. I know how to lay that rogue my son fast.

Scapin. That we must prevent. (*Aside.*)

Thrift. And for the tatterdemalion, Shift, I'll thrash him to death; I will be three years a cudgeling him.

Shift. I wondered he had forgot me so long. (*Aside.*)

Thrift. Oh, oh! yonder the rascal is, that brave governor! he tutored my son finely.

Scapin. Sir, I am overjoyed at your safe return.

Thrift. Good morrow, Scapin. Indeed, you have followed my instructions very exactly; my son has behaved himself very prudently in my absence, has he not, rascal, has he not? (*To Shift.*)

Scapin. I hope you are very well.

Thrift. Very well.—Thou say'st not a word, varlet; thou say'st not a word.

Scapin. Had you a good voyage, Mr. Thrift?

Thrift. Lord! sir, a very good voyage; pray, give a man a little leave to vent his choler.

Scapin. Would you be in choler, sir?

Thrift. Ay, sir, I would be in choler.

Scapin. Pray, with whom?

Thrift. With that confounded rogue there.

Scapin. Upon what reason?

Thrift. Upon what reason! Hast thou not heard what hath happened in my absence?

Scapin. I heard a little idle story.

Thrift. A little idle story, quotha! why, man, my son's undone, my son's undone.

Scapin. Come, come, things have not been well carried; but I would advise you to make no more of it.

Thrift. I'm not of your opinion; I'll make the whole town ring of it.

Scapin. Lord! sir, I have stormed about this business as much as you can do for your heart, but what are we both the better? I told him, indeed, Mr. Octavian, you do not do well to wrong so good a father. I preached him three or four times asleep, but all would not do; till at last, when I had well examined the business, I found you had not so much wrong done you as you imagine.

Thrifty. How! not wrong done me, to have my son married without my consent to a beggar.

Scapin. Alas! he was ordained to it.

Thrifty. That's fine, indeed; we shall steal, cheat, murder, and so be hanged, then say we were ordained to it.

Scapin. Truly, I did not think you so subtle a philosopher; I mean he was fatally engaged in this affair.

Thrifty. Why did he engage himself?

Scapin. Very true, indeed, very true; but, fie upon you now, would you have him as wise as yourself? Young men will have their follies, witness my charge Leander, who has gone and thrown away himself at a stranger rate than your son. I would fain know if you were not young once yourself; yes, I warrant you, and had your frailties.

Thrifty. Yes, but they never cost me anything; a man may be as frail and as wicked as he please, if it cost him nothing.

Scapin. Alas! he was so in love with the young wench, that if he had not had her, he must have certainly hanged himself.

Shift. Must! why he had already done it, but that I came very seasonably and cut the rope.

Thrifty. Didst thou cut the rope, dog? I'll murder you for that. Thou shouldst have let him hang.

Scapin. Besides, her kindred surprised him with her, and forced him to marry her.

Thrifty. Then should he have presently gone, and protested against the violence at a notary's.

Scapin. Oh, lord! sir, he scorned that.

Thrifty. Then might I easily have disannulled the marriage.

Scapin. Disannul the marriage?

Thrifty. Yes.

Scapin. You shall not break the marriage.

Thrifty. Shall not I break it?

Scapin. No.

Thrifty. What, shall not I claim the privilege of a father, and have satisfaction for the violence done to my son?

Scapin. 'Tis a thing he will never consent to.

Thrifty. He will not consent to!

Scapin. No. Would you have him confess he was hectoring into anything that is to declare himself a coward? Oh, fie, sir! one that has the honour of being your son, can never do such a thing.

Thrifty. Fish! talk not to me of honour; he shall do it, or be disinherited.

Scapin. Who shall disinherit him?

Thrifty. That will I, sir.

Scapin. You disinherit him!—very good.

Thrifty. How very good?

Scapin. You shall not disinherit him.

Thrifty. Shall not I disinherit him?

Scapin. No.

Thrifty. No?

Scapin. No.

Thrifty. Sir, you are very merry.—I shall not disinherit my son?

Scapin. No, I tell you.

Thrifty. Pray, who shall hinder me?

Scapin. Alas! sir, your own self; your own self, sir.

Thrifty. I myself?

Scapin. Yes, sir; for you can never have the heart to do it.

Thrifty. You shall find I can, sir.

Scapin. Come, you deceive yourself. Fatherly affection must shew itself; it must, it must. Do not I know you were ever tender-hearted?

Thrifty. You are mistaken, sir; you are mistaken. Fish! why do I spend my time in tittle-tattle with this idle fellow? Hang-dog! go find out my rake-bell, (to *Shift*) whilst I go to my brother Gripe, and inform him of my misfortune.

Scapin. In the meantime, if I can do you any service—

Thrifty. Oh! I thank you, sir, I thank you.

[*Exit.*]

Shift. I must confess thou art a brave fellow; and our affairs begin to be in a better posture. But the money, the money!—we are abominably poor, and my master has the lean, vigilant duns, that torment him more than an old mother does a poor gallant, when she solicits a maintenance for her discarded daughter.

Scapin. Your money shall be my next care. Let me see: I want a fellow to—Canst thou not counterfeit a roaring bully of Alsatia? Stalk, look big—very well. Follow me; I have ways to disguise thy voice and countenance.

Shift. Pray, take a little care, and lay your plot so that I may not act the bully always: I would not be beaten like a bully.

Scapin. We'll share the danger, we'll share the danger. [Exit.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter THRIFTY and GRIPE.

Gripe. Sir, what you tell me concerning your son, has strangely frustrated our designs.

Thrifty. Sir, trouble not yourself about my son; I have undertaken to remove all obstacles, which is the business I am so vigorously in pursuit of.

Gripe. In troth, sir, I'll tell you what I say to you: the education of children ought to be the nearest concern of a father; and had you tutored your son with that care and duty incumbent upon you, he never could so slightly have forfeited his.

Thrifty. Sir, to return you a sentence for your sentence: those that are so quick to censure and condemn the conduct of others, ought first to take care that all be well at home.

Gripe. Why, Mr. Thrifty, have you heard anything concerning my son?

Thrifty. It may be I have; and it may be worse than of my own.

Gripe. What is't, I pray? My son!

Thrifty. Even your own Scapin told it me; and you may hear it from him or somebody else: for my part, I am your friend, and would not willingly be the messenger of ill news to one that I think so to me. Your servant: I must hasten to my counsel, and advise what's to be done in this case. Good bye till I see you again. [Exit.]

Gripe. Worse than his son! For my part, I cannot imagine how; for a son to marry impudently without the consent of his father, is as great an offence as can be imagined, I take it.—But yonder he comes.

Enter LEANDER.

Leand. Oh! my dear father, how joyful am I to see you safely returned. Welcome, as the blessing which I am now craving will be.

Gripe. Not so fast, friend of mine! soft and fair goes far, sir. You are my son, as I take it.

Leand. What do you mean, sir?

Gripe. Stand still, and let me look ye in the face.

Leand. How must I stand, sir?

Gripe. Look upon me with both eyes.

Leand. Well, sir, I do.

Gripe. What's the meaning of this report?

Leand. Report, sir?

Gripe. Yes, report, sir: I speak English, as I take it. What is't that you have done in my absence?

Leand. What is it, sir, which you would have had me done?

Gripe. I do not ask you what I would have had you done; but what have you done?

Leand. Who I, sir? why, I have done nothing at all, not I, sir.

Gripe. Nothing at all?

Leand. No, sir.

Gripe. You have no impudence to speak on.

Leand. Sir, I have the confidence that becomes a man, and my innocence.

Gripe. Very well. But Scapin—d'ye mark me, young man?—Scapin has told me some tales of your behaviour.

Leand. Scapin!

Gripe. Oh! have I caught you? That name makes ye blush, does it? 'Tis well you have some grace left.

Leand. Has he said anything concerning me?

Gripe. That shall be examined anon. In the meanwhile, get you home, d'ye hear? and stay till my return. But, look to it, if thou hast done anything to dishonour me, never think to come within my doors, or see my face more; but expect to be as miserable as thy folly and poverty can make thee. *[Exit.]*

Leand. Very fine: I am in a hopeful condition. This rascal has betrayed my marriage, and undone me. Now there is no way left but to turn outlaw, and live by rapine; and, to set my hand in, the first thing shall be to cut the throat of that perfidious pick-thank dog that has ruined me.

Enter OCTAVIAN and SCAPIN.

Oct. Dear Scapin, how infinitely am I obliged to thee for thy care!

Leand. Yonder he comes.—I'm overjoyed to see you, good Mr. Dog!

Scapin. Sir, your most humble servant, you honour me too far.

Leand. You act an ill fool's part; but I shall teach you.

Scapin. Sir!

Oct. Hold, Leander!

Leand. No, Octavian; I'll make him confess the treachery he has committed. Yes, varlet dog, I know the trick you have played me: you thought, perhaps, nobody would have told me; but I'll make you confess it, or I'll run my sword through your body.

Scapin. Oh! sir, sir, would you have the heart to do such a thing? Have I done you any injury, sir?

Leand. Yes, rascal, that you have; and I'll make you own it, too, or I'll swinge it out of your already tanned, thick hide. *(Beats him.)*

Scapin. The devil's in it! Lord, sir! what do you mean? Nay, good Mr. Leander—pray, Mr. Leander—squire Leander—As I hope to be saved—

Oct. Pr'ythee, be quiet! For shame! Enough! *(Interposes.)*

Scapin. Well, sir, I confess, indeed, that—

Leand. What! Speak, rogue!

Scapin. About two months ago, you may remember, a maid servant died in the house—

Leand. What of all that?

Scapin. Nay, sir, if I confess, you must not be angry.

Leand. Well, go on.

Scapin. 'Twas said she died for love of me, sir.—But let that pass—

Leand. Death! you trifling baboon!

Scapin. About a week after her death, I dressed up myself like her ghost, and went into Madam Lucia, your mistress's chamber, where she lay half in, half out of bed, with her woman by her, reading an ungodly play-book.

Leand. And was it your impudence did that?

Scapin. They both believe it was a ghost to this hour; but it was myself played the goblin, to frighten her from the scurvy custom of lying awake

at those unseasonable hours, bearing filthy plays, when she had never said her prayers.

Leand. I shall remember you for all, in time and place. But come to the point, and tell me what thou hast said to my father.

Scapin. To your father! I have not so much as seen him since his return; and if you'd ask him, he'll tell you so himself.

Leand. Yes, he told me himself, and told me all that thou hast said to him.

Scapin. With your good leave, sir, then he lied—I beg your pardon, I mean he was mistaken.

Enter SLY.

Sly. Oh! sir, I bring you the most unhappy news.

Leand. What's the matter?

Sly. Your mistress, sir, is yonder arrested in an action of two hundred pounds. They say 'tis a debt she left unpaid at London, in the haste of her escape hither to Dover; and if you don't raise money, within these two hours, to discharge her, she'll be hurried to prison.

Leand. Within these two hours?

Sly. Yes, sir, within these two hours.

Leand. Ah! my poor Scapin, I want thy assistance.

Scapin. *(Walks about surlily.)* Ah, my poor Scapin! Now I'm your poor Scapin, now you've need of me.

Leand. No more! I pardon thee all that thou hast done, and worse if thou art guilty of it.

Scapin. No, no; never pardon me. Run your sword through my body—you'll do better to murder me.

Leand. For heaven's sake! think no more upon that, but study now to assist me.

Oct. You must do something for him.

Scapin. Yes, to have my bones broken for my pains.

Leand. Would you leave me, Scapin, in this severe extremity?

Scapin. To put such an affront upon me as you did.

Leand. I wronged thee, I confess.

Scapin. To use me like a scoundrel, a villain, a rascal, to threaten to run your sword through my body!

Leand. I cry thy mercy, with all my heart; and if thou wilt have me throw myself at thy feet, I'll do it.

Oct. 'Faith, Scapin, you must, you cannot but yield.

Scapin. Well, then—But, d'ye mark me, sir? another time, better words and gentler blows.

Leand. Will you promise to mind my business?

Scapin. As I see convenient, care shall be taken.

Leand. But the time you know is short.

Scapin. Pray, sir, don't be so troublesome. How much money is it you want?

Leand. Two hundred pounds.

Scapin. And you?

Oct. As much.

Scapin. *(To Leander.)* No more to be said; it shall be done. For you the contrivance is laid already; and, for your father, though he be covetous to the last degree, yet, thanks be to heaven! he's but a shallow person; his parts are not extraordinary. Do not take it ill, sir; for you have no resemblance to him—but that you are very like him. Begone! I see Octavian's father coming; I'll begin with him. *[Exeunt Oct. and Leand.]*

Enter THRIFTY.

Here he comes, mumbling and chewing the cud, to prove himself a clean beast.

Thrifty. Oh! audacious boy, to commit so inso-

lent a crime, and plunge himself in such a mischievousness!

Scapin. Sir, your humble servant.

Thrifty. How do you, Scapin?

Scapin. What, you are ruminating on your son's rash actions?

Thrifty. Have I not reason to be troubled?

Scapin. The life of man is full of troubles, that's the truth of it: but your philosopher is always prepared. I remember an excellent proverb of the ancients, very fit for your case.

Thrifty. What's that?

Scapin. Pray, mind it; 'twill do you a world of good.

Thrifty. What is it, I ask you?

Scapin. Why, when the master of a family shall be absent any considerable time from his home or mansion, he ought rationally, gravely, wisely, and philosophically, to revolve within his mind all the concurrent circumstances, that may, during the interval, conspire to the conjunction of those misfortunes and troublesome accidents that may intervene upon the said absence, and the interruption of his economical inspection into the remissness, negligences, frailties, and huge and perilous errors, which his substitutes, servants, or trustees, may be capable of, or liable and obnoxious unto; which may arise from the imperfection and corruptness of ingenerated natures, or the taint and contagion of corrupted education, whereby the fountain-head of man's disposition becomes muddy, and all the streams of his manners and conversation run, consequently, defiled and impure. These things premised, and fore-considered, arm the said prudent, philosophical *pater-familias* to find his house laid waste, his wife murdered, his daughters deflowered, his sons hanged—"cum multis aliis quæ nunc perscribere longum est;" and to thank heaven 'tis no worse, too. Do you mark, sir?

Thrifty. 'Sdeath! is all this a proverb?

Scapin. Ay, and the best proverb, and the wisest in the world. Good sir, get it by heart; 'twill do you the greatest good imaginable; and don't trouble yourself, I'll repeat it to you till you have gotten it by heart.

Thrifty. No, I thank you, sir; I'll have none of it.

Scapin. Pray do; you'll like it better next time: hear it once more, I say.—When the master of a—

Thrifty. Hold, hold! I have better thoughts of my own. I'm going to my lawyer; I'll null the marriage.

Scapin. Going to law! Are ye mad, to venture yourself among lawyers? Do ye not see every day how the sponges suck poor clients; and, with a company of foolish, nonsensical terms and knavish tricks, undo the nation? No, you shall take another way.

Thrifty. You have reason, if there were any other way.

Scapin. Come, I have found one. The truth is, I have a great compassion for your grief. I cannot, when I see tender fathers afflicted for their sons' miscarriages, but have bowels for them; I have much ado to refrain weeping for you.

Thrifty. Truly, my case is sad, very sad!

Scapin. So it is.—Tears will burst out.—I have a great respect for your person. (*Pretends to cry.*)

Thrifty. Thank you, with all my heart! In troth, we should have a fellow-feeling.

Scapin. Ay, so we should. I assure you there is not a person in the world whom I respect more than the noble Mr. Thrifty.

Thrifty. Thou art honest, Scapin. Have done, have done!

Scapin. Sir, your most humble servant.

Thrifty. But what is your way?

Scapin. Why, in brief, I have been with the brother of her who your wicked son has married.

Thrifty. What is he?

Scapin. A most outrageous, roaring fellow, with a down, hanging look, contracted brow, with a swelled red face, inflamed with brandy; one that frowns, puffs, and looks big at all mankind; roars out oaths, and bellows out curses enough in a day to serve a garrison a week. Bred up in blood and rapine; used to slaughter from his youth upwards; one that makes no more conscience of killing a man than killing of a flea: he has killed sixteen; four for taking the wall of him, five for looking too big upon him; two he shot—in short, he is the most dreadful of all the race of bullies.

Thrifty. Heaven! how do I tremble at the description!—But what's this to my business?

Scapin. Why, he (as most bullies are) is in want, and I have brought him, by threatening him with all the courses of law, all the assistance of your friends, and your great purse, (in which I ventured my life ten times, for so often he drew and run at me,) yet, I say, at last, I have made him hearken to a composition, and to annul the marriage for a sum of money.

Thrifty. Thanks, dear Scapin.—But what sum?

Scapin. 'Faith, he was d—y unreasonable at first, and, egad! I told him so very roundly.

Thrifty. Plague on him! what did he ask?

Scapin. Ask! hang him! why, he asked five hundred pounds.

Thrifty. Ouns and heart! Five hundred pounds! Five hundred devils take him, and fry and fricassee the dog. Does he take me for a madman?

Scapin. Why, so I said; and, after much argument, I brought him to this:—"D—e," says he, "I am going to the army, and I must have two good horses for myself, for fear one should die; and those will cost, at least, three score guineas!"

Thrifty. Hang him, rogue! why should he have two horses? But I care not if I give three score guineas to be rid of this affair.

Scapin. "Then," says he, "my pistols, saddle, horse cloth, and all, will cost twenty more,"—

Thrifty. Why, that's four score.

Scapin. Well reckoned. 'Faith, this arithmetic is a fine art.—"Then I must have one for my boy, will cost twenty more;"—

Thrifty. Oh, the devil! Confounded dog! let him go, and be d—d, I'll give him nothing.

Scapin. Sir!

Thrifty. Not a sous, d—d rascal! let him turn foot-soldier, and be hanged!

Scapin. He has a man besides; would you have him go a-foot?

Thrifty. Ay, and his master, too; I'll have nothing to do with him.

Scapin. Well, you are resolved to spend twice as much at Doctors' Commons, you are, you will stand out for such a sum as this, do!

Thrifty. Oh! d—d, unconscionable rascal!—Well, if it must be so, let him have the other twenty.

Scapin. Twenty! why it comes to forty.

Thrifty. No, I'll have nothing to do in it. Oh! a covetous rogue! I wonder he is not ashamed to be so covetous.

Scapin. Why, this is nothing to the charge at Doctors' Commons; and, though her brother has no money, she has an uncle able to defend her.

Thrifty. Oh! eternal rogue!—Well I must do it.—The devil's in him, I think!

Scapin. "Then," says he, "I must carry into France money to buy a mule, to carry!"—

Thrifty. Let him to the devil with his mule, I'll appeal to the judges.

Scapin. Nay, good sir, think a little.

Thrifty. No, I'll do nothing.

Scapin. Sir, sir! but one little mule?

Thrifty. No, not so much as an ass!

Scapin. Consider.

Thrifty. I will not consider, I'll go to law.

Scapin. I am sure if you go to law, you do not consider the appeals, degrees of jurisdiction, the intricate proceedings, the knaveries, the craving of so many ravenous animals that will prey upon you, villainous harpies! promoters, tipstaves, and the like; none of which but will puff away the clearest right in the world for a bribe. On the other side, the proctor shall side with your adversary, and sell your cause for ready money: your advocate shall be gained the same way, and shall not be found when your cause is to be heard. Law is a torment of all torments.

Thrifty. That's true.—Why, what does the d—d rogue reckon for his mule?

Scapin. Why, for horses, furniture, mule, and to pay some scores that are due to his landlady, he demands, and will have, two hundred pounds.

Thrifty. Come, come, let's go to law! (*Thrifty walks about greatly agitated.*)

Scapin. Do but reflect upon—

Thrifty. I'll go to law!

Scapin. Do not plange yourself—

Thrifty. To law, I tell you!

Scapin. Why, there's for precuracion presentation, councils, productions, proctors, attendance, and scribbling vast volumes of interrogatories, depositions, and articles, consultations and pleadings of doctors; for the register, substitute, judgments, signings,—expedition-fees, besides the vast presents to them and their wives. Hang it! the fellow is out of employment; give him the money; give it him, I say.

Thrifty. What, two hundred pounds?

Scapin. Ay, ay; why, you'll gain one hundred and fifty pounds by it: I have summed it up. I say give it him; i'faith, do!

Thrifty. What, two hundred pounds?

Scapin. Ay. Besides, you never think how they'll rail at you in pleading; tell all your fornications, bastardings, and commutings in their courts.

Thrifty. I defy them. Let them tell of my whoring; 'tis the fashion.

Scapin. Peace! Here's the brother.

Thrifty. Oh, heaven! what shall I do?

Enter SHIFT, disguised like a bully.

Shift. D—e, where's this confounded dog, this father of Octavian? Annull the marriage! By all the honour of my ancestors, I'll chine the villain!

Thrifty. Oh! oh! oh! (*Hides himself behind Scapin.*)

Scapin. He cares not, sir; he'll not give the two hundred pounds.

Shift. By heaven! he shall be worms'-meat within these two hours.

Scapin. Sir, he has courage; he fears you not.

Thrifty. You lie! I have not courage; I do fear him mortally. (*Aside.*)

Shift. He, he, he! Ounds, he! 'Would all his family were in him, I'd cut off root and branch. Dishonour my sister! This in his body!—What fellow's that?

Scapin. Not he, sir.

Shift. Nor none of his friends?

Thrifty. No, sir. Hang him! I am his mortal enemy.

Shift. Art thou the enemy of that rascal?

Thrifty. Oh! ay, hang him! Oh! d—d bully! (*Aside.*)

Shift. Give me thy hand, old boy. The next sun shall not see the impudent rascal alive.

Scapin. He'll muster up all his relations against you.

Thrifty. Do not provoke him, Scapin.

Shift. Would they were all here! Hah, hah, hah! (*He foyns every way with his sword.*) Here I had one through the lungs, there another into the heart; hah! there another into the guts. Ah! rogues, there I was with you. Hah, hah!

Scapin. Hold, sir; we are none of your enemies.

Shift. No, but I will find the villains out while my blood is up; I will destroy the whole family. Hah, hah, hah! [*Exit.*]

Thrifty. Here, Scapin, I have two hundred guineas about me, take 'em. No more to be said. Let me never see his face again; take 'em, I say. This is the devil.

Scapin. Will you not give 'em him yourself?

Thrifty. No, no, I will never see him more. I shall not recover this these three months. See the business done. I trust in thee, honest Scapin; I must repose somewhere; I am mightily out of order. A plague on all bullies, I say. [*Exit.*]

Scapin. So, there's one despatched; I must now find out Gripe. He's here; how heaven brings 'em into my nets one after another!

Enter GRIPE.

Oh, heaven! unlooked-for misfortune! poor Mr. Gripe, what wilt thou do? (*Walks about distractedly.*)

Gripe. What's that he says of me?

Scapin. Is there nobody can tell me news of Mr. Gripe?

Gripe. Who's there? Scapin?

Scapin. How I run up and down to find him to no purpose! Oh! sir, is there no way to hear of Mr. Gripe?

Gripe. Art thou blind? I have been just under thy nose this hour.

Scapin. Sir?

Gripe. What's the matter?

Scapin. Oh! sir, your son—

Gripe. Ha! my son!

Scapin. Is fallen into the strangest misfortune in the world.

Gripe. What is it?

Scapin. I met him awhile ago, disordered for something you had said to him, wherein you very idly made use of my name. And seeking to divert his melancholy, we went to walk upon the pier; amongst other things, he took particular notice of a new caper in her full trim. The captain invited us aboard, and gave us the handsomest collation I ever met with.

Gripe. Well, and where's the disaster of all this?

Scapin. While we were eating he put to sea; and when we were a good distance from the shore, he discovered himself to be an English renegade that was entertained in the Dutch service; and sent me off in his long-boat to tell you that if you don't forthwith send him two hundred pounds, he'll carry away your son prisoner; nay, for aught I know, he may carry him a slave to Algiers.

Gripe. How, in the devil's name! two hundred pounds!

Scapin. Yes, sir; and more than that, he has allowed me but an hour's time; you must advise quickly what course to take to save an only son.

Gripe. What a devil had he to do a shipboard? Run quickly, Scapin, and tell the villain I'll send my lord chief-justice's warrant after him.

Scapin. Oh! la! his warrant in the open sea! d'ye think pirates are fools?

Gripe. I! the devil's name, what business had he a shipboard?

Scapin. There is an unlucky fate that often hurries men to mischief, sir.

Gripe. Scapin, thou must now not the part of a faithful servant.

Scapin. As how, sir?

Gripe. Thou must go bid the pirate send me my son, and stay as a pledge in his room till I can raise the money.

Scapin. Alas! sir, think you the captain has so little wit as to accept of such a poor rascally fellow as I am, instead of your son?

Gripe. What a devil did he do a shipboard?

Scapin. D'y'e remember, sir, that you have but two hours' time?

Gripe. Thou say'st he demands—

Scapin. Two hundred pounds.

Gripe. Two hundred pounds! Has the fellow no conscience?

Scapin. Oh la! the conscience of a pirate! why, very few lawful captains have any.

Gripe. Has he no reason neither? Does he know what the sum of two hundred pounds is?

Scapin. Yes, sir, tarpaulins are a sort of people that understand money, though they have no great acquaintance with sense. But, for heaven's sake, despatch.

Gripe. Here, take the keys of my counting-house—

Scapin. So.

Gripe. And open it—

Scapin. Very good.

Gripe. In the left-hand window lies the key of my garret; go take all the clothes that are in the great chest, and sell 'em to the brokers to redeem my son.

Scapin. Sir, y^e mad; I sha'n't get fifty shillings for all that's there, and you know how I am straightened for time.

Gripe. What a devil did he do a shipboard?

Scapin. Let shipboard alone, and consider, sir, your son. But heaven is my witness I have done for him as much as was possible, and if he be not redeemed, he may thank his father's kindness.

Gripe. Well, sir, I'll go see if I can raise the money. Was it not ninescore pounds you spoke of?

Scapin. No, two hundred pounds.

Gripe. What, two hundred pounds Dutch, eh?

Scapin. No, sir, I mean English money, two hundred pounds sterling.

Gripe. I'the devil's name, what business had he a shipboard? Confounded shipboard!

Scapin. This shipboard sticks in his stomach. *(Aside.)*

Gripe. Hold, Scapin, I remember I received the very sum just now in gold, but did not think I should have parted with it so soon. *(Presents his purse to Scapin, but will not let it go; and in his transports, pulls his arm to and fro, whilst Scapin reaches at it.)*

Scapin. Ay, sir.

Gripe. But tell the captain he is a son of a whore.

Scapin. Yes, sir.

Gripe. A dogbolt.

Scapin. I shall, sir.

Gripe. A thief, a robber, and that he forces me to pay him two hundred pounds contrary to all law or equity.

Scapin. Nay, let me alone with him.

Gripe. That I will never forgive him, dead or alive.

Scapin. Very good.

Gripe. And that if ever I light on him, I'll murder him privately, and feed dogs with him. *(Puts up his purse, and is going away.)*

Scapin. Right, sir.

Gripe. Now make haste, and go redeem my son.

Scapin. Ay, but d'y'e hear, sir? where's the money?

Gripe. Did I not give it thee?

Scapin. Indeed, sir, you made me believe you

would, but you forgot, and put it up in your pocket again.

Gripe. Ha! my griefs and fears for my son make me do I know not what.

Scapin. Ay, sir, I see it does, indeed.

Gripe. What a devil did he do a shipboard? D—d pirate! d—d renegade! all the devils in hell pursue thee. *[Gives the money and exit.]*

Scapin. How easily a miser swallows a load! and how difficultly he disgorges a grain! But I'll not leave him so; he's like to pay in other coin for telling tales of me to his son.

Enter OCTAVIAN and LEANDER.

Well, sir, I have succeeded in your business, there's two hundred pounds which I have squeezed out of your father. *(To Octavian.)*

Oct. Triumphant Scapin!

Scapin. But for you I can do nothing—*(To Leander.)*

Leand. Then I may go hang myself. Friends both, adieu.

Scapin. D'y'e hear, d'y'e hear? the devil has no such necessity for you yet, that you need ride post. With much ado I have got your business done too.

Leand. Is it possible?

Scapin. But on condition that you permit me to revenge myself on your father for the trick he has served me.

Leand. With all my heart; at thy own discretion, good, honest Scapin.

Scapin. Hold your hand, there's two hundred pounds.

Leand. My thanks are too many to pay now. Farewell, dear son of Mercury, and be prosperous.

Scapin. Gramercy, pupil. Hence we gather,

Give son the money, hang up father.

[Exeunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter LUCIA and CLARA.

Lucia. Was ever such a trick played, for us to run away from our governesses, where our careful fathers had placed us, to follow a couple of young gentlemen, only because they said they loved us? I think 'twas a very noble enterprise! I am afraid the good fortune we shall get by it will very hardly recompense the reputation we have lost by it.

Clara. Our greatest satisfaction is that they are men of fashion and credit; and for my part, I long ago resolved not to marry any other, nor such a one neither, till I had a perfect confirmation of his love; and 'twas an assurance of Octavian's that brought me hither.

Lucia. I must confess I had no less a sense of the faith and honour of Leander.

Clara. But seems it not wonderful that the circumstances of our fortune should be so nearly allied, and ourselves so much strangers? Besides, if I mistake not, I see something in Leander so much resembling a brother of mine of the same name, that did not the time since I saw him make me fearful, I should be often apt to call him so.

Lucia. I have a brother, too, whose name's Octavian, bred in Italy, and just as my father took his voyage, returned home; not knowing where to find me, I believe, is the reason I have not seen him yet. But, if I deceive not myself, there is something in your Octavian that extremely refreshes my memory of him.

Clara. I wish we might be so happy as we are inclined to hope; but there's a strange blind side in our natures which always makes us apt to believe what we most earnestly desire.

Lucia. The worst, at last, is but to be forsaken

by our fathers; and, for my part, I had rather lose an old father than a young lover, when I may with reputation keep him, and secure myself against the imposition of fatherly authority.

Clara. How insufferable it is to be sacrificed to the arms of a nauseous blockhead, that has no other sense than to eat and drink when 'tis provided for him, rise in the morning, and go to bed at night, and with much ado be persuaded to keep himself clean.

Lucia. A thing of more flesh and blood, and that of the worst sort, too; with a squinting, meagre, hang-dog countenance, that looks as if he always wanted physic for the worms.

Clara. Yet such their silly parents are generally most indulgent to; like apes, never so well pleased as when they are fondling with their ugly issue.

Lucia. Twenty to one but to some such charming creatures our careful fathers had designed us.

Clara. Parents think they do their daughters the greatest kindness in the world when they get them fools for their husbands; and yet are very apt to take it ill if they make the right use of them.

Lucia. I'd no more be bound to spend my days in marriage to a fool because I might rule him, than I would always ride an ass because the creature was gentle.

Clara. See, here's Scapin, as full of designs and affairs as a callow statesman at a treaty of peace.

Enter SCAPIN.

Scapin. Ladies!

Clara. Oh! Monsieur Scapin, what's the reason you have been such a stranger of late?

Scapin. 'Faith! ladies, business, business has taken up my time; and truly, I love an active life, love my business extremely.

Lucia. Methinks, though, this should be a difficult place for a man of your excellencies to find employment in.

Scapin. Why, 'faith! madam, I'm never shy to my friends: my business is, in short, like that of all other men of business, diligently contriving how to play the knave and cheat, to get an honest livelihood.

Clara. Certainly, men of wit and parts need never be driven to indirect courses.

Scapin. Oh! madam, wit and honesty, like oil and vinegar, with much ado mingle together; give a relish to a good fortune, and pass well enough for sauce, but are very thin fare of themselves. No, give me your knave, your thorough-paced knave; hang his wit, so he be but rogue enough.

Lucia. You're grown very much out of humour with wit, Scapin; I hope your's has done you no prejudice of late.

Scapin. No, madam; your men of wit are good-for-nothing, dull, lazy, restive snails; 'tis your undertaking, impudent, pushing fool, that commands his fortune.

Clara. You are very plain and open in this proceeding, whatever you are in others.

Scapin. Dame Fortune, like most others of the female sex, (I speak all this with respect to your ladyship,) is generally most indulgent to the nimble mettled blockheads; men of wit are not for her turn, ever too thoughtful when they should be active. Why, who believes any man of wit to have so much as courage? No, ladies, if you have any friends that hope to raise themselves, advise them to be as much fools as they can, and they'll ne'er want patrons; and for honesty, if your ladyship think fit to retire a little further, you shall see me perform upon a gentleman that is coming this way.

Clara. Pr'ythee, Lucia, let us retreat a little, and take this opportunity of some diversionement, which has been very scarce here hitherto.

Enter SHIFT, with a sack.

Scapin. Oh! Shift—

Shift. Speak not too loud, my master's coming.

Scapin. I am glad on't; I shall teach him to betray the secrets of his friend.

Shift. I wonder at thy valour, thou art continually venturing that body of thine to the indignity of bruises and indecent bastinadoes.

Scapin. Difficulties in adventures make them pleasant when accomplished.

Shift. But your adventures, how comical soever in the beginning, are sure to be tragical in the end.

Scapin. 'Tis no matter, I hate your pusillanimous spirit. Revenge and lechery are never so pleasant as when you venture hard for them. Begone: here comes my man.

[Exit Shift.]

Enter GRIPE.

Oh! sir, sir, shift for yourself quickly, sir; quickly, sir, for heaven's sake.

Gripe. What's the matter, man?

Scapin. Heaven! is this a time to ask questions? Will you be murdered instantly? I am afraid you'll be killed within these two minutes.

Gripe. Mercy on me! killed! for what?

Scapin. They are everywhere looking out for you.

Gripe. Who, who?

Scapin. The brother of her whom your son has married; he's a captain of a privateer, who has all sorts of rogues, English, Scotch, Welch, Irish, and French, under his command; and all lying in wait now, or searching for you to kill you, because you would null the marriage: they run up and down crying, "Where is the rogue Gripe? where is the dog? where is the slave Gripe?" They watch for you so narrowly that there's no getting home to your house.

Gripe. Oh! Scapin, what shall I do? what will become of me?

Scapin. Nay, heaven knows; but if you come within their reach they'll De Wit you, they'll tear you in pieces—Hark!

Gripe. Oh, Lord!

Scapin. Hum! 'tis none of them.

Gripe. Canst thou find no way for my escape, dear Scapin?

Scapin. I think I have found one.

Gripe. Good Scapin, shew thyself a man now.

Scapin. I shall venture being most immoderately beaten.

Gripe. Dear Scapin, do; I will reward thee bounteously: I'll give thee this suit when I have worn it eight or nine months longer.

Scapin. Listen; who are these?

Gripe. God forgive me! Lord have mercy upon us!

Scapin. No, there's nobody; look, if you'll save your life, go into this sack presently.

Gripe. Oh! who's there?

Scapin. Nobody. Get into the sack, and straight, whatever happens; I'll carry you as a bundle of goods, through all your enemies, to the master's house of the castle.

Gripe. An admirable invention! 'Oh, Lord! quick! (Gets into the sack.)

Scapin. Yes, 'tis an excellent invention, if you knew all. (Aside.) Keep in your head. Oh! here's a rogue coming to look for you.—(Imitates a Frenchman.) Do you hear? I pray you, where is Monsieur's father, look you?—(In his own voice.) How should I know? What would you have with him? Lie close. (Aside to Gripe.—Imitates.) Have with him, look you! Hnr has no great business, but bar would have satisfactions and reparations, look you, for credits and honours; by Saint Tavy, he shall not put the injuries and affronts upon my captains, look you now, sir.—(In his own voice.) He affront

the captain! he meddles with no man.—*(Imitates.)* You, lie, sir, look you; and hur will give you beatings and chastisements for your contradictions, when hur Welse plood's up, look you, and hur will cudgel your packs and your noddles; take you that, *(beats the sack)* pray you now.—*(In his own voice.)* Hold, hold! will you murder me? I know not where he is, not I.—*(Imitates.)* Hur will teach saucy Jacks how they profook hur Welse ploods and hur chollers; and for the old rogue, hur will have his guts and his plood, look you, sir, or hur will never wear leeks upon Saint Tavy's day more, look you.—*(In his own voice.)* Oh! he has mauled me; a d—d Welsh rascal!

Gripe. You! the blows fell upon my shoulders. Oh, oh!

Scapin. 'Twas only the end of the stick fell on you, the main substantial part of the cudgel lighted on me.

Gripe. Why did not you stand further off?

Scapin. Peace! Here's another rogue.—*(Imitates a Lancashireman.)* Yaw fellow wi'the sack there, don' yaw know whear th' auld rascal Gripe is?—*(In his own voice.)* Not I; but here is the rascal.—*(Imitates.)* Yaw lee, yaw doug, yaw know weel enough whear he is, an' yaw don' tell, an' that he is a foo rascal as any in aw the town: I's tell a that, by'r lady.—*(In his own voice.)* Not I, sir, I know neither, sir, not I.—*(Imitates.)* By the mess, an' I tak thee in hont, I's raddle the bones on thee; I's keeble thee to some tune.—*(In his own voice.)* Me, sir? I don't understand you.—*(Imitates.)* Why, thaw'r his man, thaw Hobbles, I'll snite the nose o' thee.—*(In his own voice.)* Hold, hold, sir! what would you have with him?—*(Imitates.)* Why, I mun knock him dawn wi' my kibbo, the first bawt to the graund, and then I mun beat him aw to pap, by the mess, and after ay mun cut off the lugs and naes on 'em, and ay wot, he'll be a pretty swatley fellow bawt legs and naes.—*(In his own voice.)* Why, truly, sir, I know not where he is; but he went down that lane.—*(Imitates.)* This lane, sayn ye? Ays find him, by'r lady, an he be above graunt.—*(In his own voice.)* So, he's gone, a d—d Lancashire rascal.

Gripe. Oh! good Scapin, go on quickly.

Scapin. Hold! here's another. *(Gripe pops in his head.—Imitates an Irishman.)* Dost thou hear, Sackman? I, pridee, fare is de d—d dog.—*(In his own voice.)* Why, what's that to you? what know I?—*(Imitates.)* Fat's dat to me, joy! by my soul, joy, I will lay a great blow upon thy pate; and de devil take me, but I will make thee know fare he is, indeed, or I'll beat upon you till thou dost know, by my salvation, indeed.—*(In his own voice.)* I'll not be beaten.—*(Imitates.)* Now the devil take me, I swear by him that made me, if thou dost not tell fare is Gripe but I will beat thy father's child very much indeed.—*(In his own voice.)* What would you have me do? I can't tell where he is. But what would you have with him?—*(Imitates.)* Fat would I have wid him? By my soul, if I do see him I will make murder upon him for my captain's sake.—*(In his own voice.)* Murder him! He'll not be murdered.—*(Imitates.)* If I do lay my eyes upon him, 'gad! I will put my sword into his bowels, de devil take me, indeed. Fat hast dow in dat sack, joy! by my salvation I will look into it.—*(In his own voice.)* But you shall not. What have you to do with it?—*(Imitates.)* By my soul, joy, I will put my rapier into it.

Gripe. Oh, oh!

Scapin. *(Imitates.)* Fat, it does grunt; by my salvation, de devil take me, I will see it, indeed.—*(In his own voice.)* You shall not see my sack; I will defend it with my life.—*(Imitates.)* Den I will make beat upon thy body: take that, joy, and that, *(beats him in the sack)* upon my soul, and so I do take my leave, joy.—*(In his own voice.)* A

plague on him! he's gone; he has almost killed me.

Gripe. Oh! I can hold no longer: the blows all fell on my shoulders.

Scapin. You can't tell me; they fell on mine. Oh, my shoulders!

Gripe. Your's! Oh, my shoulders!

Scapin. Peace! they're coming.—*(In a hoarse seaman's voice.)* Where is the dog? I'll lay him on fore and aft, swinge him with a cat-o-nine-tails, keel-haul, and then hang him at the main-yard.—*(In broken French-English.)* If dere be no more men in England I will kill him; I will put my rapier in his body, I will give him two tree pushe in de gut.—*(Imitates a number of voices.)* We mun go this way; o' the right hand; no, to the left hand.—*(To Gripe.)*—Search everywhere.—By my salvation, I will kill the d—d dog.—An' we do catch un we'll tear un in pieces, and I do hear he went thic way—no, straight forward. Hold, here is his man: where's your master?—D—e! where? in hell? speak.—*(In his own voice.)* Hold, not so furiously.—*(Imitates.)* An' you don't tell us where he is, we'll murder thee.—*(In his own voice.)* Do what you will, gentlemen, I know not.—*(Imitates.)* Lay on him thick; thwack him soundly.—*(In his own voice.)* Hold, hold! do what you will, I'll never betray my master.—*(Imitates.)* Knock un down, beat un soundly, to un, at un, at un, at—*(As he is going to strike, Gripe peeps out, and Scapin runs off.)*

Gripe. Oh! dog, traitor, villain! Is this your plot! Would you have murdered me, rogue? Unheard-of impudence!

Enter THRIFTY.

Oh! brother Thrifty, you come to see me laden with disgrace; the villain Scapin has, as I am sensible now, cheated me of two hundred pounds. This beating brings all into my memory.

Thrifty. The impudent varlet has galled me of the same sum.

Gripe. Nor was he content to take my money, but hath abused me at that barbarous rate, that I am ashamed to tell it; but he shall pay for it severely.

Thrifty. But this is not all, brother; one misfortune is the forerunner of another: just now I received letters from London that both our daughters have run away from their governesses, with two wild debauched young fellows that they fell in love with.

Enter LUCIA and CLARA.

Lucia. Was ever such malicious impudence seen!—Ha! surely, if I mistake not, that should be my father.

Clara. And the other mine, whom Scapin has used thus.

Lucia. Bless us! returned, and we not know of it.

Clara. What will they say to find us here?

Lucia. My dearest father, welcome to England!

Thrifty. My daughter Luce!

Lucia. The same, sir.

Gripe. My Clara here, too!

Clara. Yes, sir, and happy to see your safe arrival.

Thrifty. What strange destiny has directed this happiness to us?

Enter OCTAVIAN.

Gripe. Heyday!

Thrifty. Oh! son, I have a wife for you.

Oct. Good father, all your propositions are vain; I must needs be free, and tell you I am engaged.

Thrifty. Look you now! is not this very fine? Now I have a mind to be merry and to be friends with you you'll not let me. Now, will you? I tell you, Mr. Gripe's daughter here—

Oct. I'll never marry Mr. Gripe's daughter, sir, as long as I live. No, yonder's she that I must love, and can never entertain the thought of any other.

Clara. Yes, Octavian, I have at last met with my father, and all our fears and troubles are at an end.

Thrifty. La ye now! you would be wiser than the father that begot you, would you? Did not I always say you should marry Mr. Gripe's daughter? But you do not know your sister Luce.

Oct. Unlooked-for blessing! why, she's my friend Leander's wife.

Thrifty. How, Leander's wife!

Gripe. What, my son Leander?

Oct. Yes, sir, your son, Leander.

Gripe. Indeed! Well, brother Thrifty, 'tis true the boy was always a good-natured boy. Well, now, I am so overjoyed, that I could laugh till I shook my shoulders, but that I dare not, they are so sore. But look, here he comes.

Enter LEANDER.

Leand. Sir, I beg your pardon, I find my marriage is discovered; nor would I, indeed, have longer concealed it; this is my wife, I must own her.

Gripe. Brother Thrifty, did you ever see the like? did you ever see the like, eh?

Thrifty. Own her, quotha! why, kiss her, kiss her, man. Odsbodikins! when I was a young fellow, and was first married, I did nothing else for three months.

Gripe. Well, 'tis his father's own child. Just so, brother, was it with me upon my wedding-day; I could not look upon my dear without blushing; but when we were a-bed, Lord ha' mercy upon us! but I'll no more.

Leand. Is then my father reconciled to me?

Gripe. Reconciled to thee! why, I love thee at my heart, man, at my heart; why, 'tis my brother Thrifty's daughter, Mrs. Lucy, whom I always designed for thy wife; and that's thy sister Clara married to Mr. Octa there.

Leand. Octavian, are we, then, brothers? there is nothing that I could have rather wished after the completing of my happiness with my charming Luce.

Thrifty. Come, sir, hang up your compliments in the hall at home, they are old and out of fashion. Shift, go to the inn, and bespeak a supper may cost more money than I have ready to pay for, for I am resolved to run in debt to-night.

Shift. I shall obey your commands, sir.

Thrifty. Then, d'ye hear? send out and muster up all the fiddlers (blind or not blind, drunk or sober) in the town; let not so much as the roaster of tunes, with his cracked cymbal in a case, escape ye.

Gripe. Well, what would I give now for the fellow that sings the song at my lord mayor's feast; I myself would make an epithalamium by way of sonnet, and he should set a tune to it; 'twas the prettiest he had last time.

Enter SLY.

Sly. Oh! gentlemen, here is the strangest accident fallen out.

Thrifty. What's the matter?

Sly. Poor Scapin!

Gripe. Ha! rogue! let him be hanged. I'll hang him myself.

Sly. Oh! sir, that trouble you may spare; for passing by a place where they were building, a great stone fell upon his head, and broke his skull, so you may see his brains.

Thrifty. Where is he?

Sly. Yonder he comes.

Enter SCAPIN between two men, his head wrapped up in linen as if he had been wounded.

Scapin. Oh me! oh me! gentlemen, you see me, you see me in a sad condition, out off like a flower in the prime of my years; but yet I could not die without the pardon of those I have wronged: yes, gentlemen, I beseech you to forgive me all the injuries that I have done; but more especially I beg of you Mr. Thrifty, and my good master, Mr. Gripe.

Thrifty. For my part I pardon thee freely; go and die in peace.

Scapin. But 'tis you, sir, I have most offended, by the inhuman bastinadoes which—

Gripe. Pr'ythee, speak no more of that; I forgive thee, too.

Scapin. 'Twas a most wicked insolence in me, that I should, with a vile crab-tree cudgel—

Gripe. Fish! no more; I say I am satisfied.

Scapin. And now, so near my death, 'tis an inexpressible grief that I should dare to lift my hand against—

Gripe. Hold thy peace, or die quickly; I tell thee I have forgot all.

Scapin. Alas! how good a man you are! But, sir, do you pardon me freely and from the bottom of your heart those merciless drubs that—

Gripe. Pr'ythee, speak no more of it; I forgive thee freely, here's my hand upon it.

Scapin. Oh! sir, how much your goodness revives me! (*Pulls off his cap.*)

Gripe. How's that? Friend, take notice, I pardon thee, but 'tis upon condition that you are sure to die.

Scapin. Oh, me! I begin to faint again.

Thrifty. Come, fie! brother, never let revenge employ your thoughts now; forgive him, forgive him without any condition.

Gripe. A deuce on't! brother, as I hope to be saved, he beat me basely and sourvily; never stir, he did. But since you will have it so, I do forgive him.

Thrifty. Now, then, let's to supper, and in our mirth drown and forget all troubles.

Scapin. Ay, and let them carry me to the lower end of the table:

*Where in my chair of state I'll sit at ease,
And eat and drink, that I may die in peace.*

[*A dance. Exeunt.*]

THE MILLER OF MANSFIELD;

A DRAMATIC ENTERTAINMENT, IN ONE ACT.—BY R. DODSLEY.



Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

THE KING
LORD LUREWELL
COURTIERS

MILLER OF MANSFIELD
RICHARD
FOREST KEEPERS

PEGGY
MARGTRY
KATE

SCENE I.—*Sherwood Forest.*

Enter several Courtiers as lost.

1 *Cour.* 'Tis horrid dark, and this wood, I believe, has neither end nor side.

4 *Cour.* You mean, to get out at, for we have found one in, you see

2 *Cour.* I wish our good King Harry had kept nearer home to hunt. In my mind, the pretty, tame deer in London make much better sport than the wild ones in Sherwood Forest

3 *Cour.* I can't tell which way his majesty went, nor whether anybody is with him or not, but let us keep together, pray.

4 *Cour.* Ay, ay, like true courtiers, take care of ourselves, whatever becomes of master.

3 *Cour.* Well, it's a terrible thing to be lost in the dark.

4 *Cour.* It is, and yet it's so common a case, that one would not think it should be at all so. Why, we are all of us lost in the dark every day of our lives. Knaves keep us in the dark by their cunning, and fools by their ignorance. Divines lose us in dark mysteries, lawyers in dark cases, and statesmen in dark intrigues. Nay, the light of reason, which we so much boast of, what is it but a dark-lantern, which just serves to prevent us from running our nose against a post, perhaps? but is no more able to lead us out of the dark mists of error and ignorance, in which we are lost, than an

ignis fatuus would be to conduct us out of this wood.

1 *Cour.* But, my lord, this is no time for preaching, methinks; and, for all your morals, day-light would be much preferable to this darkness, I believe.

3 *Cour.* Indeed would it. But come, let us go on, we shall find some house or other by-and-by.

4 *Cour.* Come along. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter the KING

King No, no, this can be no public road, that's certain. I am lost, quite lost, indeed! Of what advantage is it now to be a king? Night shews me no respect, I cannot see better, nor walk so well as another man. What is a king? Is he not wiser than another man? Not without his counsellors, I plainly find. Is he not more powerful? I oft have been told so, indeed, but what now can my power command? Is he not greater, and more magnificent? When seated on his throne, and surrounded with nobles and flatterers, perhaps he may think so, but when lost in a wood, alas! what is he but a common man? His wisdom knows not which is north and which is south; his power a beggar's dog would bark at, and his greatness the beggar would not bow to. And yet how oft are we pushed up with these false attributes! Well, in losing the monarch, I have found the man. (*The report of a gun is heard.*) Hark! some villain, sure, is near. What were it best to do? Will my majesty pro-

tect me? No. Throw majesty aside, then, and let manhood do it.

Enter the MILLER OF MANSFIELD.

Miller. I believe I hear the rogue. Who's there?

King. No rogue, I assure you.

Miller. Little better, friend, I believe. Who fired that gun?

King. Not I, indeed.

Miller. You lie, I believe.

King. Lie! lie! how strange it seems to be talked to in this style! (*Aside.*)—Upon my word, I don't.

Miller. Come, come, sirrah, confess; you have shot one of the king's deer, have not you?

King. No, indeed; I owe the king more respect. I heard a gun go off, and was afraid some robbers might have been near.

Miller. I'm not bound to believe this, friend. Pray, who are you? what's your name?

King. Name!

Miller. Name! yes, name. Why, you have a name, have not you? Where do you come from? what is your business here?

King. These are questions I have not been used to, honest man.

Miller. May be so; but they are questions no honest man would be afraid to answer, I think. So, if you can give no better account of yourself, I shall make bold to take you along with me, if you please.

King. With you! What authority have you to—

Miller. The king's authority, if I must give you an account, sir. I am John Cockle, the miller of Mansfield, one of his majesty's keepers in this forest of Sherwood; and I will let no suspected fellow pass this way, that cannot give a better account of himself than you have done, I promise you.

King. I must submit to my own authority. (*Aside.*)—Very well, sir; I am glad to hear the king has so good an officer; and since I find you have his authority, I will give you a better account of myself, if you will do me the favour to hear it.

Miller. It's more than you deserve, I believe.—But let's hear what you can say for yourself.

King. I have the honour to belong to the king as well as you; and, perhaps, should be as unwilling to see any wrong done him. I came down with him to hunt in this forest; and the chase leading us to-day a great way from home, I am benighted in this wood, and have lost my way.

Miller. This does not sound well; if you have been a-hunting, pray where is your horse?

King. I have tired my horse so, that he lay down under me, and I was obliged to leave him.

Miller. If I thought I might believe this, now—

King. I am not used to lie, honest man.

Miller. What, do you live at court, and not lie? that's a likely story, indeed.

King. Be that as it will, I speak truth now, I assure you; and to convince you of it, if you will attend me to Nottingham, if I am near it, or give me a night's lodging in your own house, here is something to pay you for your trouble; and if that be not sufficient, I will satisfy you in the morning to your utmost desire.

Miller. Ay, now I am convinced you are a courtier: here is a little bribe for to-day, and a large promise for to-morrow, both in a breath. Here, take it again, and take this along with it: John Cockle is no courtier; he can do what he ought without a bribe.

King. Thou art a very extraordinary man, I must own; and I should be glad, methinks, to be further acquainted with thee.

Miller. These, and thou! Pr'ythee, don't these

and thou me; I believe I am as good a man as yourself, at least.

King. Sir, I beg your pardon.

Miller. Nay, I am not angry, friend; only I don't love to be too familiar with anybody, before I know whether they deserve it or not.

King. You are in the right. But what am I to do?

Miller. You may do what you please. You are twelve miles from Nottingham, and all the way through this thick wood; but if you be resolved upon going thither to-night, I will put you in the road, and direct you the best I can; or if you will accept of such poor entertainment as a miller can give, you shall be welcome to stay all night; and, in the morning, I will go with you myself.

King. And cannot you go with me to-night?

Miller. I would not go with you to-night, if you were the king.

King. Then I must go with you, I think.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—The Town of Mansfield.

Enter DICK.

Dick. Well, dear Mansfield, I am glad to see thy face again. But my heart aches, methinks, for fear this should be only a trick of theirs to get me into their power: yet, the letter seems to be written with an air of sincerity, I confess; and the girl was never used to lying, till she kept a lord company. Let me see, I'll read it once more.—“Dear Richard,—I am, at last, (though much too late for me,) convinced of the injury done to us both by that base man, who made me think you false. He contrived these letters which I send you, to make me think you just upon the point of being married to another, a thought I could not bear with patience; so, aiming at revenge on you, consented to my own undoing. But, for your own sake, I beg you to return hither; for I have some hopes of being able to do you justice, which is the only comfort of your most distressed, but ever affectionate,—PEGGY.”—There can be no cheat in this, sure! the letters she has sent are, I think, a proof of her sincerity. Well, I will go to her, however: I cannot think she will again betray me. If she have as much tenderness left for me, as, in spite of her ill usage, I still feel for her, I'm sure she won't. Let me see; I am not far from the house, I believe. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—A Room.

PEGGY and PHÆBE discovered.

Phæbe. Pray, madam, make yourself easy.

Peggy. Ah! Phæbe, she that has lost her virtues, has lost with it her ease, and all her happiness. Believing, cheated fool! to think him false.

Phæbe. Be patient, madam; I hope you will shortly be revenged on that deceitful lord.

Peggy. I hope I shall; for that were just revenge. But will revenge make me happy? will it excuse my falsehood? will it restore me to the heart of my much-injured love? Ah! no. That blooming innocence he used to praise, and call the greatest beauty of our sex, is gone. I have no charm left that might renew that flame I took such pains to quench. (*Knocking at the door.*) See who's there.—Oh, heavens! 'tis he. Alas! that ever I should be ashamed to see the man I love. (*Weeps.*)

Enter DICK, who stands looking on her at a distance.

Dick. Well, Peggy, (but I suppose you're madam now in that fine dress,) you see you have brought me back: is it to triumph in your falsehood, or am I to receive the slighted leavings of your fine lord?

Peggy. Oh! Richard, after the injury I have done you, I cannot look on you without confusion: but do not think so hardly of me; I staid not to be slighted by him, for the moment I discovered his vile plot on you, I fled his sight, nor could he ever prevail to see me since.

Dick. Ah! Peggy, you were too hasty in believing; and much I fear the vengeance aimed at me had other charms to recommend it to you: such bravery as that (*pointing to her clothes*) I had not to bestow; but if a tender honest heart could please, you had it all; and if I wished for more 'twas for your sake.

Peggy. Oh! Richard, when you consider the wicked stratagem he contrived, to make me think you base and deceitful, I hope you will, at least, pity my folly, and, in some measure, excuse my falsehood; that you will forgive me, I dare not hope.

Dick. To be forced to fly from my friends and country for a crime that I was innocent of, is an injury that I cannot easily forgive, to be sure; but if you are less guilty of it than I thought, I shall be very glad; and if your design be really, as you say, to clear me and to expose the baseness of him that betrayed and ruined you, I will join with you with all my heart. But how do you propose to do this?

Peggy. The King is now in this forest a hunting, and our young lord is every day with him: now, I think, if we could take some opportunity of throwing ourselves at his majesty's feet, and complaining of the injustice of one of his courtiers, it might, perhaps, have some effect upon him.

Dick. If we were suffered to make him sensible of it, perhaps it might; but the complaints of such little folks as we seldom reach the ears of majesty.

Peggy. We can but try.

Dick. Well, if you will go with me to my father's, and stay there till such an opportunity happens, I shall believe you in earnest, and will join with you in your design.

Peggy. I will do anything to convince you of my sincerity, and to make satisfaction for the injuries which have been done you.

Dick. Will you go now?

Peggy. I'll be with you in less than an hour.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Mill.*

MARGERY and KATE discovered, knitting.

Kate. Oh dear! I would not see a spirit for all the world; but I love dearly to hear stories of them. Well, and what then?

Mar. And so, at last, in a dismal hollow tone, it cried—(*A knocking at the door frightens them both; they scream out, and throw down their knitting.*)

Mar. and Kate. Lord bless us! what's that?

Kate. Oh dear! mother, it's some judgment upon us, I'm afraid. They say, talk of the devil and he'll appear.

Mar. Kate, go and see who's at the door.

Kate. I durst not go, mother; do you go.

Mar. Come, let's both go.

Kate. Now don't speak as if you were afraid.

Mar. No, I won't if I can help it. Who's there?

Dick. (*Without.*) What, won't you let me in?

Kate. Oh, gemini! it's like our Dick, I think: he's certainly dead, and it's his spirit.

Mar. Heaven forbid! I think in my heart it's he himself. Open the door, Kate.

Kate. Nay, do you.

Mar. Come, we'll both open it. (*They open the door.*)

Enter DICK.

Dick. Dear mother, how do you do? I thought you would not have let me in.

Mar. Dear child, I'm overjoyed to see thee; but I was so frightened I did not know what to do.

Kate. Dear brother, I am glad to see you; how have you done this long while?

Dick. Very well, Kate. But where's my father? *Mar.* He heard a gun go off just now, and he's gone to see who it is.

Dick. What, they love venison at Mansfield as well as ever, I suppose?

Kate. Ay, and they will have it, too.

Miller. (*Without.*) Ho! Madge, Kate! bring a light here.

Mar. Yonder he is.

Kate. Has he caught the rogue, I wonder?

Enter the KING and the MILLER OF MANSFIELD.

Mar. Who have you got?

Miller. I have brought thee a stranger, Madge; thou must give him a supper, and a lodging if thou canst.

Mar. You have got a better stranger of your own, I can tell you: Dick's come.

Miller. Dick! where is he? why, Dick, how is't, my lad?

Dick. Very well, I thank you, father.

King. A little more, and you had pushed me down.

Miller. 'Faith! sir, you must excuse me; I was overjoyed to see my boy. He has been at London, and I have not seen him these four years.

King. Well, I shall once in my life have the happiness of being treated as a common man; and of seeing human nature without disguise. (*Aside.*)

Miller. What has brought thee home so unexpectedly?

Dick. You will know that presently.

Miller. Of that by-and-by then. We have got the King down in the forest a hunting this season, and this honest gentleman, who came down with his majesty from London, has been with him to-day, it seems, and has lost his way. Come, Madge, see what thou canst get for supper. Kill a couple of the best fowls; and go you, Kate, and draw a pitcher of ale. [*Exeunt Mar. and Kate.*] We are famous, sir, at Mansfield, for good ale, and for honest fellows that know how to drink it.

King. Good ale will be acceptable at present, for I am very dry. But, pray, how came your son to leave you and go to London?

Miller. Why, that's a story which Dick, perhaps, won't like to have told.

King. Then I don't desire to hear it.

Enter KATE, with an earthen pitcher of ale and a horn.

Miller. So, now do you go help your mother. [*Exit Kate.*] Sir, my hearty service to you.

King. Thankye, sir. This plain sincerity and freedom is a happiness unknown to kings. (*Aside.*)

Miller. Come, sir.

King. Richard, my service to you.

Dick. Thank you, sir.

Miller. Well, Dick, and how dost thou like London? Come, tell us what thou hast seen.

Dick. Seen! I have seen the land of promise.

Miller. T'ye land of promise! What dost thou mean?

Dick. The court, father.

Miller. Thou wilt never leave joking.

Dick. To be serious, then, I have seen the disappointment of my hopes and expectations; and that's more than one would wish to see.

Miller. What, would the great man, thou wast recommended to do, nothing at all for thee at last?

Dick. Why, yes; he would promise me to the last.

Miller. Zoons! do the courtiers think their deponents can eat promises?

Dick. No, no; they never trouble their heads to think whether we eat or not. I have now dangled after his lordship several years, tantalized with hopes and expectations; this year promised one place, the next another, and the third, in sure and certain hope of—a disappointment. One falls, and it was promised before; another, and I am just an hour too late; a third, and it stops the mouth of a creditor; a fourth, and it pays the hire of a flatterer; a fifth, and it bribes a vote; and the sixth, I am promised still. But having thus slept away some years, I awoke from my dream: my lord, I found, was so far from having it in his power to get a place for me, that he had been all this while seeking after one for himself.

Miller. Poor Dick! And is plain honesty then a recommendation to no place at court?

Dick. It may recommend you to be a footman, perhaps, but nothing further; nothing further, indeed. If you look higher, you must furnish yourself with other qualifications: you must learn to say ay or no, to run or stand, to fetch or carry, or leap over a stick at the word of command. You must be master of the arts of flattery, insinuation, dissimulation, application, and (*pointing to his palm*) right application, too, if you hope to succeed.

King. You don't consider I am a courtier, methinks.

Dick. Not I, indeed; 'tis no concern of mine what you are. If in general my character of the court is true, 'tis not my fault it's disagreeable to your worship. There are particular exceptions, I own, and I hope you may be one.

King. Nay, I don't want to be flattered, so let that pass. Here's better success to you the next time you come to London.

Dick. I thank you; but I don't design to see it again in haste.

Miller. No, no, Dick; instead of depending upon lords' promises, depend upon the labour of thine own hands; expect nothing but what thou canst earn, and then thou wilt not be disappointed. But, come, I want a description of London; thou hast told us nothing thou hast seen yet.

Dick. Oh! 'tis a fine place! I have seen large houses and small hospitality; great men do little actions, and fine ladies do nothing at all. I have seen the honest lawyers of Westminster-hall, and the virtuous inhabitants of 'Change-alley; the polite madmen of coffee-houses, and the wise statesmen of Bedlam. I have seen merry tragedies, and sad comedies; devotion at an opera, and mirth at a sermon; I have seen fine clothes at St. James's, and long bills at Ludgate-hill. I have seen poor grandeur and rich poverty; high honours and low flattery; great pride and no merit. In short, I have seen a fool with a title, a knave with a pension, and an honest man with a threadbare coat. Pray, how do you like London?

Miller. And is this the best description thou canst give of it?

Dick. Yes.

King. Why, Richard, you are a satirist, I find.

Dick. I love to speak truth, sir; if that happens to be satire, I can't help it.

Miller. Well, if this be London, give me my country cottage; which, though it is not a great house, nor a fine house, is my own house, and I can shew a receipt for the building on't. But, come, sir, our supper, I believe, is ready for us, by this time; and to such as I have, you're as welcome as a prince.

King. I thank you.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*The Wood.*

Enter several Keepers.

1 Keeper. The report of a gun was somewhere this way, I'm sure.

2 Keeper. Yes; but I can never believe that anybody would come deer-stealing so dark a night as this.

3 Keeper. Where did the deer harbour to-day?

4 Keeper. There was a herd lay upon Hamilton-hill, another just by Robin Hood's chair, and a third here in Mansfield wood.

1 Keeper. Ay, those they have been amongst.

2 Keeper. But we shall never be able to find them to-night, 'tis so dark.

3 Keeper. No, no; let's go back again.

1 Keeper. Zoons! you're afraid of a broken head, I suppose, if we should find 'em; and so had rather slink back again. Hark! stand close. I hear them coming this way.

Enter the Courtiers.

1 Cour. Did not you hear somebody just now? 'Faith! I begin to be afraid we shall meet with some misfortune to-night.

2 Cour. Why, if anybody should take what we have got, we made made a fine business of it.

3 Cour. Let them take it if they will; I am so tired I shall make but small resistance. (*The Keepers rush upon them.*)

2 Keeper. Ay, rogues, rascals, and villains! you have got it, have you?

2 Cour. Indeed, we have got but very little, but what we have you're welcome to, if you will but use us civilly.

1 Keeper. Oh! yes, very civilly; you deserve to be used civilly, to be sure.

4 Cour. Why, what have we done that we may not be civilly used?

1 Keeper. Come, come, don't trifle; surrender.

1 Cour. I have but three half-crowns about me.

2 Cour. Here's three and sixpence for you, gentlemen.

3 Cour. Here's my watch; I have no money at all.

4 Cour. Indeed, I have nothing in my pocket but a snuff-box.

4 Keeper. What, the dogs want to bribe us, do they? No, rascals; you shall go before the justice to-morrow, depend on't.

4 Cour. Before the justice! What, for being robbed?

1 Keeper. For being robbed! What do you mean? Who has robbed you?

4 Cour. Why, did not you just now demand our money, gentlemen?

2 Keeper. Oh! the rascals! they will swear a robbery against us, I warrant.

4 Cour. A robbery! Ay, to be sure.

1 Keeper. No, no; we did not demand your money, we demanded the deer you have killed.

4 Cour. The devil take the deer, I say! he led us a chase of six hours, and got away from us at last.

1 Keeper. Zoons! ye dogs, do ye think to banter us? I tell ye, you have this night shot one of the king's deer: didn't we hear the gun go off? did not we hear you say you were afraid it should be taken from you?

2 Cour. We were afraid our money should be taken from us.

1 Keeper. Come, come, no more shuffling: I tell ye, you're all rogues, and we'll have you hanged, you may depend on't. Come, let's take them to old Cocker's; we're not far off; we'll keep them there all night, and to-morrow morning we'll away with them before the justice.

4 Cour. A very pretty adventure! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—*The Mill.*

THE KING, MILLER OF MANSFIELD, MARGERY, and DICK discovered, at supper.

Miller. Come, sir, you must mend a bad supper

with a glass of good ale; here's King Harry's health.

King. With all my heart. Come, Richard, here's King Harry's health; I hope you are courtier enough to pledge me, are not you?

Dick. Yes, yes, sir; I'll drink the King's health with all my heart.

Mar. Come, sir, my humble service to you, and much good may do ye with your poor apper; I wish it had been better.

King. You need make no apologies.

Mar. We are obliged to your goodness in excusing our rudeness.

Miller. Pr'ythee, Margery, don't trouble the gentleman with compliments.

Mar. Lord! husband, if one had no more manners than you, the gentleman would take us all for hogs.

Miller. Now, I think, the more compliments the less manners.

King. I think so too. Compliments in discourse, I believe, are like ceremonies in religion; the one has destroyed all true piety, and the other all sincerity and plain-dealing.

Miller. Then a fig for all ceremony and compliments too: give us thy hand; and let us drink and be merry.

King. Right, honest miller, let us drink and be merry. Come, have you got e'er a good song?

Miller. Ah! my singing days are over, but my man Joe has got an excellent one; and if you have a mind to hear it, I'll call him in.

King. With all my heart.

Miller. Joe!

Enter JOE.

Miller. Come, Joe, drink, boy; I have promised this gentleman that you shall sing him your last new song.

Joe. Well, master, if you have promised it him, he shall have it.

SONG.—JOE.

*How happy a state does the miller possess!
Who would be no greater, nor fears to be less;
On his mill and himself he depends for support,
Which is better than servilely cringing at court.*

*What though he all dusty and whiten'd does go,
The more he's be-powder'd, the more like a beau;
A clown in his dress may be honest far
Than a courtier who struts in his garter and star.*

Though his hands are so daub'd, they're not fit to be seen,

*The hands of his betters are not very clean;
A palm more polite may as dirtily deal;
Gold, in handling, will stick to the fingers like meal.*

*What if, when a pudding for dinner he lacks,
He cribs, without scruple, from other men's sacks;
In this of right noble examples he brags,
Who borrow as freely from other men's bags.*

*Or should he endeavour to heap an estate,
In this he would mimic the tools of the state;
Whose aim is alone their own coffers to fill,
As all his concern's to bring grist to his mill.*

*He eats when he's hungry, he drinks when he's dry,
And down, when he's weary, contented does lie;
Then rises up cheerful to work and to sing:
If so happy a miller, then who'd be a king?*

Miller. There's a song for you.

King. He should go sing this at court, I think.

Dick. I believe, if he's wise, he will choose to stay at home though.

Enter PEGGY.

Miller. What wind blew you hither, pray? You have a good share of impudence, or you would be ashamed to set your foot within my house, methinks.

Peggy. Ashamed I am, indeed, but do not call me impudent. (*Weeps.*)

Dick. Dear father, suspend your anger for the present; that she is here now is by my direction, and to do me justice.

Peggy. To do that is all that is now in my power; for as to myself, I am rain'd past redemption; my character, my virtue, my peace, are gone. I am abandoned by my friends, despised by the world, and exposed to misery and want.

King. Pray, let me know the story of your misfortunes; perhaps it may be in my power to do something towards redressing them.

Peggy. That you may learn from him whom I have wronged; but as for me, shame will not let me speak or hear it told. [*Exit.*]

King. She's very pretty.

Dick. Oh! sir, I once thought her an angel; I loved her dearer than my life, and did believe her passion was the same for me: but a young nobleman of this neighbourhood happening to see her, her youth and blooming beauty presently struck his fancy; a thousand artifices were immediately employed to debauch and ruin her. But all his arts were vain; not even the promise of making her his wife could prevail upon her. In a little time he found out her love to me, and imagining this to be the cause of her refusal, he, by forged letters and feigned stories, contrived to make her believe I was upon the point of marriage with another woman. Possessed with this opinion, she, in a rage, writes me word never to see her more; and, in revenge, consented to her own undoing. Not contented with this, nor easy while I was so near her, he bribed one of his cast-off mistresses to swear a child to me, which she did: this was the occasion of my leaving my friends, and flying to London.

King. And how does she propose to do you justice?

Dick. Why, the King being now in this forest a hunting, we design to take some opportunity of throwing ourselves at his majesty's feet, and complaining of the injustice done us by this noble villain.

Miller. Ah! Dick, I expect but little redress from such an application. Things of this nature are so common among the great, that I am afraid it will only be made a jest of.

King. Those that can make a jest of what ought to be shocking to humanity, surely deserve not the name of great or noble men.

Dick. What do you think of it, sir? If you belong to the court, you, perhaps, may know something of the king's temper.

King. Why, if I can judge of his temper at all, I think he would not suffer the greatest nobleman in his court to do an injustice to the meanest subject in his kingdom. But, pray, who is the nobleman that is capable of such actions as these?

Dick. Do you know my Lord Lurewell?

King. Yes.

Dick. That's the man.

King. Well, I would have you put your design in execution. 'Tis my opinion the king would not only hear your complaint, but redress your injuries.

Miller. I wish it may prove so.

Enter the Keepers leading in LORD LUREWELL and other Courtiers.

1 *Keep.* Hallo! Cockle! Where are ye? Why, man, we have nabbed a pack of rogues here just in the fact.

King. Ha, ha, ha! What, turned highwaymen, my lords, or deer-stealers?

1 *Cour.* I am very glad to find your majesty in health and safety.

2 *Cour.* We have run through a great many perils and dangers to-night; but the joy of finding

your majesty so unexpectedly will make us forget all we have suffered.

Miller and Dick. What, is this the King?

King. I am very glad to see you, my lords; I confess; and particularly you, my Lord Larewell.

Lord L. Your majesty does me honour.

King. Yes, my lord, and I will do you justice, too; your honour has been highly wronged by this young man.

Lord L. Wronged, my liege!

King. I hope so, my lord; for I would fain believe you can't be guilty of baseness and treachery.

Lord L. I hope your majesty will never find me so. What dares this villain say?

Dick. I am not to be frightened, my lord. I dare speak truth at any time.

Lord L. Whatever stains my honour must be false.

King. I know it must, my lord; yet has this man, not knowing who I was, presumed to charge your lordship, not only with great injustice to himself, but also with ruining an innocent virgin whom he loved, and who was to have been his wife; which, if true, were base and treacherous; but I know 'tis false, and therefore leave it to your lordship to say what punishment I shall inflict upon him for the injury done to your honour.

Lord L. I thank your majesty. I will not be severe; he shall only ask my pardon, and to-morrow morning be obliged to marry the creature he has traduced me with.

King. This is mild. Well, you hear your sentence.

Dick. May I not have leave to speak before your majesty?

King. What canst thou say?

Dick. If I had your majesty's permission, I believe I have certain witnesses which will undeniably prove the truth of all I have accused his lordship of.

King. Produce them.

Dick. Peggy!

Enter PEGGY.

King. Do you know this woman, my lord?

Lord L. I know her, please your majesty, by sight; she is a tenant's daughter.

Peggy. (Apart.) Majesty! What, is this the King?

Dick. Yes.

King. Have you no particular acquaintance with her?

Lord L. Hum! I have not seen her these several months.

Dick. True, my lord; and that is part of your accusation; for I believe I have some letters which will prove your lordship once had a more particular acquaintance with her. Here is one of the first his lordship wrote to her, full of the tenderest and most solemn protestations of love and constancy; here is another, which will inform your majesty of the pains he took to ruin her; there is an absolute promise of marriage before he could accomplish it.

King. What say you, my lord; are these your hands?

Lord L. I believe, please your majesty, I might have a little affair of gallantry with the girl some time ago.

King. It was a little affair, my lord; a mean affair; and what you call gallantry, I call infamy. Do you think, my lord, that greatness gives a sanction to wickedness? or that it is the prerogative of lords to be unjust and inhumane? You remember the sentence which yourself pronounced upon this innocent man; you cannot think it hard that it should pass on you who are guilty.

Lord L. I hope your majesty will consider my rank, and not oblige me to marry her.

King. Your rank, my lord! Greatness that stoops to actions base and low, deserts its rank, and pulls its honours down. What makes your lordship great? Is it your gilded equipage and dress? Then put it on your meanest slave, and he's as great as you. Is it your riches or estate? The villain that should plunder you of all would then be as great as you. No, my lord, he that acts greatly, is the true great man. I, therefore, think you ought, in justice, to marry her you thus have wronged.

Peggy. Let my tears thank your majesty. But, alas! I am afraid to marry this young lord: that would only give him power to use me worse, and still increase my misery: I, therefore, beg your majesty will not command him to do it.

King. Rise, then, and hear me. My lord, you see how low the greatest nobleman may be reduced by ungenerous actions. Here is, under your own hand, an absolute promise of marriage to this young woman, which, from a thorough knowledge of your unworthiness, she has prudently declined to make you fulfil. I shall, therefore, not insist upon it; but I command you, upon pain of my displeasure, immediately to settle on her three hundred pounds a year.

Peggy. May heaven reward your majesty's goodness! 'Tis too much for me; but if your majesty thinks fit, let it be settled upon this much-injured man, to make some satisfaction for the wrongs which have been done him. As to myself, I only sought to clear the innocence of him I loved and wronged, then hide me from the world, and die forgiven.

Dick. This act of generous virtue cancels all past failings; come to my arms, and be as dear as ever.

Peggy. You cannot sure forgive me!

Dick. I can, I do, and still will make you mine.

Peggy. Oh! why did I ever wrong such generous love?

Dick. Talk no more of it. Here let us kneel, and thank the goodness which has made us blessed.

King. May you be happy!

Miller. (Kneels.) After I have seen so much of your majesty's goodness, I cannot despair of pardon, even for the rough usage your majesty received from me. (The King draws his sword, the Miller is frightened, and rises up, thinking he was going to kill him.) What have I done that I should lose my life?

King. Kneel without fear. No, my good host, so far are you from having anything to pardon, that I am much your debtor. I cannot think but so good and honest a man will make a worthy and honourable knight; so, rise up, Sir John Cooke: and to support your state, and in some sort requite the pleasure you have done us, a thousand marks a year shall be your revenue.

Miller. Your majesty's bounty I receive with thankfulness; I have been guilty of no meanness to obtain it, and hope I shall not be obliged to keep it upon base conditions; for though I am willing to be a faithful subject, I am resolved to be a free and an honest man.

King. I rely upon your being so: and to gain the friendship of such a one I shall always think an addition to my happiness, though a king.

Worth, in whatever state, is sure a prize,

Which kings, of all men, ought not to despise;

By selfish hypocrites so close basing'd,

'Tis by mere chance a worthy man's oblig'd:

But hence, to every courtier be it known,

Virtue shall find protection from the throne.

[Exeunt.]

FALSE IMPRESSIONS;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND.



WILLIAMS.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

CHARACTERS

SIR OLIVER MONARATH
ALGERNON
SCUD
EARLING
FARMER GAWDRY

SIMON SINGLE
ISAAC
PETER
FRANK
JACK

LADY CYPRESS
EMILY FLIZALIAN
MRS. BUCKHAM
RACHEL WILLIAMS
JENNY SCUD

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Chamber in Scud's house.

Enter SCUD.

Scud. Ha, ha! very good, very good! Here I am again. No bad night's work, pretty fairish job. Patient none the better, myself none the worse. Tipped two guineas for sitting up with old Lady Cypress, slept comfortably in an easy chair, nibbled a cold chicken with my lady's woman, tiffed a can of slip with the old butler, cribbed a kiss or two from the sweet lips of Mrs. Rachel, and gave her a box of cardamoms and a bottle of elder-flower water in return for the favour. So far, so good. Well done, Jerry Scud!—Hallo! Jack, boy, puppy! where are you?

Enter JACK

Jack. Here am I, master.

Scud. Fetch my slippers, sirrah! Take off my boots.—[*Exit Jack*].—My dear Jenny can't abide boots, very right, very reasonable, soil the carpet, daub her ~~face~~ ^{pet}, annoy her olfactories. No wonder; delicate darling, my Jenny, sweet, pretty creature, perfect posy of a woman.

Re-enter JACK.

So, so, so! Take hold, sirrah! pull away! That will do, that will do! Set my slippers—red moccasins. Stockings not soiled, pretty well off there. Now, puppy Jack, where's your mistress?

Jack. Don't know.

Scud. How does she do?

Jack. Can't tell.

Scud. Is she at home?

Jack. A n't sure

Scud. Was she at home last night, or was she out?

Jack. Both sometimes in, sometimes out.

Scud. You're a fool! Had she company?

Jack. No, no, no company.

• *Scud.* Poor, dear Jenny!—What, quite alone?

Jack. No, no, not quite alone

Scud. Jackanapes! didn't you tell me she had no company?

Jack. Yes, I did, because whif she bade me let no company in. Yet she wasn't quite alone by herself, because young 'squire Algernon was alone with her.

Scud. The devil and his dam! I'm done for. Get out of my sight! begone! away with you!—[*Exit Jack*].—Ah! Jenny, Jenny, Jenny! you are bent upon sending your poor husband to heaven some day other, when it rains while the sun shines. How now, Peter!

Enter PETER.

Peter. Is there any alteration to be made in Lady Cypress's medicines?

Scud. None at all, none Draughts, *sicet ante*.

Peter. They do no good.

Scud. They do no harm.

Peter. They are a mere chip in porridge: conserve of roses will never cure an asthma.

Scud. I know it! what then? A patient cured is a customer lost. In one word, therefore, *speculator*

haustus

Peter. Be it so? Let nature do the work herself; our practice won't puzzle her.

Scud. Miserable man that I am! my Jenny tête-à-tête with Harry Algernon! A rake, a rogue, a rantirole! Ha! here she comes.

Enter MRS. SCUD.

Light of my eyes, joy of my heart, fair as a lily, come to my arms! Out all night—sighed for my darling—counted the minutes—terrible long absence—how did you bear it? Doubt you've been lonesome.

Jenny. Not at all; far from it. Harry Algernon has been here.

Scud. What does he want?—Nothing to say to him.

Jenny. But you'll hear what he has to say to you.

Scud. Let him say it to me only. Not fit company for jewel Jenny.

Jenny. Ridiculous! He only wants a little of your interest with Lady Cypress.—Apropos, he brought you half a buck.

Scud. Let him take his half buck home again. Wouldn't name his name to Lady Cypress for all the venison in his father's park.

Jenny. Haven't you named his name to Lady Cypress? I doubt you have, Jerry, oftener than you ought, and in a way you should be ashamed of.

Scud. Only said what lawyer Earling said,—always had the law on my side.

Jenny. On which side was truth? on which side was gratitude? Recollect yourself.

Scud. What should I recollect?

Jenny. I'll tell you:—your adventure at Barnstaple races; when, in the pride of your heart, you must shew off in your new gig, forsooth. And where would you have been now, if the very man you have defamed hadn't saved your life at the peril of his own?

Scud. He did, he did; I don't deny it. Tit ran restive; tipped me over a wheelbarrow—tumbled under his heels—might have been kicked to atoms—surgeon's work as it was—snapped my arm—well it was not my neck—much obliged to Harry Algernon—never spoke against him since.

Jenny. Speak for him, man; it isn't enough you do not speak against him. Liberate your conscience.

Scud. Jenny, Jenny, liberate my conscience, as you call it, and I shall liberate my customers. If Harry Algernon will be a rantirole; if his women and his wine, his racing and his revelling, have crossed him out of the old lady's books, how am I to blame?

Jenny. Well, well; it isn't your business to set the worst side of his character to view; you have benefited by his courage and humanity; why don't you talk of them, and hold your tongue about his frailties?

Scud. My tongue can do nobody any harm. I tell you it is all up with him: lawyer Earling has done his business. If ever he enter my lady's doors, or touch a shilling of her fortune while he breathes, set me down for a fool and a false prophet.

Jenny. Suppose he does not aim at touching a shilling of her fortune; suppose he only wants—but here he comes, and will tell you what he wants.

Enter ALGERNON.

Alg. Ah! Jerry, my worthy fellow, give me your hand, give me your help. No, no; that's not the point at present; take your fingers off my pulse.

Scud. Very high, let me tell you—very full—gallops at a furious rate.

Alg. Expectation raises it, hope quickens it. Love is my disease; and if you don't stand my friend, disappointment will be my death.

Scud. Love! can't cure love; troubled enough to cure the consequences of it.

Alg. Harkye! Jerry, you are an intimate of

Lady Cypress; I, though her nearest of kin, am an exile. Within her castle lives the idol of my soul, Emily Fitzallan; obtain for me an interview with her; and, though you can't cure love, you may rescue me from death, and then you may fairly boast of having saved one man's life by your practice.

Scud. Can't do't—not possible. Fair Emily never goes out of the castle.

Alg. Therefore it is I want to go into it.

Scud. Hopeless case—not upon the chances. Old lady won't hear to look upon you.

Alg. I'll excuse her if I may but look upon the young one. Manage that for me, my good fellow! Nobody knows me; nobody can find me out; I'm a stranger to the whole family.

Scud. And so you are likely to remain.

Jenny. Come, come, Jerry, cast about; be good-natured, and contrive some errand or pretence to introduce him. If there be a little danger, surely you may risk it for the preserver of your life.

Scud. Foolish scheme, jewel Jenny! foolish scheme—won't do.

Alg. Have you no medicines to send in? Can't I personate your pestle and mortar man?

Scud. Not you; I keep no such pestle and mortar man in my shop.

Alg. But you keep a heart in your body, and a memory in your brains; therefore, you must stand for me as I have stood for you.

Jenny. Hush! here comes Simon Single, the keeper of the castle. Leave me with him, and I warrant I have a key to his castle.

Alg. Angel of my hope, into your hands I commit my cause.

Scud. Ay, ay; leave your cause, and quit your company. [Exit with Algernon.]

Enter SIMON SINGLE and JENNY SCUD.

Jenny. Welcome, welcome, my good friend!

Simon. Glad to see you, pretty Mrs. Jane.

Jenny. So, you are taking your rounds this fair morning, Mr. Simon.

Simon. Better take them than Jerry's doses.

Jenny. I agree with you.

Simon. So would not they, perhaps.

Jenny. And how are all cronies at the castle? How does the venerable virgin, Mrs. Buckram, pretty Rachel Williams, and the rest of the fair nuns?

Simon. Name 'em not; you have not left your fellow. What is Rachel Williams? a baby.

Jenny. Well; but Mrs. Buckram, she's no baby.

Simon. No; on my word, she is of the race of the Anakims.

Jenny. No matter for that, friend Simon; you'll marry Buckram.

Simon. No, no; that buckram shall never stick in my skirts. Harapha of Gath wouldn't marry her. I am no knight-errant to encounter giants.

Jenny. I should think so; for if you were a true knight, you would not sleep before you had set free your lovely prisoner, Emily Fitzallan.

Simon. There's one a-coming will do that. Fair Emily will be a wife before you'll be a widow. Young Monrath is the man for her; he's expected every day with his uncle Sir Oliver. It is all agreed upon, and my lady's whole fortune will be settled on Miss Emily. There's a start for you! there's a sally from dependance to prosperity; from wanting everything to possessing all.

Jenny. And nothing left to Harry Algernon?

Simon. Yes; patience, if he possess it; and an ill-name, whether he merit it or not.

Jenny. Well, I can't see the justice of all this.

Simon. Who can, where lawyer Earling is concerned! That puppy of an attorney lords it over the whole castle; and now we are in the bustle of setting out Miss Emily in a style before Sir Oliver

arrives. There are fine dresses to be made, fine apartments to be furnished, and fresh servants to be hired for the heiress.

Jenny. Say you so? Fresh servants? Are you fall? If not, I can recommend you such a lackey—the very man of men—Jerry shall bring him to you.

Simon. Bring him yourself: lead him over in a white bridle, and let me judge of his points and his paces.

Jenny. You shall. My life for yours, Miss Emily will be charmed with him.

Simon. Adieu! Time flies when I am with you. Once more, adieu! I shall expect you. I hope you are happy with your little doctor; but I must think you were much too a fine flower, to be plucked by an apothecary, and stuck into a gallipot. *[Exit.]*

Jenny. He's off; you may come out of your hiding-hole; the coast is clear.

Enter ALGERNON, followed by SCUD.

Alg. Now, my fair advocate, what have you done for me? Is there any hope?

Jenny. Of the old lady's fortune, none; your aunt has not left you a shilling.

Alg. I'm glad of it.

Scud. I wonder why.

Jenny. Miss Emily is to have the whole.

Alg. I'm sorry for it.

Scud. I wonder wherefore.

Alg. I'll tell you, then. Had my aunt bequeathed to me her fortune, she would have probably restricted me from marrying Emily; having given it to Emily, she has doubtless tied her up from marrying me: had she done neither one nor the other, I have enough to maintain her, and the prize had been my own.

Jenny. And so she shall; I've a project for your meeting.

Alg. I doubt if I ought to seek it.

Scud. Very true; lay it aside altogether: it will bring a plaguy deal of mischief upon me, and do no good to you.

Alg. Tell it me, however.

Jenny. You'll comprehend it at once. There is a proper valet to be hired for the heiress, fit to wait upon her person, and grace the back of her chair at table.

Alg. I can't do it; I am not equal to the task; I can't approach so near, and yet refrain. When she spoke to me, I should be lost; when she looked on me, I should betray myself; and when I handed her the plate, I should present it on my knee.

Scud. Ay, then you would be vollied out of the window, and I kicked out of the doors. Now, silly Jenny, what's become of your project?

Alg. Hold there! though dangerous in the extreme, it is not altogether desperate. If I cannot undertake the offices you describe, I may yet present myself as a candidate for her service; and, in that character, perhaps, obtain an interview with my charmer. That hope is worth an effort.

Scud. It isn't worth a farthing, and will be pounds and pounds out of my way. Cursed scrape, foolish Jenny; cursed scrape!

Alg. But where shall I get a proper dress to appear in?

Scud. No where; you can't appear at all.

Jenny. Fear nothing; I'll provide you with a dress.

Scud. Egad! she has a provision for everything.

Alg. Who but must conquer that is armed by the fair? There is a rascal in the family, Earling by name, who has slanderously defamed me: I'll wring his ears from his head.

Scud. Take care: Earling is an attorney; and if he have any ears you will pay for wringing them; if he have none, you'll be puzzled to lay hold of them.

Alg. Come, Jerry, I see what staggers you; you are afraid of losing the old lady's custom.

Scud. You are right; I am. She takes physio, and you take pleasure.

Alg. Mark me! I'll not promise you to swallow as many medicines as she does; but, come what will, I'll guarantee you against all losses incurred on my account; so, fear nothing, but come on. Discretion I can't boast of, but in honour I will never be found wanting.

Scud. That's enough, that's enough! Deal upon honour, and I am with you. I love to do a good-natured action, when there's nothing to be lost by it. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—An Apartment in Lady Cypress's castle.

Enter LADY CYPRESS, followed by EARLING.

Lady C. Enter, enter, Mr. Earling. You come upon a wish.

Earl. Ever prompt to approve myself your ladyship's most devoted and most absolute humble servant, upon a wish I come, upon a word I vanish.

Lady C. I am satisfied with your diligence; you may spare yourself the trouble of describing it.

Earl. I am dumb.

Lady C. Have you the memorandum about you that I dictated?

Earl. If my tears have not defaced them. Believe me, gracious lady, when I saw my own name set down to a bequest so munificent, I was covered with blushes, I was choked with gratitude.

Lady C. Out with it, then; out with your name, if such is the effect, and write in Algernon's: I warrant gratitude will not choke him.

Earl. Good, very good! Your ladyship has the gift of rallying me in the most pleasant way out of my metaphors. Choke is a figure somewhat of the strongest.

Lady C. Why, yes; and I should think you may venture upon the legacy, and risk the effects of it; so copy out your paper when you please.

Earl. I'll set my clerks upon it out of hand.

Lady C. You'll set the world upon it when I'm out of it; for you have totally cashiered Harry Algernon, and he is the son of my sister.

Earl. And your sister was the wife of his father, and his father was your unremitting persecutor, who vexed you with a suit in chancery for ten long years; and ten might have been added to ten, had it not been that I—I speak modestly of myself—I am no egotist—I speak simply of number one, and nobody else, for your barrister was a cipher—

Lady C. But a cipher put to number one adds no trifle to its value; so the upshot is, you gained the suit, and I paid the costs; a victory little to be envied: and, after all, is it just and equitable, that the son should suffer for the father's faults?

Earl. *O jus et æquum!* as if he had not faults enough of his own to warrant your exclusion of him!

Lady C. I have heard enough of his faults, I confess, if you are correct in describing them. If you have deceived me—

Earl. I! I deceive you! I defame your nephew! I who have never spoken of his offences but with regret and sorrow; never brought a story to your ears, but with the view of intercepting malice and softening down impressions. I deceive you! Then where is truth and virtue?

Lady C. Both in sight, as I should hope; for Emily appears.

Enter EMILY PARZALLAN.

Earl. I humbly take my leave. Miss Emily, I'm yours. Humph! not a word? Your faithful friend to serve you. Not a look?—Upstart! I'll marry the old lady, and cut her out of every shilling, I will. *[Aside, and exit.]*

Lady C. Approach, my dear! Come near me. I must talk with you. Well, you have been to see the apartment I have newly furnished; and do you like it, Emily?

Emily. 'Tis elegant in the extreme; 'tis sumptuous.

Lady C. 'Tis your's, my dear; it is to grace my Emily that I have decked it out.

Emily. For me such finery?

Lady C. Child of my heart, for you. All I possess is your's.

Emily. I hope you will not tempt me to forget that I was poor and humble.

Lady C. I hope not. Nature has endowed you with admirable qualities; prosperity, I trust, will not pervert them. It does not quite come on you by surprise: you could not well suppose I should adopt the son of my most unrelenting persecutor.

Emily. I did not dare to reason in that case.

Lady C. But you must know how worthless in himself, how undeserving of my favour is he who, in respect of consanguinity, is the only person that could supersede you.

Emily. You speak of Mr. Algernon.

Lady C. I do; I speak of him, whom no one speaks of but with reproach and scorn.

Emily. I do confess I've heard much evil speaking; but 'twas from one who should have more respect for truth and decency than to traduce the nephew to the aunt.

Lady C. What do you mean? Would you defend a libertine?

Emily. No, madam; I defend no libertine. But you will not be angry if I avow that I detest a libeller. If he, who thus has poisoned your opinion, knows not the character, the manners, habits, sentiments, connections, perhaps not even the outward form and feature of the man whose fame he mangles, can I be to blame if I implore you, for the love of justice, to hear before you strike?

Lady C. What is this, Emily? What is this warmth?

Emily. Honest, not prudent; out of time and place; but still sincere, though rash.

Lady C. You call on me to hear before I strike; I now demand if you that strike have heard?—Do you know Algernon? Have you conversed with him?

Emily. Madam, I have.

Lady C. You have! When, where? He comes not hither; never was admitted, never will be, within these doors. Astonishing! that you should dare to tell me you have made acquaintance with this profligate.

Emily. Hear my defence. You gave me leave to pass a little time, for change of air, after my late confinement, at your Hill farm. One evening I had rambled about a mile from home, when, upon entering a little copse, through which my footpath led, judge of my horror, when a villain, such I must call him, surprised me, seized me; and, in spite of my cries, prayers, and entreaties—

Lady C. Merciful Providence! what do you tell me?

Emily. A dreadful tale I should have had to tell, or died ere I could tell it, had not heaven sent me a rescue, a brave, brave preserver! who, with a soul all fire, and motion quick as lightning, sprung on the assailant, grasped him in his arms; and, after a contention, furious though short, hurled him to the ground, breathless and maimed with bruises. Which of these merit the name of profligate? Not he that saved me!—It was Algernon.

Lady C. Algernon, do you say? My worthless nephew Algernon! Take care!

Emily. Renounce me if I tell you an untruth.

Lady C. I'm all astonishment. Who was the assailant?

Emily. Madam, I know not. Your heroic ne-

phew bore me half dead and fainting to my house; 'twas not till then I knew him to be Algernon. He staid with me no longer than till the care of the good people had recovered me. The next morning I returned to the castle, fearing to remain any longer in so solitary a place. Of Algernon-I saw no more. Now suffer me to ask, if this be the conduct of a profligate?

Lady C. 'Tis a strange story.

Emily. 'Tis a true one, madam.

Lady C. Why have you kept it to yourself thus long? You've been returned two days.

Emily. Because until this hour I have not seen your spirits in a state to bear the slightest agitation.

Lady C. And do you think the agitation slight that I now suffer? No, I see your danger, Emily; I see your weak credulity, and much I fear you'll find yourself the dupe of Algernon. What business could he have at my Hill-farm?

Emily. Madam, your tenant's wife nursed Mr. Algernon.

Lady C. She never should have nursed you, Emily, or harboured you one moment, had I known it.

Emily. That's hard; but I must suffer and be silent.

Lady C. Be silent, then, and go to your chamber; there you may meditate on what you have been, and call to mind, with timely recollection, what you may be again. [Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Castle Hall.

SIMON SINGLE, FARMER GAWDRY, and his Son ISAAC, discovered.

Simon. Master Gawdry, Master Gawdry, have I not said the word? and will not the word that I have said, serve and suffice to put thee out of doubt, that Isaac thy son, thy son Isaac, will not do?

Gawd. I pray you, now, Master Simon Single, be kind-hearted, and consider of it. I should be main proud to have him in my lady's livery; he's a docile lad, and can turn his hand, as I may say, to anything.

Simon. Let him turn it to the plough. He's a bumpkin. Let him drive the team, and dung the land; he's born to them. Let him ring the hogs, and tend the sty, and toil in the drudgery of his vocation. Nature never fashioned him to be the lackey of a lady. You are answered, Farmer Gawdry.

Gawd. Ay, master, I am answered; but I am not heard. I hanna'told you half the things my boy can do.

Simon. What can he do? Unfold.

Gawd. A power—Speak for yourself, Isaac; tell the gentleman what you can do.

Isaac. A'looks so grave, a'daunts me.

Gawd. What should daunt thee, boy? Don't hang thy head; but up, and tell him boldly what canst do.

Isaac. I wull, father, I wull. I can sing psalms, shoot flying, worm the puppies, cut capons, climb the rookeries, and make gins for polecats.

Simon. Wonderful! And can't you eat and drink, and sleep and snore abundantly? Can't you wench when you have an opportunity, swear now and then upon occasion, and lie a little when it serves your purpose?

Isaac. Ees, ees; I know something of all these matters.

Gawd. I told you he was fit to wait upon any lady in the land.

Simon. Upon any lady but the Lady Cypress he is welcome; upon her he may wait long enough before he get any other answer than I've given to you. *Dictum est.* Good morning to you.

Gawd. Good morning to me, indeed! How long, I trow, have you been this great man, to carry

yourself in your geers so stately? I can call to mind the day when you came into this family as mere a bumpkin as you think my boy to be.

Simon. Keep your temper, neighbour Gawdry, keep your temper! Mount your steed, amble homewards; visit your oves and your boves; comfort your good dame, and present my humble service to her.

Gawd. I won't comfort her; I won't present your humble service to her: I don't find you are so willing to do her any service; and, as for humble, it don't belong to you. But mark my words—time is at hand—county election's coming on—ask me for a plumper, then, do; ask me, I say, for a plumper, and mind where I'll direct you to look for it. Come along, Isaac, come along!

[*Exit with Isaac.*]

Simon. We men in power, when we have a place to give away, make nine enemies to one friend; and 'tis nine to one if that friend don't turn an enemy before he is well warm in office.—Ah! doctor, is it you?

Enter SCUD.

Scud. Your servant, your servant! I have brought you the young man Jenny recommended.

Simon. Have you so, have you so? Where did you fall in with him?

Scud. Crossed upon him by mere chance—clever fellow—wants a place—think he'll suit Miss Emily—no objection, dare say, on his part—won't haggle for wages—Will you see him?

Simon. Hold a moment! Has he got a character?

Scud. Two; a good one and a bad one; but the good one is what he would prefer being known by.

Simon. I give him credit for that. What name does he bear?

Scud. Henry, alias Harry; you may take your choice.

Simon. He has two of them, it seems. Very good! What besides?

Scud. Scudamore.

Simon. A branch of the Scuds we'll suppose.—But we'll see him. Where does he come from?

Scud. T'other side of the country.—Better let him answer questions for himself. Come in, young man; present yourself to Mr. Simon Single, the respectable major domo of this illustrious family.

Enter ALGERNON.

Simon. So, so! What's here? This is no drudge for all work and all weathers. This is a thing for Sundays and for holidays! As clean a peg to hang a livery on as heart could wish. (*Aside.*)—Well, Henry Scudamore, you're for a place; and, I conclude, one there's least to do will please you most. You are not used to labour.

Alg. I am not.

Simon. Nor ever mean to be, I dare believe.

Scud. Oh, fie! you'll put him down: he's modest to a fault.

Simon. If that be his only fault, we'll overlook it. What can you do?

Alg. My best to please my mistress, and something, I should hope, to gain your favour.

Simon. Egad! you've found the way to that already. I like your manners, countenance, deportment; and I am no mean judge, although I say it.

Alg. Sir, you have all the right in life to say it; for if none else will give us a good word, we must e'en praise ourselves.

Simon. A sharp wit, let me tell you.—Harkye! Henry, your name I know; the place from whence you come I do not know; your qualifications remain to be proved, and your character, I dare say, if it be of your own-giving, will be an excellent good one.

Alg. With your leave, I should prefer to speak upon all these points with the lady I aspire to serve.

Simon. Aspire to serve! Sir, your most obedient humble servant. I shall aspire to ask you no further questions; but turn you over for examination to the lady of the house.

Alg. Is this the lady of the house now approaching?

Enter MRS. DOROTHY BUCKRAM.

Simon. Of the lower house she is the lady. Make your best bow to Mrs. Dorothy Buckram; but don't be too aspiring; if you offer to salute her, you are a lost man; that blessing don't fall to my lot above once in a twelvemonth, and some would not aspire even to that.

Mrs. B. What is this ribaldry that you are talking? and who is this young man?

Simon. A youth of promise; a candidate for service; one that aspires to the supreme delight of carrying clogs, and combing lap-dogs, for the lady heirs.

Mrs. B. What is his name?

Simon. Henry.

Mrs. B. A gentle name, soothing and soft. I much approve of Henry; I've ever had a prejudice for Henry.

Simon. Simon is sweeter.

Scud. Jerry is more brisk.

Simon. Sweet Simon, simple Simon! Why, 'tis music; 'tis a lute. [*pet.*]

Scud. But Jerry sounded in F sharp, is a trum-

Mrs. B. Yes, truly, in the ears of a hen-pecked husband when his partlet cackles. But can't this youngster speak? Henry should speak like Henry: let us hear you. Were I the mistress you aspired to serve, what would you say to me?

Alg. Silence becomes a servant; 'tis a virtue; but if I were your equal and your lover—

Mrs. B. Ah! then what would you say?

Alg. Then if you stood all tempting as you are, full in my sight, and cheered your happy swain with smiles so lovely, so languishing, so alluring—

Mrs. B. What would you do?

Alg. I'd snatch you to my heart, press you, caress you, smother you with fondness—

Mrs. B. And so you will. Let go, or I'll scream out.

Simon. Bravo! you'll do. A very good rehearsal.

Scud. A very villainous one, if my Jenny have had a part in it.

Simon. I give you joy, young man; your fortune's made.

Mrs. B. I wonder who has taught him this assurance!

Scud. Oh! madam, he's a pupil of my Jenny's; I've nothing to do with him.

Simon. Come, come; there's no offence; 'twas a fair challenge, and no true Englishman would have refus'd it. Courage, my lad! you'll never want a service. Let us adjourn. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter LADY CYPRESS and EARLING.

Lady C. Well, now you've heard the story, what do you say to it?

Earl. Nothing.

[*lieve it.*]

Lady C. What, nothing? Then you don't believe it.

Earl. Pardon me, madam; I believe it happened just as Miss Emily relates it to you; I do believe there was a man set on to frighten her, and that he took a drubbing from her hero, for which I also perfectly believe he was well paid.

Lady C. Why should you not suppose it might be real? There are such drunken fellows up and down.

Earl. But sober men will not be taken in by such stale tricks. You meet the same, or something very like it, in every paltry novel that you read. The man's escaped; you'll never hear of him; his bargain was not made to go to prison.

Lady C. I see it now; I see through the contrivance.

Earl. Yes, madam; and you may also see which way your property will go, if ever miss have the disposal of it.

Lady C. I'll never sign those deeds in her behalf till she consent to marry as I'd have her. Indeed, indeed, you have saved me, my good sir, from a most rash and inconsiderate measure.

Earl. Now is the time; I'll seize the happy moment. My ever honoured lady, I but live to save and serve you: my whole life has been devoted to your happiness. The founder of your fortune, I have fought your battles manfully, and stood a siege as long as that of Troy in your defence; ay, and would die in it, if need required.

Lady C. There is no need; I know your services; and, at my death, you'll find I have not under-rated them.

Earl. She melts—I'll strike! (*Aside.*)—Not at your death, dear lady, (may that be far, far off!) but with your life reward me.—Ha! that tells she yields to the impression. (*Aside.*)

Lady C. How with my life! You have my good opinion, you have my friendship; what more can I do for you?

Earl. Think of me only as I think of you. Why should a thankless girl engross your fortune? Use it, employ it; many happy days are yet in store for you. When the Lord Cypriss married you, he was your senior by a pretty many years more than your ladyship is mine.

Lady C. Your inference from that?

Earl. I dare not quite reveal it. I would wish your ladyship to take it to your thoughts. A hint, a word, a look, so it were kind, would greatly help me to declare it to you.

Lady C. We'll talk no more at present, if you please; you will remember you're my agent, sir, and I will not forget your services. Good day.

Earl. May every day and every hour be happy as I could wish them, and you will be blessed.—'Twill do; her pride is dropping from the perch; she totters; I shall catch her. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Enter SIMON SINGLE.

Lady C. How now, Simon! Have you found a proper lad amongst the tenants' sons to serve Miss Emily?

Simon. Of them not one, so help me, honoured lady—I cannot recommend them; they are boors, clowns, clodpates.

Lady C. What is to be done?

Simon. There is a youth attending; doctor Scud speaks in his favour.

Lady C. Scud's a babbler.—What do you say?

Simon. He is above the level of these indigent smock-frocks and hob-nails. I should advise your ladyship to see him.

Lady C. By all means; let him enter.

Simon. Henry, you are permitted to approach; the Lady Cypriss deigns to look upon you. Make your obeisance.

Enter ALGERNON.

Lady C. So, this is the young man; Henry you call him. What other name belongs to him?

Simon. Scudamore, an please you; so he gives in himself.

Lady C. No vulgar name; and, so far as appearances bespeak, no vulgar person. Well, Henry Scudamore, you want a place.

Alg. I wish to serve your ladyship.

Lady C. Have you been in service?

Alg. Never.

Lady C. So I should guess. What leads you now to seek it?

Alg. The ambition of belonging to your ladyship: but I would answer more directly, might I presume—

Lady C. I understand you. Simon, leave the room.—[*Exit Simon.*—] You seem embarrassed. Was it not your wish to speak to me in private?

Alg. Madam, it was.

Lady C. And what have you to impart, that one, who possibly may be your fellow-servant, might not be privy to?

Alg. Madam, I am a gentleman by birth; that being known amongst my fellow-servants might chance to raise an evil mind against me, and make my humble station painful to me: your candour will not think the worse of me because I am unfortunate.

Lady C. No, not the worse in charity of thought; but I cannot employ you in my service. No gentleman must wait upon that lady, to whom, I else, perhaps, had destined you; no gentleman, at least, of your appearance.

Alg. I'm sorry for it; but it is my fate to be judged by appearances, and condemned by reports.

Lady C. If you have fallen into this decay by mere misfortune, or injurious treatment, I can pity you; nay, Henry Scudamore, if that be your name, and if I knew your story, (which, at present, I have not time to hear,) I could do more; I could (and something whispers me I would) consider your necessities, and help you.

Alg. I am the victim, madam, of a villain. My story is soon told, for it is founded on a simple fact, which I can make appear to full conviction, if you will condescend to give me hearing, and suffer me to state such evidence as cannot be opposed by my defamer.

Lady C. I know not what to say to that, young man; I have no strength to spare for others' burthens, and am already loaded with my own, even to the breaking down of my weak frame. If it be a case of pity, I've a hand that's open to your wants without inquiry; if it be a matter of grievance and redress, I would recommend you to state it to my lawyer, Mr. Earling, and he shall see you righted.

Alg. I humbly thank you; I will state it to him, and trust the goodness of your heart will see me righted.

Lady C. Ah! I've no heart, no health, no nerves, to hear you. You must excuse me, Henry Scudamore; I dare not undertake to arbitrate; but wait Sir Oliver Montrath's arrival, and he shall hear you: he's a noble gentleman.

Alg. Where shall I wait the whilst?

Lady C. Where? Let me see—yes, you may stay this night here in the castle. My old servant, Simon, will entertain you at the second table. Does that content you?

Alg. I were most unthankful if it did not.

Lady C. Follow me, then, and I will give my orders. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Emily's Apartment.*

Enter EMILY FITZALLAN, followed by RACHEL WILLIAMS.

Emily. Rachel!

Rachel. Madam, what are your commands?

Emily. Don't answer me in that style. I have so long been a dependant, and lived in such familiarity with you, my good Rachel, in particular, that, though you are my servant, I don't wish you to use a language to me so submissive.

Rachel. Whatever language you would have me use, so it will but convey the same respect, I will endeavour to conform to it.

Emily. I would fain keep upon such terms with fortune, that I may fall back to my former poverty without a pang; therefore, if ever you perceive me giddy with prosperity, recall my recollection to the low situation I emerged from; and do it honestly, my girl; don't spare me.

Rachel. You'll want no monitor to warn you against pride; and yet, as you require sincerity, there is one warning I conceive is needful just at this crisis.

Emily. State it without reserve.

Rachel. Are you not now in danger of incurring your patroness's most severe displeasure?

Emily. Perhaps I am; but he explicit with me.

Rachel. Your champion, Algernon, has he not left a thorn in that soft heart?

Emily. If you call gratitude a thorn, he has.

Rachel. Are you quite sure 'tis only gratitude? May it not soon be love? Nay, give me leave, is it not love already?

Emily. Well, if it is, how can I strive against it?

Rachel. Prudence will tell how.

Emily. Prudence will tell me an old gossip's tale; but who, that is in love, will hear her out?

Rachel. Are you aware how fatal it will be to all your expectations, if my lady discover your attachment?

Emily. Are you aware how natural it is to love the man who saves you from destruction? My lady gives me riches, Algernon rescues my life and honour: I was lost but for his courage, I am only poor without her bounty; and if she demand that I should sacrifice my heart's affections, she makes conditions that I cannot grant, nor would her fortune bribe me to the attempt.

Rachel. Do you know Mr. Algernon's character?

Emily. Does he that blackens it? What does my lady know but what that lawyer instils into her ear? Infamous man! And why does he defame him? Why, but because he may retain his power in the estate, and garble it at pleasure: besides, he has an ample legacy. Believe me, I hold it a disgrace to read my name in the same page with his; nor would I be his partner in the crime of plundering Algernon: but that I live in hopes the time will come when I may render back the unlawful spoil.

Rachel. Then temporize the whilst, my dearest lady, or that time never will be yours.

Emily. 'Tis right; you counsel well; and now I will confide a secret to you: I have warned Algernon, who is his enemy, and what base stories have been forged against him.—Ah! who is this? 'Tis he, 'tis he himself!

Enter ALGERNON.

Alg. Hush! not so loud.

Emily. Your name was on my lips. How came you here? How did you gain admission, and what have you in view by this disguise? You may disclose; this friendly girl is secret.

Alg. Then let her stay; I would not be surprised in private with you. I am here by sufferance of Lady Cypress: I have seen my aunt for the first time, conversed with her, and lodged a plea for further hearing, when her friend, Sir Oliver Montrath, shall be at leisure: one of his servants is already come, he may be soon expected.

Emily. And his nephew, does he accompany him?

Alg. I did not ask that question of the servant; but, if you wish it, I will make the inquiry.

Emily. No, let it pass. I know your aunt expects him.—Hark! Rachel, somebody is at the door; see who it is.

Rachel. Madam, there's nobody; nor any sound that I can hear.

Emily. Stand where you are, and listen.—What is the meaning of this dress you wear?

Alg. I put it on to counterfeit a servant; or, I should rather say, to ask for service. Will you not try me, Emily? Don't take my character from that attorney; I'll serve you honestly.

Emily. You serve! you're jesting.

Alg. Am I not your servant? I am your faithful servant.

Emily. My heroic preserver! that is your rightful character, and by that title you have a claim upon my gratitude, which only can expire with life: and now inform me what you have in view by this adventure.

Alg. I am not so romantic as to think I can maintain my post longer than till to-morrow, to

which time I have a furlough by authority; if fortune stand my friend, I may effect something within that period; but even now am I not supremely blessed to see you, hear you, and behold that face, that was of late so pale and wan with terror, restored to all the lustre of its charms?

Emily. That face, assure yourself, will never be turned from you to league with those who seek to rob you of your fame and fortune.

Alg. I am not robbed of what enriches you.

Emily. The heart, that swells with indignation against all that wrong you, had, but for you, been cold and motionless.

Alg. Oh! Emily, forbear.

Emily. This and no more: I never will be made the slave of interest or dupe of slander. My confidence in you cannot be shaken, my obligations cannot be computed. The life that I possess is of your giving. What can I say, but that I live for you? Now leave me, Henry; not a word, but leave me. [Exeunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter LADY CYPRESS and Servant.

Lady C. Hark! 'tis the porter's bell: run to the hall, and tell me if Sir Oliver's arrived.

Serv. Madam, he's here: Sir Oliver is present.

Enter SIR OLIVER MONTRATH.

Lady C. Welcome, most welcome! May I trust my senses? This is above hope, that you and I should live to meet again.

Sir O. My ever dear, my ever honoured lady!

Lady C. Time has gone lightly over you, my friend. You, that have traversed sea and land, are whole; I, that have tempted neither, am become a shattered wreck on shore.

Sir O. Not so, not altogether so, thank heaven! Time is a surly guest, whose courtesy does not improve by long acquaintance with us; but we'll not rail at him, since he permits us once more to meet. And here's the same old castle still unspoiled by modern popery; ay, and the same old grand-sires firm in their frames, with not one wrinkle more than when I parted from them years ago.

Lady C. Ay, years, indeed! but you have filled them up with glory; your's has been a life of themes for future history, a field of laurels to adorn your tomb; mine has been tame and simple vegetation.

Sir O. I have lived a soldier's life; but, heaven be thanked, I've plundered no nabob, stripped no rajah of his pearls and pagodas, nor have I any blood upon my sword, but what a soldier's honour may avow; but you have here a relic of my gallant comrade, Major Antony Fitzallan. He was wounded by my side, carried off the field, and died in my arms. With his last breath he bequeathed ('twas all he had to bestow) a blessing to his daughter, and charged me, if I lived to come to England, to thank you for your charity, and be a friend to her.

Lady C. I trust you will find her worthy of your friendship.

Sir O. Is she good, is she amiable? Has she her father's principles, her mother's purity?

Lady C. See her, and judge; she's naturally sincere: but where is your nephew? where is Mr. Lionel? I reckoned with much pleasure upon seeing him.

Sir O. Ah! my good lady, there I am unfortunate. I have built upon the hopes of presenting him to you; but it cannot be at present. Poor Lionel is indisposed, and must bear his disappointment with what philosophy he can.

Lady C. The disappointment is reciprocal: a little time, I hope, will bring him to us.

Sir O. I wish it may—but, look, who comes—

Lady C. This is my orphan charge. This is our Emily.

Enter EMILY FITZALLAN.

Sir O. The very image of her lovely mother.*

Lady C. My dear, this is Sir Oliver Montrath, mine and your father's friend; as such, you'll honour him.

Sir O. As such, I claim the privilege to embrace and press her to my heart. My child, my charge, devolved upon me by a father's legacy, when breathing out his gallant soul in prayers and blessings for his Emily.

Emily. Oh! sir, were you, were you beside him at that dreadful moment?

Sir O. I was, my child; these arms supported him, covered with wounds, and crowned with victory—alas! how dearly purchased!

Emily. Then let his last commands be ever sacred; if you have any such in charge to give me, impart them, I conjure you.

Sir O. I have none but blessings to impart. In fortune's gifts the hero had no share, in virtue's he abounded. In the care of this, your generous benefactress, he had left you, to that and heaven's protection he bequeathed you.

Emily. I am content; and what before I owed in gratitude to this beneficent and noble lady, I now will pay with filial obedience and duty superadded. Suffer me, dearest madam, from this moment to call myself your daughter.

Lady C. As such I have adopted you; remember now, my child, the duty you have taken on yourself, the authority you have consigned to me. All rights parental centre now in me, your happiness, your credit, your establishments, are trusts for which I am responsible. You have no other task but to obey.

Emily. Obedience, madam, has its limitations; but such as I would render to my father I'll pay to you. Have I your leave to withdraw?

Lady C. You may, my dear; your spirits seem to need it. Go and compose yourself.

[*Exit Emily.*]

Sir O. Exquisite creature! I'm enchanted with her. By heaven! 'twould be the height of my ambition, the object I have most at heart in life, to see my Lionel—Oh! that I could! here kneeling at her feet. Born of such parents, trained by such instructions, and graced with charms so lovely, Emily, without a fortune, is a match for princes.

Lady C. If such be your disinterested wish, (and greater happiness I could not pray for,) I trust my fortune thrown into her scale will not make her appear less worthy of your nephew, or cause you to retract your good opinion.

Sir O. No, surely; but I doubt if I should wish your fortune to go out of the right channel even to Emily. We that have never married should regard our nephews as our sons.

Lady C. But does affinity impose on me an obligation to bestow my property on one that merits nothing, to the wrong of her that merits all?

Sir O. Is that the character of Algernon? Is he so undeserving?

Lady C. Ah! there, my friend, there is my terror; the destiny I dread; the man, of all men living, the most dangerous to my peace is Algernon.

Sir O. Indeed!

Lady C. Preserve my Emily from him; save her from Algernon.

Sir O. Is Algernon, then, born to be a curse to both of us?

Lady C. Explain yourself.

Sir O. He is your nephew, therefore I was silent; but if he's dangerous to your peace of mind, to mine he's fatal: in one word, the wound, of which my hapless Lionel now languishes, was given by the hand of Algernon.

Lady C. Horrible wretch! his murderer.

Sir O. I say not that; for modern courtesy gives not that name to duellists, and honour sanctifies their bloody deeds.

Lady C. Away with all such honour! Truth disavows it, nature revolts from it, religion denounces it. Oh! he is born to be my shame and torment.

Sir O. Be patient for awhile; suspend your judgment.

Lady C. No, I regard a duellist with horror; I hold him as an agent of the enemy of mankind, sent to disturb society, and rend the parent's and the widow's hearts asunder: one action, one only action, and that a doubtful one, has met my ear in favour of that wretch whom I call nephew, and henceforth, even that one I totally discredit, and renounce him.

Sir O. Hold, I conjure you. In the midst of wrath let us remember justice. I, like you, abhor a duellist professed; yet I am taught by long experience how to make allowances for younger spirits, and warmer passions, that will not submit to meet the world's contempt, and scorn its prejudices.

Lady C. Away! you talk this language by profession; reason declares against it.

Sir O. Reason demands that we should pause in judgment. When two men draw their swords upon each other, reason will tell us one must be to blame; but ere we fix the blame upon that one, justice decrees that we should hear them both.

Lady C. What says your nephew? He will speak the truth.

Sir O. I should expect he would; yet I'll not wholly trust to any man's report against another in his own cause; and in this sentiment my nephew honourably coincides, for he declines all answer to my questions, and will state nothing to affect or criminate his antagonist. Ha! who is this?

Enter ALGERNON.

Lady C. Go, go; I did not send for you.

Alg. I know it; but I wish to speak in private with Sir Oliver Montrath.

Sir O. With me? Who is this man? I do not know him. Is he one of your ladyship's domestics?

Lady C. No; he made offer of his services, but upon talking with him I perceived he had a list of grievances to state, and not being then at leisure, I believe I told him he might wait your coming, and make his suit to you.

Sir O. And so he may; his looks plead in his cause. Is it your wish to speak with me, young man?

Alg. It is.

Sir O. Alone?

Alg. Alone, if you'll permit it.

Sir O. Freely; and when I can command my time, it shall be your's. I'll call for you.

Alg. I shall attend your summons. [*Exit.*]

Sir O. I'm curious what this man can have to tell me. Do you conjecture?

Lady C. There is a mystery about him. He says he is a gentleman by birth, and so far I believe him. Of what he had to tell besides I waved the hearing, but offered him relief: that did not seem his object, nor was it mine to take a gentleman into my service. But you will know the whole: shall we adjourn, and see what is become of Emily?

Sir O. With all my heart; and I hope the mournful subject of our last interview may be no more revived. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Enter LAWYER EARLING meeting ALGERNON.

Earl. So, whence come you? who are you? what's your business?

Alg. Sir, I don't know you.

Earl. Not know me! that's much. You must be new, indeed.

Alg. Are you that worthy gentleman, Mr. Earling?

Earl. I am the very person.

Alg. Heaven reward you! Your fame is sounded forth through all the county.

Earl. Are you not hired to wait on Miss Fitzallan?

Alg. No, sir, my character don't seem to recommend me to the Lady Cypress. If you would speak for me, 'twould make my fortune.

Earl. How can I speak for you, whom I don't know?

Alg. 'Twould be as easy as to speak against me.

Earl. But I do neither; I have no concern with you or with your character.

Alg. Indeed! they told me you were famous for it.

Earl. For what is it I'm famous?

Alg. For speaking about characters you've no concern with; therefore, I pray you, sir, take mine in hand, and do me justice. I suspect some villain has cruelly defamed me. Doesn't an action lie for that at law?

Earl. Go; you're a fool; begone!

Alg. I am a fool, to ask a knave for justice.

[*Exit.*]

Earl. Knave! do you call me knave? I'll trounce you, sirrah! I'll blow you to the moon, audacious beggar! Ah! master Doctor, do you know that rascal?

Enter SCUD.

Scud. I know several rascals, but which of them do you mean?

Earl. That impudent new comer, that mad fellow, that dares to insult me in my lady's house. Call me a knave, indeed, and to my face! did you ever hear such insolence?

Scud. Never, never. If he had only said it behind your back, why, 'twere but *quid pro quo*; it would have passed; but to your face! Oh! monstrous!

Earl. I'll set him in the stocks; I'll have his ears nailed to the whipping-post.

Scud. No, don't do that; if whipping-posts had ears, they'd hear the cries of those that are tied to them, and pity them.

Earl. Pooh! you're as great a fool as he, methinks: I've done with you. Look to yourself, Sir Gallipot, your reign will not be long on this ground, take my word for it.

[*Exit.*]

Scud. There, there, there! I'm blown up, ousted, all is over with me. Thought to have had my lady's custom till her death: perceive now she will be one of the few patients that outlive my prescriptions. Oh! fine work, fine work!

Re-enter ALGERNON.

Alg. How now, friend Scud! what ails you?

Scud. Friend! call me fool. I'm ruined by my friendship. You've played the devil's dance with that d—d lawyer, and set him whip and spur upon my back.

Alg. Why, that's his proper place: back-biting is his trade?

Scud. And what's my trade, do you think? where shall I drive it? my gallipots may grow into the shelves for everlasting, if I'm to be made the cat's-paw of your schemes and foolish Jenny's; but I'll go tell my lady all about you.

Alg. No, no, you'll not do that, my little Scud.

Scud. I'll tell you what I won't do—lose my customer.

Alg. Ay, but consider what an ornament your ears are to your head; and you'll lose them inconspicuously if you betray me.

Scud. My ears, indeed! look to your own; the lawyer has sworn to nail them to the whipping-post. I've got a wig, so have not you, my master. Besides, I'm not quite certain but my lady's custom will be the greater loss: She takes a world of physic.

Enter SIMON SINGLE.

Simon. Who talks of physic? I've the best of medicines: a case of old canary, which my lady has ordered us to tap, and drink a welcome to our noble guest, Sir Oliver Monstrath. I've put my lips to it: 'tis supernaculum.

Scud. I see you have; I see 'tis supernaculum, for some of it has got under your wig already.

Simon. My wig; no, no, Dame Dorothy set that awry with a kind cuff o' the ear.

Scud. You put your lips to her, too, it should seem.

Simon. Perhaps I did, but that's all buckram, Doctor. Ah! Henry, give me your hand. Stand fast, my gallant hearts; lo! where she comes again, a portly saint right on upon our convoy. My life upon't, she's bound to the Canaries.

Enter MRS. BUCKRAM.

Mrs. B. Oh! thou rash youth, thou hast undone thyself. Earling has vowed thy ruin.

Scud. He has vowed my ruin, too, and that is one of the few vows that he will keep religiously.

Mrs. B. Ah! he's a carnal man; he'll swallow up this castle and its fortunes.

Simon. I hope the turrets of it will stick by the way and choke him. He sha'n't swallow the canary in it, however; we'll be beforehand with him at that sport.

Scud. I would I had the cooking of one dose for him! I wish he'd swallow that. It should be a settler.

Mrs. B. What has he done by Harry Algernon? There's malice for you; there's a batch of mischief; blasted his character, garbled his fortune, and turned my lady's heart to stone against him.

Simon. Flint, iron, adamant. I told her so: "Madam," said I, "the gentleman is wronged; the neighbours, where he lives, all give him a good word, the gentry love him, his father doats on him, the poor adore him: there is but one bad character betwixt him and your attorney. Judge you," said I, "which party it belongs to."

Alg. Did you say this?

Simon. I did.

Alg. Then you're an honest fellow.

Simon. I know that well enough. Yes, I did say it.

Scud. How did she take it?

Simon. As she takes your physic: gulped and made wry faces; but it went down.

Scud. I hope 'twill stay by her.

Simon. I hope it will, and when we've drunk confusion to attorneys, I'll deal her out another dose a little stronger. D—it!—no, hold, I will not swear; I'll do it coolly: come, we'll call a council in the Canaries.

Scud. Agreed; I'll drink myself into a little courage, and have a word with the old lass myself.

Simon. Come on, my hearts! Henry, conduct the lady. You may solicit her fair hand in safety. Jerry and I have wigs. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

LADY CYPRESS, EMILY, SIR OLIVER MONTRATH, and EARLING discovered.

Lady C. Now, Emily, you see what misery that wicked man has brought upon us all.

Emily. I am sorry for Sir Oliver's misfortune.

Lady C. I hope you have also pity for the sufferer.

Emily. I trust I have for all that merit it.

Earl. I'm sure Miss Emily will not attempt to extenuate the guilt of such an action.

Emily. You may be sure I never will defend a guilty person, knowing him for such; be you as careful how you criminate an absent man till you have proofs against him. (*To Sir O.*) Sir, you are silent; I should wish to know if you have anything to urge against him.

Sir O. Nothing, my dear, I'm listening with attention, and, therefore, silent. I should be sorry were you less unwilling to give up your opinion of a man who rendered you such service.

Lady C. What service? Earling, you have heard the story; let us hear what you have to say upon it.

Earl. If Miss Fitzallan will suffer me to put a simple question to her.

Emily. By all means; put your question.

Earl. When Mr. Algernon, by happy chance, came in so opportunely to her rescue, can Miss Fitzallan say what brought him thither so far from his own home?

Emily. I never asked what caused him to be there, nor did he tell me.

Earl. We'll call it, then, a very happy chance without a cause, or a most fortunate presentiment that somewhere in that grove there would be found a damsel in the power of some vile ruffian, whom he was doomed to rescue. Some people might suppose this a collusion, but Miss Fitzallan can remove all doubts by telling us who was the villain that offered her that violence.

Sir O. Can you do this, my Emily?

Emily. I cannot.

Earl. Did Mr. Algernon know who he was?

Emily. I do not think he did.

Earl. Did he secure his person?

Emily. No; his care was wholly turned to me; the man he left upon the ground, and, as it seemed, disabled.

Earl. I have done: I leave it to the court to judge.

Lady C. A barefaced trick. It is too palpable. *Sir O.* Who can say that? Let Mr. Algernon speak for himself.

Earl. Speak!

Sir O. Ay, you have spoke, and should not he? That's justice, is it not?

Earl. Did you always find it so where you have been, Sir Oliver?

Sir O. Whether I found it so or not, I felt it.

Emily. Now, Mr. Earling, you may put those questions you've pressed on me to Mr. Algernon. Perhaps he'll answer them.

Lady C. Emily, Emily, you forget yourself.

Emily. Madam, I should, if I forbore to speak when charges such as these are urged against an absent, therefore, a defenceless man. You have not allowed him to approach you, madam; this gentleman, equally unknown to him, prejudices him at once; he is ingenious to find out bad motives for good actions; there's not a virtue in the human heart but may be metamorphosed by such cunning into a vice. Sir Oliver has said, and said it in the language of a hero, "Let Mr. Algernon speak for himself."

Sir O. And I repeat those words: let him be heard. However circumstances bear against him, and wretched though he has made me, still I hold it matter of conscience never to prejudice, however strong the grounds of my suspicion.

Lady C. Sir Oliver, we do not think alike, and therefore, with your leave, we'll out this subject short. Emily will retire; a little recollection will be useful to shew the error of some rash opinions and amend them. Go, child, remember, I have now a right to look for the obedience of a daughter.

Emily. And I to expect the mildness of a mother. [Exit.]

Lady C. And now, Sir Oliver, with your permission, I will despatch a little business with my servant, and leave you to fulfil your promise to that young man, who, I perceive, is waiting to approach you. Follow me, Mr. Earling. [Exit with Earling.]

Sir O. See here a sample of the blessings of dependence! Poor orphan Emily! 'tis now my turn to prove that I am worthy to be called the friend of thy gallant father.

Enter ALGERNON.

Oh! come in, come in, young man. I promised you a hearing, and I'll make good my word; but as my mind is pressed with many matters, be short, and to the point.

Alg. I will. Your nephew has had an affair with Mr. Algernon, and is wounded. You have visited him, no doubt. Has he related to you the particulars of that unpleasant business?

Sir O. Before I answer, let me know who it is that questions me.

Alg. My father lives upon the lands of Sir George Algernon, and I have some acquaintance with his son, the person whose unlucky chance it was to wound your nephew.

Sir O. And what's your motive for the question that you now put to me?

Alg. I am no stranger to your character, and if you know the circumstances of that duel, I trust you will not suffer Mr. Earling to misrepresent them to the Lady Cypress.

Sir O. Certainly I should not, if I knew the truth, suffer it to be disguised; but I have no particulars from my nephew. The affair remains a mystery. Can you develop it?

Alg. If Lady Cypress will permit me to stay this night, as she has promised, and you can bring me to an explanation with her in your presence, I can so far elucidate this mystery, that if you still persist to trace it home, you shall have full possession of the means.

Sir O. I hardly should expect it at your hands; nor where my nephew's honour is concerned shall I be easily induced to listen to other evidence than that of facts, incontrovertibly attested, and (I am free to say) admitted on his part.

Alg. 'Tis to such facts and such authorities I shall appeal.

Sir O. And do you mean to criminate my nephew?

Alg. Pardon me, sir, I have no other meaning but to declare the truth.

Sir O. Have you the means to know it? Were you present at the rencontre?

Alg. If it appear that I have not the means to know the truth, or knowingly disguise it, treat me as I deserve; I'm in your hands.

Sir O. Well, sir, I'll urge no farther questions on you, but use my interest with the Lady Cypress to procure you the interview you wish. Now fail not on your part: you know me, sir; I trust to you unknown.

Alg. Poor as I seem, I have a soul within, that never yet was tainted by dishonour. [Exit.]

ACT IV.

LADY CYPRESS, EMILY FITZALLAN, and EARLING discovered.

Lady C. Well, child, I have here the instrument that makes you rich above the dreams of avarice. I have not executed it, for that depends on you; I have not cancelled it, because this gentleman, your steady friend, has interceded with me to recal you once more to recollection and atonement.

Emily. For what must I atone?

Lady C. For your intemperate defence of Algernon. Guilty or innocent, no more of him: Where I bestow my fortune, I expect to find no opposition to my will in the disposal of it.

Emily. What is your will in that respect?

Lady C. This is my will: if Lionel Montrath survive his wound, he is the man I destine for my heiress. To this, if you declare instant assent, I shall as instantly confirm this paper; if not, I cancel it, and cast you off.

Emily. Not all the world could bribe me to do that, before I know which is the offending party. What baseness, what ingratitude were mine, to give my hand to him that wronged the brave preserver of my life and honour!

Lady C. Obstinate girl! you have no such preserver. Have not I told you, it was mere collusion?

Emily. Madam, you have; but I am not convinced, because you told me so by your attorney, not from your own knowledge and conviction.

Lady C. What will convince you?

Emily. Proof well established, and all parties heard.

Lady C. You to make terms, that called yourself my daughter! Where is your duty?

Emily. Inviolable, unbroken. I shall ever bear you respect and true devotion for your goodness; but no parent, no patroness, not even my father, to whose awful spirit I now appeal, could have the power or could possess the right to tear away affections from my heart, which honour, gratitude, have planted there, or force me to conspire with that bad man in stripping Algernon of fame and fortune, and fixing artifice, deceit, and murder upon a man so near to you in blood, in nature so abhorrent of those crimes.

Lady C. You are mad; I have done with you? I cast you off. Now, Mr. Earling, take away your papers; they, or the thankless object they allude to, must be entirely changed before I sign them.

[*Exit.*]

Earl. Miss Emily, it grieves me to the heart to have heard what now has passed. Indeed, you wrong me if you suppose I am the author of this fatal breach. I am no otherwise the enemy of Mr. Algernon than as I am your friend; in very truth, I'm not his enemy.

Emily. Sir, for your enmity to Mr. Algernon, and so much of your friendship as flows from it, I pray you, let them go together; I have no use for either.

Earl. Do you scorn me because I pity you?

Emily. You pity me! There cannot be that state of human wretchedness which could reduce me to accept your pity. I wonder you can waste your time with one, who neither courts your favour, fears your power, nor credits your professions.

Earl. Well, haughty madam, I have been a friend, and I can be a foe.

[*Exit.*]

Enter ALGERNON.

Alg. My Emily, my angel, what is this I have heard? Discarded, disinherited, and for your generosity to me.

Emily. Yes, Algernon, I'm poor but free. I was a prisoner in a gaudy cage, where they would fain have taught me to call names, and whistle to a tune of Earling's making; but being a bad bird, and obstinate, my keeper let me fly; and now I've got the wide world for my portion, and nothing but my own small wits to trust to for picking up a living.

Alg. Fly to me, perch on my breast, for in my heart you'll find both shelter and affection.

Emily. Ah! that is generous, gallant, like yourself; but 'tis not yet a time for me to hear you. The asylum that you offer is attacked, the very citadel of your life and honour is besieged by assailants, and you must beat them off, my hero, or I have sacrificed myself to ruin without the enjoyment of that honest pride which glories in the cause for which it suffers.

Alg. Doubt me not, Emily, the shield of truth covers my breast, and I'm invulnerable.

Emily. Earling accuses you of a collusion with my unknown assailant in the wood.

Alg. I'm armed against that charge.

Emily. And for your wounding of Monrath, he calls it assassination. There I should fear you are not so well armed, having no seconds to appeal to, and, therefore, more exposed to his attack.

Alg. Let him come on; at all points I defy him. Now, my sweet advocate, repose in peace, and wait the event.

Emily. Farewell! If I am ruined in the cause of truth, I'll not regret the sacrifice.

[*Exit.*]

Alg. Heroic Emily, how I adore you! Ha! Jerry, whence come you?

Enter JERRY SCUD.

Scud. From the Canaries, where the illustrious major-domo governs, and drinking is a duty by the laws of the sage Solon of the cellars, the profound Diogenes of the tubs, of whose academy I am a member.

Alg. You've not betrayed me in your cups, I hope.

Scud. Betrayed you! no; if you had fired the house, burnt the old lady in it, and violated the virgin purity of dame Buckram, I'd not betray you. D— it! I scorn a sneaker; I loath him worse than physic. Go on, my boy, and fear not; I am steady.

Alg. Pretty well for that. You've had a sip or two with honest Simon.

Scud. Simon's a fish; Dame Buckram is a leech, fills where she fastens, and delights in suction: I honour her for her absorbent qualities, and I pronounce that they are silly apes and ignorammuses, that say wine gets into the head; 'tis false, I say it gets into the heart; it drives ill humour, melancholy, treason, and a whole gang of cowardly companions out of a man, as a carminative does crudities and indigestion; it would have set my constitution clear, only there's one thing sticks—

Alg. What's that, my honest fellow? Out with it.

Scud. Why, then, 'tis jealousy; and that, you know, is a confounded spasm.

Alg. Away with it at once! Why, man, you don't know half your happiness; you have the best wife in the country. Oh! if you could have heard her pine for you last night; she wouldn't hear of comfort.

Scud. Indeed, indeed! May I believe you, 'squire? May I be sure I'm not the horned beast?

Alg. None of my making, Jerry, on my honour.

Scud. Oh, jubilate! then I kick the clouds. Good b'ye, good b'ye to you. Let me embrace you. All luck attend you. I'm going to my lady; if I can throw in a provocative to stir her in your favour I will do it; I will upon my soul. Good b'ye to you!

Alg. Stop, Jerry; hold your hand, my gallant fellow! I am too much your friend to let you go to Lady Cypress in your present state. Why, man, you are tipsy.

Scud. Say drunk, and you'll not say more than is true; but then it is I cure my patients; when I am only sober I let them cure themselves.

Alg. Well, get you gone; I am not bound to find reason for him that will not keep his own.

SCENE II.

LADY CYPRESS, and RACHEL WILLIAMS discovered.

Lady C. Come hither, Rachel, I would speak with you. When I promoted you to be about the person of Miss Emily Fitzallan, it was because I saw you were attached to her, and I was willing to do her a grace by thus preferring you. If you must now fall back into your station, it is not that I have withdrawn my favour from you, but from your mistress.

Rachel. I know it, madam; all your people know it, for Mr. Earling has announced it to us; but I must beg your ladyship to excuse me if I decline all service but Miss Emily's.

Lady C. What should enable her to keep a servant?

Rachel. Then she will stand in the more need of me; I'll work my fingers to the bone to serve her. Your ladyship may turn me from your doors, but I will say that Mr. Earling is a base cruel man, and when he has driven all your relations from you, your ladyship will find your house a desert, and nothing but a villain left within it.

[*Exit.*]

Lady C. Out of my sight! begone! Such insolence is not to be endured: yet, Earling is to blame to publish this to all my family. So, what comes next?

Enter MRS. DOROTHY BUCKRAM.

Mrs. B. Madam, I've served your ladyship too long to bear the arrogance of Mr. Earling. I beg to be discharged; I'll not live in the house with one who drives Miss Emily out of your doors, tells such monstrous lies of Mr. Algernon, and sets your ladyship against all your friends and relations.

Lady C. Who made you a judge in matters that concern me only? When you are cool, I'll hear you. I know you have been junketing and caballing with Rachel Williams, and the rest of them: pr'ythee, retire.

Mrs. B. That's what I mean to do, and others beside me, or I'm mistaken. We respect your ladyship, but we can't put up with your attorney.

[*Exit.*]

Enter EARLING.

Lady C. There, Mr. Earling, you hear what is said against you: murmurs, complaints, invectives from all quarters.

Earl. No wonder, when that Henry Scudamore, whom I suspect to be a secret agent of your unworthy nephew's, sets them on to blacken and arraign me. Madam, he has had the insolence to give me the worst of names.

Lady C. Then give him his dismissal; send him away at once.

Earl. It shall be done.

[*Exit.*]

Lady C. Oh! that Sir Oliver had postponed his visit to his nephew but one hour!

Enter SCUD.

Ah! pr'ythee, pr'ythee, do not plague me now. What brings you hither?

Scud. Duty, my lady, duty; want to hear how the draughts have agreed.

Lady C. 'Tis plain how your draughts have agreed; the operation's visible; no matter about mine.

Scud. Oh! pardon me, there is great matter: spared for no pains—employed the best of drugs—hope I have given content—but rumours fly—no parrying defamation—a man may be accused behind his back, and who can stand it?

Lady C. What rumours do you allude to? Who has accused you?

Scud. I don't know who may have accused me, my lady; I wish to heaven I could say I have accused nobody.

Lady C. What do you mean?

Scud. Oh dear! madam, I am troubled with the heart-ache; I have a lacerated conscience.

Lady C. You have a loaded head, I perceive; more wine in it than wit.

Scud. True, my lady; it is so full I can no longer hide the truth within it. Out it must come, and true it is, I have slandered Mr. Algernon. He saved my life, and I have stabbed his character.

Lady C. You don't know what you say: you're tipsy.

Scud. I wish I had been tipsy when I spoke of him; then I should have told the truth.

Lady C. Go your ways; get you gone: a man that is in two stories should be credited for neither. You have made him out to me a compound of all vices.

Scud. That was the very vilest compound that ever came out of my hands; but Lawyer Earling put a lie into my mouth, and like a gilded pill of loathsome quality I swallowed it, and now it makes me sick.

Lady C. Begone! I will no longer be insulted with your apothecary's jargon. Never enter my doors again.

Scud. I hope your ladyship will give me leave to enter my own. Oh! honesty, honesty! it's very pleasant to speak the truth, but a man is sure to lose his customers by it. [*Exit.*]

Enter SIMON SINGLE.

Lady C. Heyday, Simon! and you, too—I'll have my cellar-doors walled up, if I am to be troubled with all the tipsy companions that resort to them.

Simon. Venerable lady, I am not inebriated. What I may be, if you wall up your cellar-doors, and me within them, I can't pretend to say. I may, in that case drink to support life, as I have now been tasting a glass, by your permission, to celebrate this mournful festival.

Lady C. How can it be a festival and mournful? You know not what you say.

Simon. Pardon me, pardon me, most incomparable lady. A festival it must be, because you are pleased to order us to be merry. Mournful it surely is, because your attorney makes us sad.

Lady C. You see he is in my interest, and you are all in league against him.

Simon. No, no, no, my lady; it is not because he is in your interest, we are leagued against him; your interest has been ever dearer to me than my own. If you turn me out of your doors this night, I can lay my hand upon my heart, and appeal to the Giver of it, that I never wronged you of a farthing; and, though a poor servant, scorn to cringe and lie and vilify an absent man, as he has done. Madam, you are abused; the country would rise up against him if they knew what he has said of Mr. Algernon; so much is your nephew beloved.

Lady C. Come, come, I know who tells you so: 'tis Henry Scudamore, and no one else.

Simon. Pray, madam, be no more deceived, but hear and judge for yourself. If it were the last word I had to utter, I would say, and say it to his face, that Lawyer Earling is a falsifier and a defamer.

Lady C. Go, stop him from discharging Henry Scudamore; don't let him leave the house till I have seen him. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Enter EARLING.

Earl. Where is this Henry Scudamore? I've hunted the whole house over for the fellow. If he is not driven out before this night, my post will not be tenable to-morrow; we shall have Algernon brought in in triumph upon the shoulders of his partisans, and all my labour's blasted in a moment. Ha! here's the man of all men for my purpose; this surly fellow has the mastiff's property; shew him his prey, and he will fasten on it.

Enter FRANK.

Come hither, Frank; a word with you.

Frank. What is your pleasure, master?

Earl. Do you know a loose fellow, an interloper, that came to seek a place, but brought no character; a vagabond it should seem, that calls himself Henry Scudamore?

Frank. Yes, I know Henry Scudamore.

Earl. Well, honest Frank, you see that he came here for no good purpose; and it is not fit he should be let to stay and take the bread out of the mouths of better than himself.

Frank. There's bread enough for all of us, methinks.

Earl. What then? what then? you're not a man, we'll hope, to be afraid of such a wafer cake as he is, Frank.

Frank. I'm afraid of no man.

Earl. Why, then, my hearty Frank, I give you orders to turn him bodily out of this house, for which I have my lady's authority.

Frank. What has he done that I should turn him out?

Earl. He has insulted me, traduced my character, and set me at defiance.

Frank. Has he done this?

Earl. He has.

Frank. Then let him stay for me: I will not touch him; I honour him for his spirit. They call me surly Frank, and so I am if any man affronts me; but I'll be no attorney's catchpole, lookye! And as for turning out, if that's your game, there's but one man I'll do that office for, and that's yourself, my master. There you have it. [*Exit.*]

Earl. Impudent varlet! the contagion's general if he have caught it. The whole swarm's upon me, and I must stand their buzzing; as for their stings, I'm not in fear of them so long as I can keep the queen of the hive in my possession.

Enter ALGERNON.

Oh, ho! I have lit upon you at last. Harkye! sir, you Henry Scudamore, whom nobody knows, de-camp, pack up your wallet, and betake yourself nobody cares whither. Off! the Lady Cypress warns you off, begone!

Alg. Go back, and say to Lady Cypress, when she sends her warning by a proper messenger, I will obey her.

Earl. Why, who am I? What do you take me for?

Alg. A wretch beneath my notice: a defamer.

Enter SIMON SINGLE.

Simon. Well met, friend Henry, 'tis my lady's orders that you don't leave the house till she have seen you.

Earl. Sot! you are drunk. You never had such orders.

Simon. I had no orders! very well. And I'm a sot, I'm drunk! why, very well. So much for me, now for yourself: you are no sot; you're sober, Mr. Earling the attorney; you're never drunk, for no man will drink with you; you never make mistakes about your orders, for you are under orders from the old one never to speak the truth, and faithfully adhere to your instructions.

Earl. This to my face?

Simon. Oh! yes, I never saw a face better entitled to the compliment. I only wish to see it face to face with Harry Algernon, and then, perhaps, your face may be promoted, where I may treat it with an egg or two.

Alg. Go, go, unhappy man; it can't be pleasant to hear yourself described so faithfully.

Earl. I'll not go; I summon you before the Lady Cypress; she'll do me justice; she'll avenge my wrongs. Here comes Sir Oliver, I appeal to him.

Enter SIR OLIVER MONTRATH.

Sir O. What is the matter?

Earl. These fellows have insulted me most grossly.

Sir O. You are a lawyer. You have your redress.

Earl. Sir, 'tis above redress by any law.

Sir O. Then put it up, and seek redress from patience. That is a remedy for all complaints.

Earl. I hope I've better remedies than patience; I warrant I'll exterminate these insolents. I'll pluck 'em root and branch out of this house, and hurl 'em to the dunghill that they sprung from.

Sir O. Go, then, and set about it. Leave me, sir, I've business with this gentleman.

Earl. This gentleman, forsooth! this gentleman— [*Exit.*]

Simon. Well, he may be a gentleman for me, only he lets the bottle stand too long, and takes no pity on his company, that wish to give it motion; that's not quite like a gentleman, methinks; else he

may be a sober sort of a gentleman—but not a lord; no, no; at least, he'll never be as drunk as a lord;

[*Exit.*]

Sir O. Now, sir, I've seen my nephew since we last conversed. You asked me then if I had been informed of the particulars of that rencontre; and by the motives you assigned for the inquiry, I should suppose you know some circumstances of that dark affair.

Alg. The whole correctly.

Sir O. Indeed! I should hardly have thought that Mr. Algernon would have revealed the whole to any but his nearest and most confidential friend.

Alg. Nor has he; it remains still in his bosom an inviolable secret, though known to me.

Sir O. You mean to say that secrets in your keeping are secure. I have my nephew's story as you have Algernon's, and should be glad, with your consent, to compare them with each other.

Alg. They cannot differ, for my account is drawn up by your nephew, and being signed by him, he neither can nor will depart from it?

Sir O. You much amaze me, sir, that Mr. Algernon should give a paper of such consequence out of his hand. I greatly wish to see it.

Alg. Would it relieve your mind at the same time to see and talk with Algernon himself?

Sir O. Oh! infinitely, if I could obtain it.

Alg. Then with a man of honour 'twould be mean to trifle any longer—I am Algernon.

Sir O. How! Algernon! may I believe you?

Alg. You shall not doubt me. There's your nephew's paper: no eye but your's has seen it from my hand.

Sir O. Sir—Mr. Algernon, I ask your pardon; I am satisfied; but can you be unknown, and in this house?

Alg. I never entered it before this day, nor, to my knowledge ever saw my aunt, till I appeared before her in this habit, which I shall now put off. But hark! we shall be interrupted here. Can't we retire to a more private place?

Sir O. To my apartment, if you'll be pleased to follow me. Ah! sir—ah! Mr. Algernon, how hard to find, now at the close of a long life of services, all its enjoyments, all its labours lost! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—The Castle-hall.

Enter JERRY SCUD and JENNY.

Scud. Well, well, well! jewel Jenny, here we are for the last time: farewell visits, to be sure, are melancholy matters; but we have many good friends in the castle still, and though I am thrown out of the cabinet, I have kept up my interest in the kitchen.

Jenny. Ay, and in the country, too, when it shall be known that you have forfeited my lady's favour by speaking up for Mr. Algernon; he is so much pitied and beloved by all men, that your neighbours will sham sick on purpose to employ you.

Scud. To say the truth, I have sometimes thought that was my lady's only complaint; but I took care my physis should not cure her of it; and my comfort is that nobody of the faculty will profit by my loss; for when she leaves off my medicines she'll find herself too well to employ a doctor.

Jenny. Come, come, Jerry, she'll not leave off you nor your medicines. If you can get to the speech of her, a little coaxing and a submissive apology, will set all things right.

Scud. No, no, jewel Jenny, she'll hear no apology, and, therefore, I have expressed myself more at large in my bill. Here it is: it's a bouncer, isn't it?

Jenny. Yes, marry, if she have patience to go

through this she'll find you have enough to say for yourself; but I suspect, Jerry, this argument is a little too much on one side.

Scud. Turn over the leaf, and you'll find a great deal more on the other side.

Enter SIMON SINGLE and MRS. DOROTHY BUCKRAM.

Ah! my good friends, my good friends! this is the most doleful visit I ever made to the castle. Jenny can witness I have passed a sleepless night: that incubus of an attorney rode upon me like the nightmare.

Mrs. B. Rode, indeed! Set a beggar on horse-back, and where will he not ride?

Scud. I attempted to put a cracker under his tail, but it burst in my hand, and I only burnt my own fingers without singing him.

Simon. Let him go; the road he travels is all down-hill, and when he comes to his journey's end he'll find those that will put crackers enough under his tail, I warrant me.

Mrs. B. As for me, a jackdaw in a cage has a better life of it than I have, for he may cry rogue and not be chidden for it. We shall be turned away: I lay my account to be sent going for one.

Simon. Thirty years I have passed within these walls, and I would sooner pass the rest of my days within the walls of a prison than live in a house where scurrility is caressed and plain speaking turned out of doors. Ha! who comes here?

Enter ALGERNON, in his own dress.

Mrs. B. Bless the good mark! our Henry—No—Yes, sure, 'tis Henry; how comes this to pass?

Alg. I'm ordered to attend upon my lady, so I put on my best.

Simon. Harkye! my friend, if it is not your own, bad is your best. Let us have no false feathers. Where did you get this suit?

Alg. 'Tis Harry Algernon's. He and I wear the same clothes; one tailor serves us both. Isn't it true, Jerry?

Scud. It is, it is; and the same measure fits you.

Simon. I don't know what you mean.

Alg. Then I'll inform you. Here are but two of you in company that do not know me; you are both my friends, my generous, zealous friends, for which I thank you, and come in person hither to convince you that Algernon is not that worthless man which calumny has painted him to be.

Mrs. B. Heaven's grace light on you, if, indeed, you are that injured gentleman.

Scud. Oh! by my soul, he is the very man: you may take that upon my word for truth.

Simon. I saw it; I said it; I knew he was a gentleman. Now we have got that attorney in a trap.

Jenny. Yes, yes; he'll make that Earling shrink into his hole.

Simon. Hang him, polecat; I'll smoke him out of it. Oh! the innumerable lies that miscreant has told of a gentleman he does not know even by sight. I pray you, sir, don't discover yourself to him, till we have had him up before my lady. Methinks I hear her say, "Simon, I am convinced that lawyer is a rascal: turn him out."

Mrs. B. Ay, we'll all lend a helping hand to that.

Scud. Yes, or a helping foot. If that be wanted, I have one at his service.

Simon. Bless you, my worthy master, bless you heartily! I hope I have said nothing to affront you; I was a little by the head just now, but that's over.

Alg. So is not my remembrance. I shall ever prize you as my best of friends.

Simon. Lord love you, we are all your friends; we are all Algernons and anti-Earlings.

Mrs. B. And when the election comes, we'll wear your colours.

Scud. Only put me in office on that day; let me be surgeon-general to the enemy, and I'll engage they shall have more freeholders in the hospital than at the hustings. I'll scour their consciences, I warrant me.

Alg. Now, my good friends, keep secret what has passed, and wait the event in silence. Here comes one, a gentle advocate, whom I would fain speak to apart.

Simon. We are gone, we are gone. All happiness befall you! [*Exeunt all but Alg.*]

Enter EMILY FITZALLAN.

Emily. Bless me! you've changed your habit.

Alg. Yes, my charmer: in chase 'tis lawful to hang out false colours, but when we are cleared and going into action, we must shew what we are.

Emily. Right, and where truth unfolds her standard, victory must follow.

Alg. And what should follow victory? What, but the glorious prize for which I struggle? that prize which fortune, aiming to impoverish, has only made more rich in my esteem; that generous heart, that sacrificed for me interest, for which so many sacrifice themselves. Now call to mind those words so heavenly sweet, which you left with me, whilst the ingenuous blush glowed on your cheek:—"Henry, I live for you!"

Emily. Ah! that was then the only way I had to reinstate you in your property; and, though it cost a blush to say those words, still I could say them, for I scorned to rob you: but to repeat them now would be—Oh, heaven! it would be everything but false, my Henry.

Alg. Then let me take that truth into a heart, of which no human power can dispossess you.

Emily. I hope not, Henry; for take that away, and I am poor, indeed.

Alg. 'Tis yours for ever; and believe me, dear one, if my too credulous aunt have not outlived her reason, she will see the injustice of her own decisions and revoke them. For my exclusion she may have some plea; our families have been at suit for years, and law will cut asunder closer ties than those existing between her and me; but of her motives for discarding you, take my word, Emily, she'll soon repent.

Emily. It is not that I fear her worthless favourite, the wretch has brought a storm upon his head, and has already had some heavy shocks; but my worst fears point to another quarter.

Alg. I understand you. 'Tis Monrath you dread.

Emily. I could not temporize; I spoke too plainly. Indignant of the claim she made upon me, I set her power too boldly at defiance, and challenged her to cancel her bequest.

Alg. You must consult Sir Oliver upon this: I cannot speak upon Monrath's affair even to you.

Emily. I see you either cannot or you will not, therefore I ask no questions, well persuaded you never would take arms against the life of any man and know yourself in fault.

Alg. I hope I sha'n't be found to have so done; but look! here comes Sir Oliver. I'll leave you; he may, perhaps, be less reserved than I am. [*Exit.*]

Enter SIR OLIVER MONRATH.

Sir O. Was not that Algernon?

Emily. You know him, sir, it seems.

Sir O. I think I do, I have cause to know him.

Emily. Ah! sir, you speak so mournfully, I fear you have found no comfort in your visit to your nephew.

Sir O. Small comfort. Yet the danger of his wound is much abated.

Emily. Then I'm afraid you have, or think you have, some cause of anger against Algernon.

Sir O. No, Emily, no anger against him. You cannot think too well of Algernon, though I could wish you had not put your thoughts in language quite so warm.

Emily. 'Twas indiscreet, but that defamer urged me, and put me off my guard.

Sir O. Couldn't you find another and a stronger cause that put you off your guard? Is there not a certain passion, which our hearts are subjects to, that neither keeps a guard upon itself, nor suffers any to be kept against it?

Emily. If I should answer that as truth would prompt me, shouldn't I expose myself to another reproof for want of caution?

Sir O. No; for so far from thinking with my lady, that you have chosen ill, I think with you that you could nowhere make a better choice: and more than this—were your brave father living, and knew what I know of your Algernon, he would approve your judgment.

Emily. As I am sure you would not give that name but to a sacred truth, what you have said sanctions the character of Algernon; but does it warrant me in suffering him to make a sacrifice of interest by marrying a beggar?

Sir O. You point the question wrong, and should have asked if it exculpates me, your father's friend, for suffering you to call yourself a beggar. No, my dear child, it does not, nor will I permit it to be said, the daughter of the generous Fitzallan, who in the battle found me faint with wounds, and, whilst he covered me, received his death, wanted that dress which I abounded in. This, Emily, this never should be said; so come with me, and don't oppose one word to my resolves; for in an act of honour I will pause at no man's bidding; no, my pretty one, nor yet at any woman's, though graced with all the charms that heaven can give her.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Enter EARLING.

Earl. Now, fortune, one kind lift, and I am landed. So far success goes with me: I have nothing more to fear from Emily; that pert, proud miss is silenced and thrown by. It now remains to sweep those menial vermin out of my way, those insects that annoy me: old Sir Oliver, that blusters about justice, is a hypocrite; he cannot be a friend to Algernon; and yet he troubles me, takes up my seat at table, occupies the ear of the old lady, and obstructs my suit, which stood so fair, that if I could but seize one lucky moment, one fair opportunity—Ha! I have found it: here she comes alone. Now, impudence befriend me!

Enter LADY CYPRESS.

Lady C. So, Mr. Earling, much as I love peace, I will not purchase it by mean concessions; I will not suffer the gentleman I esteem and trust to be affronted by my saucy servants; they shall atone or troop.

Earl. Most amiable, most excellent of ladies, whom with my heart I serve, honour, obey, and worship. I want words to speak my gratitude. Thus at your feet, in humble adoration, let me seal on this dear hand, the pledge, the sacred pledge, of my unutterable, my unbounded love—

Enter SIMON SINGLE and MRS. DOROTHY BUCKRAM.

Simon. Look, Dorothy, the devil's at his prayers.

Mrs. B. I hope they're his last prayers.

Earl. Curse on their coming! what a moment lost! (*Aside.*) Madam, do you permit your menial servants thus to break in upon your private moments?

Lady C. Why not? If you have anything to add

to your last speech I shall not interrupt it. You may resume your posture and go on.

Earl. Madam, I cannot.

Lady C. I can help your memory if you have lost the word. 'Twas 'Love, unbounded love.' When you had gone so far out of all bounds; all measures of respect, can the appearance of these silly people deter you from proceeding?

Earl. Madam, if you're offended, I have done. I'll humbly take my leave.

Lady C. No, sir, I must insist upon your staying. Though you are foiled to add a single word to insolence so perfect and complete, yet you shall not be robbed of your just right, that nature gives you, to be heard in vindication of your own assertions. If you have spoken the truth, and nothing but the truth, of Algernon, his character cannot be rescued, let the fate of your's be what it may.

Simon. Anything the matter, Mr. Attorney? Afraid you are not quite well just now. You look a little pale.

Lady C. Hold your tongue, foolish fellow! you, Simon, in the first place, and you next, mistress, who dare to tell me I am made the dupe of false impressions, are you not both ashamed to look this injured gentleman in the face?

Simon. It is a face to make a man ashamed, and we did blush to see him on his knees before your ladyship.

Lady C. That's my affair, fall down on your's and ask forgiveness of him.

Simon. Pray, madam, don't command me to do that, for fear I never should forgive myself. I ask your pardon for approaching you when I was tipsy, but you bade me drink, and I was over eager to obey you.

Lady C. That's easily forgiven; but your abuse of this gentleman, whom I must still call the friend of truth, is monstrous.

Simon. Madam, if that gentleman is the friend of truth, he makes very free with his friend, truly. I only said he told lies to your ladyship, that's no abuse, for here come those that can prove it.

Enter SIR OLIVER MONTRATH and EMILY FITZALLAN.

Earl. My evil genius! what does he do here?

Sir O. Forgive me, my good lady, if I come to atone to you and this fair advocate for my unjust suspicions of your nephew. I have one here waiting, who'll confront that gentleman, his accuser, and, I trust, remove some false impressions that your ladyship may have imbibed from his unfounded charges. Come in, sir, if you please.

Enter ALGERNON.

Lady C. How now! who's this? Henry!

Sir O. I claim your promise to give him hearing.

Earl. I protest against him; that fellow's an impostor: we shall not listen to his evidence.

Lady C. He first came here humbly to ask for service, pleaded decay, and said he was a gentleman by birth; I pitied him, and offered him relief. He now has changed his dress, shifted his character, and claims to be an advocate for Algernon. These are suspicious circumstances, and I should have some better reasons for believing him than I am yet possessed of. Do you know any such, Sir Oliver?

Earl. Ay, sir, do you know who this champion is?

Sir O. Sir, give me leave to ask, do you?

Earl. Not I; I know him not.

Sir O. Yet you know Algernon; are intimate with all his habits, frailties, faults, offences; have looked into his heart, and kindly told the secrets you discovered. Oh, thou slanderer! Now look him in the face, and prove your charge. Well may

you start. Mark his confusion, madam. This is your nephew, this is Algernon.

Emily. Yes, on my honour, and my brave preserver.

Lady C. I am confounded. Where is that defamer?

Simon. Madam, he has stepped aside to mend a flaw in his indictment. How do you do, Mr. Attorney? Come forward, if you please, and get acquainted with this gentleman's face. You knew him well enough behind his back.

Lady C. Peace! let me hear what Algernon will say in his own cause.

Sir O. Speak for yourself, brave Algernon.

Alg. I am that exiled man, whom, on the word of this defamer, though unknown to him even by sight, it seems, you have proscribed. Despairing of admission to your presence, and driven, in self-defence, on this resource, I took a counterfeited character, and saw what I had never been allowed to approach—your person. Much I wished to speak in mitigation of your prejudice, and give a plain rental of my wrongs; but you had then no ear for such discourse, and I was told to wait your better leisure.

Lady C. All this is true: proceed.

Alg. A friend here present told me I was accused to you of various crimes and gross enormities. I plead to failings, to the common errors and indiscretions youth is subject to, but, I trust, I have never degraded my character or debased my principles; I am no gamester, as he makes me to be; no dissipater of my paternal fortune, as he insinuates; no libertine, as he asserts; and, let me add, in the hearing of Sir Oliver Montroath, I am no assassin.

Sir O. It is now my duty, and a painful one I feel it, to bring to light, in vindication of an injured character, the guilty person, for whose shameful act no better palliation can be found than temporary madness and intoxication. The monster, from whose brutal violence the purest of heaven's creatures was preserved by Algernon—how shall I speak it without shame and horror!—was Lionel Montroath.

Lady C. I am confounded and amazed. Montroath! This, if not told by you, Sir Oliver, would mock belief.

Sir O. Your nephew was too noble to disclose it, though he has in his hands a written paper signed by the offender for his vindication. This, I believe, he never has discovered, even to that lady, though a party in it.

Emily. Never; but constantly evaded my inquiries.

Sir O. To this, when I shall add that my rash nephew forced the duel on him in consequence of blows exchanged between them, I trust I may with safety rest his cause upon the facts adduced, unless, indeed, this gentleman have any other charge, which in his modesty he will prefer.

Earl. You'll not draw anything from me, Sir Oliver; you may talk on; I prefer silence.

Sir O. You are right; 'tis time your tongue had some repose.

Lady C. Pray, do not keep him longer in my sight. My nephew does not seem to hold him worthy of a retort.

Alg. No, madam, I have nothing to return him for his malicious slander, but my contempt.

Lady C. If he can feel, 'tis punishment enough.

Sir O. Begone! your infamy go with you; and may no part of it adhere to your profession.

Earl. Let my profession look to itself. There are some understandings in this world made, it should seem, by nature to be duped. Had you not been so easy of belief, I had not been so forward to deceive you. Now put what name you will upon my conduct, there are such glaring instances in point, of dealers in seduction, infamy, and false impres-

sions on credulity, as make my shame no wonder. [Exit.]

Lady C. Now, Henry, you've appealed to me for justice: hear my decree. There is your destiny; that is the prize which you have so nobly earned. My heart, so long estranged, is now your own. You are my son, and Emily my daughter; all I possess is yours. Have I stoned?

Alg. Oh! you have given me that which might atone for all the pains mortality could feel: beauty to charm me, talents to enchant, and truth to fix my happiness secure.

Emily. Oh! Henry, bear me to my benefactress, and let me kneel—

Lady C. Yes, I will let you kneel, my child, for now thou hast a treasure worth thy thanks. Be virtuous, loving, faithful to each other, ape not the fashions of this guilty world; seek pleasures where alone they can be found, in nuptial harmony, domestic duties, and the sweet reflection which fortune well employed is sure to give. Rise, my adopted, rise!

Sir O. Oh! let me add a blessing. May you be—Well, well, it will not forth; my heart's too full; but I will send it up in thought towards heaven. Here, Emily, my love, I'll put the first chain on your bridal arm; they are pure pearls, my child; not spoils of war, but gifts of gratitude for life preserved; wear them for my sake, and when I am dead, cast a kind look upon them, and drop one pearly tear, richer than them all, to the memory of old Oliver.

Emily. Oh! sir, sir, sir! my father and my friend!

Sir O. So, no! no more. Henry, my gallant boy, give me your hand; a soldier's greeting after victory—time was I could have grasped it closer.

Alg. I accept it, and press it to my heart.

Lady C. Where are you all? This is a day of joy. Simon, I look to you to oil the hinges of my castle gates, that they may open freely to the neighbours, the tenants, and the poor.

Simon. I'll make 'em swing, so please you, and for one bad man now gone out of them, a hundred good ones shall come in, I warrant me.

Lady C. You, Dorothy, must set the girls a dancing; and you, Rachel, must lead the ball in honour of your mistress.

SCUD and JENNY who had crept in behind the servants, come forward.

Scud. And when the bumpkins caper and kick shins, may they not want a plaister, good my lady? I'll cure them gratis on this happy night. I have brought a bill, so please you, that will bear some riders on it, and not break its back.

Lady C. We'll have no bills nor bickerings any more; and to cut short all reckonings, I'll establish you apothecary-general to the castle upon a salary fixed.

Simon. Then, Jerry, the less physic you send in the better for yourself.

Scud. And for all parties, my most honoured lady, I hope most heartily, for all your sakes, my place will be as near a sinecure as possible.

Lady C. I hope so, too. You and your fair wife are welcome. She is a child of the castle, and will grace our dance.

Scud. Yes, under favour, Jenny, though I say it, has all the steps that now are thought so graceful: she'll balance on one leg and send the other upon a cruise into her neighbour's pocket; no magnetizing-doctor or dotterell-monger can surpass my Jenny for the fine attitudes.

Lady C. You're a strange mortal; but let mirth go round, and if the humble annals of our castle can cheer one honest, ease one heavy heart, our harmless efforts have not been in vain. [Exeunt.]

ZARA;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY AARON HILL.



Act III.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

OSMAN
LUSIGNAN
CHATILLON

NERESTAN
ORASMIN
MELIDOR

ZARA
SELIMA
ATTENDANTS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Seraglio.*

Enter ZARA and SELIMA.

Sel. It moves my wonder, young and beauteous
Zara,
Whence these new sentiments inspire your heart!
Your peace of mind increases with your charms;
Tears now no longer shade your eyes' soft lustre:
You meditate no more those happy climes,
To which Nerestan will return to guide you.

Zara. Since after two long years he not re-
turns,
'Tis ~~his~~ his promise stretch'd beyond his
power.

I own
I once admired the unprofitable zeal,
But now it charms no longer.

Sel. What if yet,
He, faithful, should return, and hold his vow;
Would you not, then—

Zara. No matter: time is past,
And everything is changed.

Sel. But whence comes this?

Zara. Go: 'twere too much to tell thee Zara's
fate:
The sultan's secrets, all, are sacred here:

But my fond heart delights to mix with thine.
Some three months past, when thou, and other
slaves,

Were forc'd to quit fair Jordan's flow'ry bank,
Heav'n, to cut short the anguish of my days,
Rais'd me to comfort by a powerful hand:
This mighty Osman—

Sel. What of him?

Zara. This sultan,
This conqueror of the Christians, loves—

Sel. Whom?

Zara. Zara.

Thou blushest, and, I guess, thy thoughts accuse
me;

But know me better: 'twas unjust suspicion.
All emperor as he is, I cannot stoop

To honours that bring shame and baseness with
them:

He offers marriage; and its rites now wait
To crown me empress of this eastern world.

Sel. Your virtue and your charms deserve it
all:

My heart is not surprised, but struck to hear it.
If to be empress can complete your happiness,
I rank myself, with joy, among your slaves.

Zara. Be still my equal, and enjoy my bles-
sings;

For, thou partaking, they will bless me more.

Sel. Alas! but heaven, will it permit this mar-
riage?

Will not this grandeur, falsely call'd a bliss,
Plant bitterness, and root it in your heart?
Have you forgot you are of Christian blood?

Zara. Ah me! What hast thou said? Why
wouldst thou thus
Recall my wav'ring thoughts? How know I,
what,

Or whence I am? Heaven kept it hid in dark-
ness,

Conceal'd me from myself, and from my blood.

Sel. Nerestan, who was born a Christian here,
Asserts that you, like him, had Christian parents;
Besides, that cross, which, from your infant
years,

Has been preserved, was found upon your bosom,
As if design'd by heaven a pledge of faith
Due to the God you purpose to forsake.

Zara. This cross, as often as it meets my eye,
Strikes through my heart a kind of awful fear.
I honour, from my soul, the Christian laws;
Those laws, which, softening nature by humanity,
Melt nations into brotherhood: no doubt,
Christians are happy; and 'tis just to love them.

Sel. Why have you, then, declared yourself their
foe?

Why will you join your hand with this proud
Osman's,

Who owes his triumph to the Christians' ruin?

Zara. Ah! Who could slight the offer of his
heart?

Nay, for I mean to tell thee all my weakness,
Perhaps I had ere now professed thy faith,
But Osman lov'd me, and I've lost it all:—
I think on none but Osman: my pleased heart,
Fill'd with the blessing to be loved by him,
Wants room for other happiness. Place thou
Before thy eyes his merit and his fame,
His youth, yet blooming but in manhood's dawn;
How many conquer'd kings have swell'd his
pow'r!

Think, too, how lovely! how his brow becomes
This wreath of early glories! Oh! my friend,
I talk not of a sceptre, which he gives me:
No; to be charm'd with that were thanks too
humble;

Offensive tribute, and too poor for love!

'Twas Osman won my heart, not Osman's crown:
I love not in him aught besides himself.

'Thou think'st, perhaps, that these are starts of
passion;

But had the will of heav'n, less bent to bless him,
Doom'd Osman to my chains, and me to fill
The throne that Osman sits on, ruin and wretched-
ness

Catch and consume my wishes! but I would,
To raise me to myself, descend to him.

Sel. Hark! the wish'd music sounds. 'Tis he!
he comes! [*Exit.*]

*Enter OSMAN, reading a paper, which he delivers to
ORASMAN; Attendants following.*

Osm. Wait my return; or should there be a
cause

That may require my presence, do not fear
To enter; ever mindful, that my own

[*Exit Orasman with Attendants.*]

Follows my people's happiness. At length,
Cares have releas'd my heart to love and Zara.

Zara. 'Twas not in cruel absence to deprive
me

Of your imperial image; everywhere

You reign triumphant: memory supplies

Reflection with your power; and you, like hea-
ven,

Are always present, and are always gracious.

Osm. The sultans, and my great ancestors, be-
queath'd

Their empire to me, but their taste they gave
not;

Their laws, their lives, their loves, delight not
me:

I know our prophet smiles on am'rous wishes,
And opens a wide field to vast desire;

I know, that at my will I might possess;

That, wasting tenderness in wild profusion,

I might look down to my surrounded feet,

And bless contending beauties. I might speak,

Serenely slothful, from within my palace,

And bid my pleasure be my people's law.

But, sweet as softness is, its end is cruel;

I can look round and count a hundred kings,
Unconquer'd by themselves, and slaves to
others:

Hence was Jerusalem to Christians lost;

Hence from the distant Euxine to the Nile,

The trumpet's voice has waked the world to
war;

Yet, amidst arms and death thy power has reach'd
me;

For thou disdain'st, like me, a languid love;

Glory and Zara join and charm together.

Zara. I hear at once with blushes and with
joy,

This passion, so unlike your country's customs.

Osm. Passion like mine disdains my country's
customs;

I know to love you, Zara, with esteem;

To trust your virtue, and to court your soul.

Nobly confiding, I unveil my heart,

And dare inform you that 'tis all your own.

My joys must all be yours; only my cares

Shall lie conceal'd within, and reach not Zara.

Zara. How low, how wretched was the lot of
Zara!

Too poor, with aught but thanks to pay such bles-
sings!

Osm. Not so; I love, and would be loved
again;

Let me confess it, I possess a soul,

That what it wishes, wishes ardently.

I should believe you hated, had you power

To love with moderation: 'tis my aim,

In everything to reach supreme perfection.

If with an equal flame I touch your heart,

Marriage attends your smile. But know, 'twill
make

Me wretched, if it make not Zara happy.

Zara. Ah! sir, if such a heart as gen'rous
Osman's

Can, from my will, submit to take its bliss,

What mortal ever was decreed so happy?

Pardon the pride with which I own my joy;

Thus wholly to possess the man I love;

To know and to confess his will my fate;

To be the happy work of his dear hands;

To be—

Enter ORASMIN.

Osm. Already interrupted! What?

Who? Whence?

Oras. This moment, sir, there is arrived

That Christian slave, who, licens'd on his faith,
Went hence to France; and now returned, prays
audience.

Osm. Admit him.—What? Why comes he
not?

Oras. He waits without. No Christian dares ap-
proach

This place, long sacred to the sultan's privacies.

Osm. Go, bring him with thee; monarchs, like
the sun,

Shine but in vain, unwarmed, if unseen;

With forms and rev'rence let the great approach
us,

Not the unhappy; every place alike

Gives the distress'd a privilege to enter.

[*Exit Orasmin.*
I think with horror on these dreadful maxims,
Which harden kings, insensibly, to tyrants.

Enter ORASMIN with NERESTAN.

Ner. Imperial sultan! honour'd even by foes!
See me return'd, regardful of my vow,
And punctual to discharge a Christian's duty.
I bring the ransom of the captive Zara,
Fair Selima, the partner of her fortune,
And of ten Christian captives, prisoners here.
You promised, sultan, if I should return,
To grant their rated liberty: behold,
I am return'd, and they are your's no more.
I would have stretch'd my purpose to myself,
But fortune has deny'd it; my poor all
Suffic'd no further, and a noble poverty
Is now my sole possession. I redeem
The promis'd Christians, for I taught them hope;
But, for myself, I come again your slave,
To wait the fuller hand of future charity.

Osm. Christian, I must confess thy courage
charms me;

But let thy pride be taught it treads too high
When it presumes to climb above my mercy.
Go, ransomless, thyself, and carry back
Their unaccepted ransoms, join'd with gifts,
Fit to reward thy purpose; instead of ten,
Demand a hundred Christians; they are thine:
Take them, and bid them teach their haughty
country

They left some virtue among Saracens:
Be Lusignan excepted. He,
Who boasts the blood of kings, and dares lay
claim

To my Jerusalem—that claim, his guilt!
Such is the law of states, had I been vanquish'd,
Thus had he said of me. I mourn his lot,
Who must in fetters, lost to daylight, pine
And sigh away old age in grief and pain.
For Zara, but to name her as a captive,
Were to dishonour language: she's a prize
Above thy purchase: all the Christian realms,
With all their kings to guide them, would unite
In vain to force her from me. Go, retire.

Ner. For Zara's ransom, with her own consent,

I had your royal word. For Lusignan—
Unhappy, poor, old man!

Osm. Was I not heard?
Have I not told thee, Christian, all my will?
What, if I prais'd thee! This presumptuous
virtue,

Compelling my esteem, provokes my pride:
Begone; and, when to-morrow's sun shall rise
On my dominions, be not found too near me.

[*Exit Nerestan.*

Zara, retire a moment.
Assume, throughout my palace, sovereign em-
pire,

While I give orders to prepare the pomp
That waits to crown thee mistress of my throne.

[*Leads her out, and returns.*
Orasmin. Didst thou mark th' imperious slave?
What could he mean? He sigh'd, and as he
went,
Turn'd and look'd back at Zara. Didst thou mark
it?

Oras. Alas! my sovereign master, let not jeal-
ousy

Strike high enough to reach your noble heart.

Osm. Jealousy, saidst thou? I disdain it: no!
Distrust is poor, and a misplaced suspicion
Invites and justifies the falsehood fear'd.
Yet, as I love with warmth, so I could hate.
But Zara is above disguise and art:
My love is stronger, nobler, than my power.

Jealous! I was not jealous: if I were,
I am not—no—my heart—but let us drown
Remembrance of the word:
My heart is fill'd with a diviner flame.
Go, and prepare for the approaching nuptials;
Zara to careful empire joins delight;
I must allot one hour to thoughts of state,
Then, all the smiling day is love and Zara's.

[*Exit Orasmin.*
Monarchs, by forms of pompous misery press'd,
In proud, unsocial misery unblest'd,
Would, but for love's soft influence, curse their
throne,
And, among crowded millions, live alone. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Another Apartment.

Enter NERESTAN and CHATILLON.

Chat. Matchless Nerestan! generous and
great!

You, who have broke the chains of hopeless
slaves!

You, Christian saviour, by a Saviour sent;
Appear be known, enjoy your due delight.
The grateful weepers wait to clasp your knees,
They throng to kiss the happy hand that sav'd
them:

Indulge the kind impatience of their eyes,
And, at their head, command their hearts for
ever.

Ner. Illustrations Chatillon! this praise o'erwhelms
me;

What have I done beyond a Christian's duty?
Beyond what you would, in my place, have
done?

Chat. True, it is every honest Christian's
duty;

Nay, 'tis the blessings of such minds as ours,
For others' good to sacrifice our own;
Yet, happy they, to whom heav'n grants the
power

To execute, like you, that duty's call.
For us, the relics of abandon'd war,
Forgot in France, and, in Jerusalem,
Left to grow old in fetters,—Osman's father
Consign'd us to the gloom of a damp dungeon,
Where, but for you, we must have groan'd out
life,

And native France have bless'd our eyes no
more.

Ner. The will of gracious heav'n, that soften'd
Osman,

Inspir'd me for your sakes. But with our joy
Flows mix'd a bitter sadness. I had hoped
To save from their perversion a young beauty,
Who, in her infant innocence, with me,
Was made a slave by cruel Noradin;
When, sprinkling Syria with the blood of Chris-
tians,

Cæsaræa's walls saw Lusignan surpris'd,
And the proud crescent rise in bloody triumph.
From this sgraglio, having young escap'd,
Fate, three years since, restor'd me to my
chains:

Then, sent to Paris on my plighted faith,
I flatter'd my fond hope with vain resolves,
To guide the lovely Zara to that court;
But Osman will detain her—yet, not Osman,
Zara herself forgets she is a Christian,
And loves the tyrant sultan. Let that pass:
I mourn a disappointment still more cruel;
The prop of all our Christian hope is lost.

[*Chat.* Dispose me at your will; I am your
own.

Ner. Oh! sir, great Lusignan, so long their captive,
That last of an heroic race of kings;
That warrior, whose past fame has fill'd the world,
Osman refuses to my sighs for ever.

Chat. Nay, then, we have been all redeem'd in vain;

Perish that soldier who would quit his chains
And leave his noble chief behind in fetters.
Alas! you know him not as I have known him;
Thank heav'n, that plac'd your birth so far re-mov'd

From those detested days of blood and woe.
But I, less happy, was condemn'd to see
Thy walls, Jerusalem, beat down,
And our last king, oppress'd with age and arms,
Murder'd, and bleeding o'er his murder'd sons.
Then, Lusignan, sole remnant of his race,
Rallying our fated few amidst the flames,
Fearless, beneath the crush of falling towers,
The conquerors and the conquer'd, groans and death;

Dreadful!—and waving in his hand a sword,
Red with the blood of infidels, cried out,
“This way, ye faithful Christians, follow me.”

Ner. How full of glory was that brave retreat!

Chat. 'Twas heav'n, no doubt, that sav'd and led him on;
Pointed his path, and march'd our guardian guide:

We reach'd Cæsarea; there the general voice
Chose Lusignan thenceforth to give us laws;
Alas! 'twas vain: Cæsarea could not stand,
When Sion's self was fallen! we were betray'd,
And Lusignan condemn'd to length of life,
In chains, in damps, and darkness, and despair:
Yet, great amidst his miseries, he look'd
As if he could not feel his fate himself,
But as it reach'd his followers. And shall we,
For whom our generous leader suffer'd this,
Be vilely safe, and dare be bless'd without him?

Ner. Oh! I should hate the liberty he shar'd not.

I know too well the miseries you describe,
For I was born amidst them. Chains and death,
Cæsarea lost, and Saracens triumphant,
Were the first objects which my eyes e'er look'd on.

Hurried, an infant, among other infants,
Snatch'd from the bosoms of their bleeding mothers,

A temple sav'd us, till the slaughter ceased;
Then were we sent to this ill-fated city,
Here, in the palace of our former kings,
To learn from Saracens their hated faith,
And be completely wretched. Zara, too,
Shar'd this captivity; we both grew up,
So near each other, that a tender friendship
Endear'd her to my wishes. My fond heart
(Pardon its weakness) bleeds to see her lost;
And, for a barb'rous tyrant, quit her God.

Chat. Such is the Saracens' too fatal policy!
Watchful seducers still of infant weakness:
Happy that you so young escap'd their hands!
But let us think—May not this Zara's interest,
Loving the sultan, and by him belov'd,
For Lusignan procure some softer sentence?
The wise and just, with innocence, may draw
Their own advantage from the guilt of others.

Ner. What prospect of success from an apostate?

On whom I cannot look without disdain;
And who will read her shame upon my brow.
The hardest trial of a generous mind
Is to court favours from a hand it scorns.

Chat. Think it is Lusignan we seek to serve.

Ner. Well, it shall be attempted. Hark! who's this?

Are my eyes false, or is it really she?

Enter ZARA.

Zara. Start not, my worthy friend, I come to seek you;

The sultan has permitted it;
It pleas'd your pity, shall I say, your friendship?

Or rather, shall I call it generous charity?
To form that noble purpose, to redeem
Distressful Zara; you procur'd my ransom,
And with a greatness that out-soar'd a crown,
Return'd, yourself a slave, to give me freedom;
But heav'n has cast our fate for different climes:
Here, in Jerusalem, I fix for ever;
Yet, among all the shine that marks my fortune,
I shall with frequent tears remember your's;
Your goodness will for ever soothe my heart,
And keep your image still a dweller there:
Warm'd by your great example to protect
That faith that lifts humanity so high,
'T'll be a mother to distressful Christians.

Ner. How! You protect the Christians! You, who can

Abjure their saving truth, and coldly see
Great Lusignan, their chief, die slow in chains!

Zara. To bring him freedom you behold me here;

'You will this moment meet his eyes in joy.

Chat. Shall I, then, live to bless that happy hour?

Zara. See where they bring the good old chief,
grown dim

With age, by pain and sorrows hasten'd on.

Enter LUSIGNAN, led in by two Guards.

Lus. Where am I? From the dungeon's depth,
what voice

Has call'd me to revisit long-lost day?

Am I with Christians! I am weak—forgive me,
And guide my trembling steps. I'm full of years;

My miseries have worn me more than age.

Am I, in truth, at liberty? (*Seating himself.*)

Chat. You are;
And every Christian's grief takes end with your's.

Lus. Oh, light! Oh! dearer far than light, that voice!

Chatillon, is it you? my fellow martyr!

And shall our wretchedness, indeed, have end?

In what place are we now? my feeble eyes,

Disus'd to daylight, long in vain to find you.

Chat. This was the palace of your royal fathers:

'Tis now the son of Noradin's seraglio.

Zara. The master of this place, the mighty Osman,

Distinguishes and loves to cherish virtue.

This generous Frenchman, yet a stranger to you,
Drawn from his native soil, from peace and rest,
Brought the vow'd ransoms of ten Christian slaves,

Himself contented to remain a captive;

But Osman, charm'd by greatness like his own,

To equal what he lov'd, has giv'n him you.

Lus. So generous France inspires her social sons!

They have been ever dear and useful to me.

Would I were nearer to him! Noble sir,

(*Nerestan approaches.*)

How have I merited that you for me

Should pass such distant seas to bring me blessings,

And hazard your own safety for my sake?

Ner. My name, sir, is Nerestan; born in Syria,

I wore the chains of slavery from my birth;
Till quitting the proud crescent for the court
Where warlike Lewis reigns, beneath his eye
I learnt the grade of arms;
Your sight, unhappy prince, would charm his
eye;

That best and greatest monarch will behold
With grief and joy these venerable wounds,
And print embraces where your fetters bound
you.

All Paris will revere the cross's martyr.

Lus. Alas! in times long past, I've seen its
glory:

When Philip the victorious liv'd, I fought
Abreast with Montmorency and Melun,
D'Estaing, De Neille, and the far-famous
Courcy;

Names which were then the praise and dread of
war;

But what have I to do at Paris now?

I stand upon the brink of the cold grave;
That way my journey lies; to find, I hope,
The King of kings; and ask the recompense
For all my woes, long suffer'd for his sake.
You generous witnesses of my last hour,
While yet I live, assist my humble prayers,
And join the resignation of my soul.

Nerestan! Chatillon! and you, fair mourner,
Whose tears do honour to an old man's sorrows,
Pity a father, the unhappiest, sure,
That ever felt the hand of angry heaven!
My eyes, though dying, still can furnish tears;
Half my long life they flow'd, and still will
flow:

A daughter and three sons, my heart's proud
hopes,

Were all torn from me in their tend'rest years;
My friend Chatillon knows, and can remember—

Chat. Would I were able to forget your woe!

Lus. Thou wert a prisoner with me in Cæsarea,
And there beheldst my wife and two dear sons
Perish in the flames.

Chat. A captive, and in fetters,
I could not help them.

Lus. I know thou couldst not.

Oh! 'twas a dreadful scene! these eyes beheld
it—

Husband and father, helpless I beheld it—
Denied the mournful privilege to die.

Oh! my poor children! whom I now deplore,
If ye be saints in heav'n, as sure ye are,
Look with an eye of pity on that brother,
That sister whom you left! If I have yet
Or son or daughter: for, in early chains,
Far from their lost and unassisting father,
I heard that they were sent, with numbers more,
To this seraglio; hence to be dispers'd
In nameless remnants o'er the east, and spread
Our Christian miseries round a faithless world.

Chat. 'Twas true; for, in the horrors of that
day,

I snatch'd your infant daughter from her cradle;
When, from my bleeding arms, fierce Saracens
For'd the lost innocent, who smiling lay,
And pointed, playful, at the swarthy spoilers.
With her, your youngest, then your only son,
Whose little life had reach'd the fourth sad year,
And just giv'n sense to feel his own misfortunes,
Was order'd to this city.

Ner. I, too, hither,
Just at that fatal age, from lost Cæsarea,
Came in that cloud of undistinguish'd Chris-
tians.

Lus. You! came you thence? Alas! who knows
but you

Might heretofore have seen my two poor children.

(Looking up.)
Ha! madam, that small ornament you wear,

Its form a stranger to this country's fashion,
How long has it been yours?

Zara. From my first birth, sir.

Ah! what! you seem surpris'd! why should this
move you?

Lus. Would you confide it to my trembling
hands?

Zara. To what new wonders am I now re-
serv'd!

Oh! sir, what mean you?

Lus. Providence and heaven!

Oh! failing eyes, deceive ye not my hope!

Can this be possible? Yes, yes, 'tis she;

This little cross—I know it by sure marks.

Oh! take me, heav'n, while I can die with joy—

Zara. Oh! do not, sir, distract me: rising
thoughts,

And hopes and fears, o'erwhelm me!

Lus. Tell me yet,

Has it remain'd for ever in your hands?

What, both brought captives from Cæsarea
hither?

Zara. Both, both.

Lus. Their voice, their looks,

The living images of their dear mother!

Oh! God, who see'st my tears, and know'st my
thoughts,

Do not forsake me at this dawn of hope;

Strengthen my heart, too feeble for this joy.

Madam—Nerestan—Help me, Chatillon;
(Rising.)

Nerestan, hast thou on thy breast a scar,
Which, ere Cæsarea fell, from a fierce hand,
Surprising us by night, my child receiv'd?

Ner. Bless'd hand! I bear it, sir; the mark is
there.

Lus. Merciful heaven!

Zara. *(Kneeling.)* My father! Oh!

Lus. Oh! my children!

My son, my daughter! lost in embracing you,
I would now die, lest this should prove a dream.

Chat. How touch'd is my glad heart to see their
joy!
(Aside.)

Lus. Again I find you; dear in wretched-
ness;

Oh! my brave son, and thou, my nameless daugh-
ter;

Now dissipate all doubt, remove all dread.

Has heaven, that gives me back my children, giv'n
them

Such as I lost them? Come they Christians to
me?

One weeps, and one declines a conscious eye:

Your silence speaks—too well I understand it.

Zara. I cannot, sir, deceive you: Osman's
laws

Were mine, and Osman is not Christian.

Lus. Her words are thunder bursting on my
head;

Wer't not for thee, my son, I now should die.

Full sixty years I fought the Christian's cause,
Saw their doom'd temple fall, their power de-
stroy'd;

Twenty a captive, in a dungeon's depth,

Yet never for myself my tears sought heaven;

All for my children rose my fruitless prayers.

Yet what avails a father's wretched joy?

I have a daughter gain'd, and heav'n an enemy!

Oh! my misguided daughter, lose not thy faith;

Reclaim thy birthright; think upon the blood

Of twenty Christian kings that fills thy veins;

What would thy mother feel to see thee thus!

She and thy murder'd brothers! think they call
thee!

Think that thou seest them stretch their bloody
arms,

And weep, to win thee from their murder's
bosom.

Ev'n in the place where thou betray'st thy God,
He died, my child, to save thee. Turn thy eyes
And see; for thou art near his sacred sepulchre;
Thou canst not move a step but where he trod;
Thou tremblest—Oh! admit me to thy soul;
Kill not thy aged, thy afflicted father;
Take not, thus soon, again, the life thou gav'st
him;
Shame not thy mother, nor renounce thy God.
'Tis past. Repentance dawns in thy sweet eyes;
I see bright truth descending to thy heart,
And now, my long-lost child is found for ever.

Zara. Oh! my father,
Dear author of my life, inform me, teach me,
What should my duty do?

Lus. By one short word,
To dry up all my tears, and make life welcome,
Say, thou art a Christian.

Zara. Sir, I am a Christian.

Lus. Receive her, gracious heaven! and bless
her for it!

Enter ORASMIN.

Oras. Madam, the sultan order'd me to tell
you,
That he expects you instant quit this place,
And bid your last farewell to these vile Chris-
tians.

You, captive Frenchmen, follow me; for you,
It is my task to answer.

Chat. Still new miseries!
How cautious man should be to say, "I'm
happy!"

Lus. These are the times, my friends, to try
our firmness,
Our Christian firmness.

Zara. Alas! sir—Oh!

Lus. Oh! you—I dare not name you:
Farewell! but come what may, be sure remember
You keep the fatal secret; for the rest,
Leave all to heaven: be faithful, and be bless'd.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Seraglio.*

Enter OSMAN and ORASMIN.

Osm. Orasmin, this alarm was false and ground-
less;
Lewis no longer turns his arm on me:
The French, grown weary by a length of woes,
Wish not at once to quit their fruitful plains,
And furnish on Arabia's desert sands:
Their ships, 'tis true, have spread the Syrian
seas;

And Lewis, hovering o'er the coast of Cyprus,
Alarms the fears of Asia. But I've learnt,
That, steering wide from our unmenac'd ports,
He points his thunder at th' Egyptian shore.
There let him war and waste my enemies;
Their mutual conflict will but fix my throny.
Release those Christians: I restore their free-
dom;

'Twill please their master, nor can weaken me:
Transport them at my cost, to find their king;
I wish to have him know me: carry thither
This Lusignan, whom, tell him, I restore,
Because I cannot fear his fame in arms;
But love him for his virtue and his blood.
Tell him, my father, having conquer'd twice,
Condemn'd him to perpetual chains; but I
Have set him free, that I may triumph more.

Oras. The Christians gain an army in his name.

Osm. I cannot fear a sound.

Oras. But, sir, should Lewis—

Osm. Tell Lewis and the world—It shall be
so:

Zara propos'd it, and my heart approves:

Thy statesman's reason is too dull for love.

But I talk on, and waste the smiling moments.

For one long hour I yet defer my nuptials;

But 'tis not lost, that hour; 'twill be all her's;

She would employ it in a conference

With that Nerestan, whom thou know'st—that
Christian.

Oras. And have you, sir, indulg'd that strange
desire?

Osm. What mean'st thou? They were infant slaves
together;

Friends should part kind, who are to meet no
more.

When Zara asks, I will refuse her nothing:

Restraint was never made for those we love.

Down with those rigours of the proud seraglio!

I hate its laws: where blind austerity

Sinks virtue to necessity. My blood

Disclaims your Asian jealousy. I hold

The fierce, free plainness of my Scythian ances-
tors,

Their open confidence, their honest hate,

Their love unfeared, and their anger told.

Go; the good Christian waits; conduct him to
her;

Zara expects thee; what she wills, obey. [*Exit.*]

Oras. Ho! Christian, enter. Wait a moment
here.

Enter NERESTAN.

Zara will soon approach: I go to find her. [*Exit.*]

Ner. In what a state, in what a place I leave
her!

She's here.

Enter ZARA.

Thank heaven, it is not, then, unlawful

To see you yet once more, my lovely sister!

For Lusignan,

His last sad hour's at hand.

Oh! let not doubt

Disturb his parting moments with distrust;

Let me, when I return to close his eyes,

Tell him

You are confirm'd a Christian.

Zara. What, am I not your sister? and shall
you

Refuse me credit? You suppose me light;

You, who would judge my honour by your own,

Shall you distrust a truth I dar'd avow,

And stamp apostate on a sister's heart?

Ner. Ah! do not misconceive me. If I err'd,

Affection, not distrust, misled my fear;

Your will may be a Christian, yet not you;

Swear, swear by all the woes we all have borne,

By all the martyr'd saints who call you daugh-
ter,

That you consent, this day, to seal our faith,

By that mysterious rite which waits your call.

Zara. I swear by heaven, and all its holy
host,

Its saints, its martyrs, its attesting angels,

And the dread presence of its living Author,

To have no faith but yours:—to die a Christian!

But, tell me—nor be tender on this point,

What punishment your Christian laws decree,

For an unhappy wretch, who, to herself

Unknown, and all abandon'd to the world,

Lost and enslav'd, has, in her sov'reign master,

Found a protector, generous as great,

Has touch'd his heart, and given him all her
own?

Ner. The punishment of such a slave should be

Death in this world, and pain in that to come.

Zara. I am that slave—

Ner. Destruction to my hopes! Can it be you?

Zara. It is: adored by Osman, I adore him:
This hour the nuptial rites will make us one.

Ner. What, marry Osman! Let the world grow dark,
That the extinguish'd sun may hide thy shame!
Could it be thus, it were no crime to kill thee.

Zara. Strike, strike! I love him; yes, by heav'n,
I love him.

Ner. Death is thy due; but not thy due from me.

Yes, I will dare acquaint our father with it:
Departing Lusignan may live so long,
As just to hear thy shame, and die to 'scape it.

Zarra. Stay, my too angry brother, stay; perhaps,

Zara has resolution great as thine:

'Tis cruel, and unkind! Thy words are crimes;
My weakness but misfortune! Dost thou suffer?
I suffer more. Oh! would to heaven this blood
Of twenty boasted kings would stop at once,
And stagnate in my heart! it then no more
Would rush in boiling fevers through my veins,
And ev'ry trembling drop be fill'd with Osman. A
How has he lov'd me, how has he oblig'd me!
I owe thee to him:

For me, he softens the severe decrees
Of his own faith; and is it just that mine
Should bid me hate him, but because he loves me?

No; I will be a Christian; but preserve
My gratitude as sacred as my faith.

Ner. Here, then, begin performance of thy vow;

Here, in the trembling horrors of thy soul,
Promise thy king, thy father, and thy God,
Not to accomplish these detested nuptials,
Till first the rev'rend priest has clear'd your eyes,

Taught you to know, and giv'n you claim to heav'n.

Promise me this—

Zara. So bless me, heaven, I do!

Go, hasten the good priest, I will expect him;
But first return,—cheer my expiring father,
Tell him I am, and will be, all he wishes me:
Tell him, to give him life, 'twere joy to die.

Ner. I go. Farewell, farewell, unhappy sister!
[Exit.]

Zara. I am alone; and now be just, my heart!
And tell me, wilt thou dare betray thy God?
What am I? What am I about to be?
Daughter of Lusignan, or wife to Osman?
Help me, heaven!
To thy hard laws I render up my soul;
But, oh! demand it back, for now 'tis Osman's.

Enter OSMAN.

Osm. Shine out, appear, be found, my lovely Zara!

Impatient eyes attend, the rites expect thee;
And my devoted heart no longer brooks
This distance from its soft'ner!

Come, my slow love! the ceremonies wait thee;
Come, and begin from this dear hour my triumph.

Zara. Oh! what a wretch am I! Oh, grief! oh, love!

Osm. Nay, Zara, give me thy hand, and come—

Zara. My lord, my sov'reign!
Heav'n knows this marriage would have been a bliss

Above my humble hopes: yet, witness, love!
Not from the grandeur of your throne that bliss,
But from the pride of calling Osman mine.
But, as it is,—these Christians—

Osm. Christians! What!

How start two images into thy thoughts,
So distant—as the Christians and my love!

Zara. That good old Christian, rev'rend Lusignan,

Now dying, ends his life and woes together.

Osm. Well, let him die! What has thy heart to feel,

Thus pressing, and thus tender, from the death
Of an old wretched Christian? Thank our prophet,

Thou art no Christian! Educated here,
Thy happy youth was taught our better faith:
Sweet as thy pity shines, 'tis now mis-tim'd.

What, though an aged sufferer die unhappy,
Why should his foreign fate disturb our joys?

Zara. Sir, if you love me, and would have me think

That I am truly dear—

Osm. Heaven, if I love!—

Zara. Permit me—

Osm. What?

Zara. To desire—

Osm. Speak out.

Zara. The nuptial rites

May be deferr'd till—

Osm. What!—Is that the voice
Of Zara?

Zara. Oh! I cannot bear his frown! (Aside.)

Osm. Of Zara?

Zara. It is dreadful to my heart—

Pardon my grief—Alas! I cannot bear it;

There is a painful terror in your eye
That pierces to my soul: hid from your sight,
I go to make a moment's truce with tears,
And gather force to speak of my despair.

[Exit, disordered.]

Osm. I stand immovable, like senseless marble:

Horror had frozen my suspended tongue,

And an astonish'd silence robb'd my will

Of power to tell her that she shock'd my soul!

Spoke she to me? Sure, I misunderstood her!

Could it be me she left?—What have I seen!

Enter ORASMIN.

Orasmin, what a change is here! She's gone,
And I permitted it, I know not how.

Oras. Perhaps you but accuse the charming fault

Of innocence, too modest oft in love.

Osm. But why, and whence those tears? those looks, that sight,

That grief, so strongly stamp'd on every feature?

If it has been that Frenchman!—What a thought!

How low, how horrid a suspicion that!

The dreadful flash at once gives light and kills me.—

But tell me, didst thou mark them at their parting?

Didst thou observe the language of their eyes?

Hide nothing from me—Is my love betray'd?

Tell me my whole disgrace: nay, if thou tremblest,

I hear thy pity speak, though thou art silent.

Oras. I did, 'tis true, observe some parting tears;

But they were tears of charity and grief:

I cannot think there was a cause deserving

This agony of passion—

Osm. Why no—I thank thee—

Orasmin, thou art wise. It could not be,

That I should stand expos'd to such an insult.

Thou know'st, had Zara meant me the offence,

She wants not wisdom to have hid it better.

How rightly didst thou judge! Zara shall know it,

And thank thy honest service.—After all,

Might she not have some cause for tears, which I
Claim no concern in, but the grief it gives her?
What an unlikely fear—from a poor slave,
Who goes to-morrow, and, no doubt, who wishes,
Nay, who resolves, to see these climes no more.

Oras. Why did you, sir, against our country's
custom,

Indulge him with a second leave to come?
He said he should return once more to see her.

Osm. Return! The traitor! he return! Dares
he

Presume to press a second interview?

Would he be seen again? He shall be seen,
But dead. I'll punish the audacious slave,
To teach the faithless fair to feel my anger.
Be still, my transports; violence is blind:
I know my heart at once is fierce and weak.
Rather than fall

Beneath myself, I must, how dear so'er
It costs me, rise—till I look down on Zara!
Away—but mark me: these seraglio doors
Against all Christians be they henceforth shut,
Close as the dark retreats of silent death.

[*Exit Orasmin.*]

What have I done, just heav'n! thy rage to
move,

That thou shouldst sink me down so low—to love?
[*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Seraglio.*

ZARA and SELIMA discovered.

Sel. Ah! madam, how at once I grieve your
fate,

And how admire your virtue! Heaven permits,
And heaven will give you strength, to bear mis-
fortune;

To break these chains, so strong and yet so dear.

Zara. Ah! that I could support the fatal strug-
gle!

Sel. To-night the priest,
In private introduc'd, attends you here:
You promis'd him admission.

Zara. Would I had not!
I promis'd, too, to keep this fatal secret:
Compell'd to silence, Osman is enrag'd;
Suspicion follows, and I lose his love.

Enter OSMAN.

Osm. Madam, there was a time when my charm'd
heart

Made it a virtue to be lost in love;
When, without blushing, I indulg'd my flame,
And ev'ry day still made you dearer to me.
You taught me, madam, to believe my love
Rewarded and return'd; nor was that hope,
Methinks, too bold for reason. Emperors,
Who choose to sigh devoted at the feet
Of beauties, whom the world conceive their
slaves,

Have fortune's claim, at least, to sure success:
But 'twere prophane to think of power in love.
Dear as my passion makes you, I decline
Possession of her charms, whose heart's ano-
ther's.

You will not find me a weak, jealous lover,
By coarse reproaches, giving pain to you,
And shaming my own greatness: wounded deeply,
Yet shunning and disdaining low complaint,
I come—to tell you—

Osman, in every trial, shall remember
That he is emperor. Whate'er I suffer,

'Tis due to honour that I give up you,
And to my injur'd bosom take despair,
Rather than shamefully possess you sighing;
Convinc'd those sighs were never meant for me.
Go, madam; you are free from Osman's pow'r;
Expect no wrongs, but see his face no more.

Zara. At last, tis come; the fear'd, the mur-
dering moment

Is come; and I am curs'd by earth and heaven!

[*Kneels.*]

If it be true that I am lov'd no more;

If you—

Osm. It is too true, my fame requires it;
It is too true, that I unwilling leave you;
That I at once renounce you and adore—
Zara, you weep!

Zara. If I am doom'd to lose you;—
If I must wander o'er an empty world,
Unloving and unlov'd;—oh! yet, do justice
To the afflicted; do not wrong me doubly:
Punish me, if't be needful to your peace;
But say not, I deserv'd it.

May heav'n, that punishes, for ever hate me,
If I regret the loss of aught but you.

Osm. What! is it love to force yourself to
wound

The heart you wish to gladden?

Lovers least know themselves; for I believ'd,
That I had taken back the power I gave you;
'Tis yet, see! you did but weep, and have resum'd
me!

Proud as I am, I must confess, one wish
Evades my power—the blessing to forget you.
Zara, thy tears were form'd to teach disdain,
That softness can disarm it. 'Tis decreed,
I must for ever love! but from what cause,
(If thy consenting heart partake my fires,)
Art thou reluctant to a blessing meant me?

Speak! Is it artifice?

Oh! spare the needless pains. Art was not made
For *Zara*: art, however innocent,
Looks like deceiving; I abhor'd it ever.

Zara. Alas! I have no art; not even enough
To hide this love, and this distress you give me.

Osm. New riddles! Speak with plainness to my
soul:

What canst thou mean?

Zara. I have no power to speak it.

Osm. Is it some secret dangerous to my state?
Is it some Christian plot grown ripe against me?

Zara. Lives there a wretch so vile as to betray
you?

Osman is bless'd beyond the reach of fear:

Fears and misfortunes threaten only *Zara*.

Osm. Why threaten *Zara*?

Zara. Permit me, at your feet,

Thus trembling, to beseech a favour from you.

Osm. A favour! Oh! you guide the will of
Osman.

Zara. But this day;
But this one sad, unhappy day, permit me,
Alone, and far divided from your eye,
To cover my distress, lest you, too tender,
Should see and share it with me: from to-mor-
row,

I will not have a thought conceal'd from you.

Osm. If it must be, it must. Be pleased, my
will

Takes purpose from your wishes; and consent
Depends not on my choice, but your decree.
Go; but remember how he loves, who thus
Finds a delight in pain, because you give it.

Zara. It gives me more than pain to make you
feel it.

Osm. And can you, *Zara,* leave me?

Zara. Alas, my lord!

[*Exit.*]

Osm. It should be yet, methinks, too soon to
fly me!

Too soon, as yet, to wrong my easy faith.
The more I think, the less I can conceive
What hidden cause should raise such strange despair!

Now, when her hopes have wings, and every wish
Is courted to be lively! when love,
And joy, and empire, press her to their bosom!

Yet, was I blameless? No; I was too rash:
I have felt jealousy, and spoke it to her;
I have distrusted her, and still she loves:
Generous atonement that!
I remark'd,
Ev'n while she wept, her soul, a thousand times,
Sprung to her lips, and long'd to leap to mine,
With honest, ardent utterance of her love.
Who can possess a heart so low, so base,
To look such tenderness, and yet have none?

Enter MELIDOR and ORASMIN.

Mel. This letter, great disposer of the world!
Address'd to Zara, and in private brought,
Your faithful guards this moment intercepted,
And humbly offer to your sov'reign eye.

Osm. Come nearer; give it me.—To Zara!—
Rise!
Bring it with speed—Shame on your flattering distance!—

(Advancing, and snatching the letter.)
Be honest; and approach me like a subject,
Who serves the prince, yet not forgets the man.

Mel. One of the Christian slaves, whom late
your bounty
Releas'd from bondage, sought, with heedful guile,
Unnotic'd, to deliver it. Discover'd,
He waits, in chains, his doom from your decree.

Osm. Leave me.—*[Exit Melidor.]*—I tremble, as
if something fatal
Were meant me from this letter—Should I read it?

Oras. Who knows but it contains some happy truth,
That may remove all doubts, and calm your heart?

Osm. Be it as 'twill, it shall be read.
'Tis done: and now, *(Opens the letter.)*
Fate, be thy call obey'd.—Orasmin, mark:—
(Reads.)

*"There is a secret passage tow'rd the mosque;
That way you might escape; and, unperceiv'd,
Fly your observers, and fulfil our hope:
Despise the danger, and depend on me,
Who wait you, but to die, if you deceive."*

Hell! tortures! death! and woman!—What, Orasmin!

Are we awake? Heard'st thou? Can this be Zara?

Oras. 'Would I had lost all sense; for what I heard

Has cover'd my afflicted heart with horror!

Osm. Thou see'st how I am treated!

Oras. Monstrous treason!

To an affront like this you cannot, must not,
Remain insensible. You, who but now,
From the most slight suspicion, felt such pain,
Must, in the horror of so black a guilt,
Find an effectual cure, and banish love.

Osm. Seek her this instant! go, Orasmin, fly!
Shew her this letter; bid her read, and tremble;
Then, in the rising horrors of her guilt,
Stab her unfaithful breast, and let her die.
Say, while thou strik'st—Stay, stay; return, and
pity me;

I will first think a moment: let that Christian
Be straight confronted with her—Stay; I will,
I will—I know not what!—'Would I were
dead!

'Would I had died! unconscious of this shame!

Oras. Never did prince receive so bold a wrong!

Osm. See here detected this infernal secret!

This fountain of her tears, which my weak heart

Mistook for marks of tenderness and pain!

Why, what a reach has woman to deceive!

Under how fine a veil of grief and fear

Did she propose retirement till to-morrow!

And I, blind dotard! gave the fool's consent,

Sooth'd her, and suffer'd her to go. She parted,

Dissolv'd in tears; and parted to betray me!

Oras. Could you, my gracious lord, forgive my zeal,

You would—

Osm. I know it—thou art right—I'll see her—

I'll tax her in thy presence—I'll upbraid her—

I'll let her learn—Go; find, and bring her to me.

Oras. Believe me, sir, your threat'nings, your complaints,

What will they all produce, but Zara's tears,

To quench this fancied anger? Your lost heart,

Seduc'd against itself, will search but reasons

To justify the guilt, which gives it pain.

Rather conceal from Zara this discovery;

And let some trusty slave convey the letter,

Reclus'd, to her own hand; then shall you learn,

Spite of her frauds, disguise, and artifice,

The firmness or abasement of her soul.

Osm. Thy counsel charms me!

Here, take this fatal letter; choose a slave,

Whom yet she never saw, and who retains

His tried fidelity. Despatch—begone!

[Exit Orasmin.]

Now, whither shall I turn my eyes and steps,

The surest way to shun her, and give time

For this discovering trial?—Heav'n! she's here.

Enter ZARA.

So, madam! fortune will befriend my cause,

And free me from your fetters. You are met

Most aptly, to dispel a new-ris'n doubt,

That claims the finest of your arts to gloss it.

Unhappy each by other, it is time

To end our mutual pain, that both may rest.

You want not generosity, but love;

My pride forgotten, my obtruded throne,

My favours, cares, respect, and tenderness,

Touching your gratitude, provok'd regard;

Till, by a length of benefits besieged,

Your heart submitted, and you thought 'twas

love:

But you deceiv'd yourself, and injur'd me.

There is, I'm told, an object more deserving

Your love than Osman: I would know his name.

Be just, nor trifle with my anger: tell me,

Now, while expiring pity struggles faint;

While I have yet, perhaps, the power to pardon,

Give up the bold invader of my claim,

And let him die to save thee. Thou art known:

Think and resolve. While I yet speak, renounce

him!

While yet the thunder rolls suspended, stay it:

Let thy voice charm me, and recall my soul,

That turns averse, and dwells no more on Zara.

Zara. Can it be Osman speaks, and speaks to

Zara?

If my heart

Deserve reproach, 'tis for, but not from, Osman.

Osm. What, does she yet presume to swear sin-

cerity?

Oh! boldness of unblushing perjury!

Had I not seen, had I not read such proof

Of her light falsehood as extinguish'd doubt,
I could not be a man, and not believe her.

Zara. Alas! my lord, what cruel fears have seiz'd you?

What harsh, mysterious words were those I heard?

Osm. What fears should Osman feel, since Zara loves him?

Zara. I cannot live and answer to your voice
In that reproachful tone; your angry eye
Trembles with fury while you talk of love.

Osm. Since Zara loves him!

Zara. Is it possible

Osman should disbelieve it?

Can it be kind, can it be just to doubt me?

Osm. No; I can doubt no longer. You may retire. [Exit Zara.]

Enter ORASMIN.

Orasmin, she's perfidious, even beyond
Her sex's undiscover'd power of seeming;
She's at the topmost point of shameless artifice;
An empress at deceiving!
Say, hast thou chos'n a slave? Is he intructed?
Haste to detect her villainess and my wrongs.

Oras. Punctual I have obey'd your whole command.

But have you arm'd, my lord, your injur'd heart
With coldness and indifference? Can you hear,
All painless and unmov'd, the false one's shame?

Osm. Orasmin, I adore her more than ever.

Oras. My lord! my emperor! forbid it, heaven!

Osm. I have discern'd a gleam of distant hope;
This hateful Christian, the light growth of France,
Proud, young, vain, amorous, conceited, rash,
Has misconceiv'd some charitable glance,
And judg'd it love in Zara: he alone,
Then, has offended me. Is it her fault,
If those she charms are indiscreet and daring?
Zara, perhaps, expected not this letter;
And I, with rashness groundless as its writer's,
Took fire at my own fancy, and have wrong'd her.

Now, hear me with attention. Soon as night
Has thrown her welcome shadows o'er the palace;

When this Nerestan, this ungrateful Christian,
Shall lurk in expectation near our walls,
Be watchful that our guards surprise and seize him;

Then, bound in fetters, and o'erwhelm'd with shame,

Conduct the daring traitor to my presence:

But, above all, be sure you hurt not Zara;

Mindful to what supreme excess I love.

[Exit Orasmin.]

On this last trial all my hopes depend;
Prophet, for once thy kind assistance lend,
Dispel the doubts that rack my anxious breast;
If Zara's innocent, thy Osman's bless'd. [Exit.]

ACT V.

SCENE 1.—The Seraglio.

ZARA and SELIMA discovered.

Zara. Soothe me no longer with this vain desire;

To a recluse, like me, who dares henceforth
Presume admission? the seraglio's shut;
Bar'd and impassable—as death to time.
My brother ne'er must hope to see me more.

How now! what unknown slave accosts us here?

Enter MELIDOR.

Mel. This letter, trusted to my hands, receive,
In secret witness I am wholly your's.

(Zara reads the letter.)

Sel. Thou everlasting Ruler of the world,
(Aside.)

Shed thy wish'd mercy on our hopeless tears;
Redeem us from the hand of hated infidels,
And save my princess from the breast of Osman!

Zara. I wish, my friend, the comfort of your counsel.

Sel. Retire; you shall be call'd: wait near. Go, leave us. [Exit Melidor.]

Zara. Read this, and tell me what I ought to answer:

For I would gladly hear my brother's voice.

Sel. Say, rather, you would hear the voice of heav'n:

'Tis not your brother calls you, but your God.

Zara. I know it, nor resist his awful will;

Thou know'st that I have bound my soul by oath;

But can I—ought I to engage myself,
My brother, and the Christians, in this danger?

Sel. 'Tis not their danger that alarms your fears;

Your love speaks loudest to your shrinking soul;

This tiger, savage in his tenderness,
Courts with contempt, and threatens amidst soft-

ness;

Yet, cannot your neglected heart efface

His fated, fix'd impression.

But talk no more of this unhappy passion:

What resolution will your virtue take?

Zara. All things combine to sink me to despair:

From the seraglio death alone will free me.

I'll send my brother word he may expect me.

Call in the faithful slave. God of my fathers!

[Exit Selima.]

Let thy hand save me, and thy will direct!

Enter SELIMA and MELIDOR.

Go, tell the Christian, who entrusted thee,
That Zara's heart is fix'd, nor shrinks at danger;

And that my faithful friend will, at the hour,

Expect, and introduce him to his wish.

Away! [Exit with Selima.]

Enter OSMAN and ORASMIN.

Osm. Swifter, ye hours, move on; my fury glows

Impatient, and would push the wheels of time.

How now! What message dost thou bring? Speak boldly:

What answer gave she to the letter sent her?

Mel. She blush'd and trembled, and grew pale,
and paus'd;

Then blush'd, and read it, and again grew pale;

And wept, and smil'd, and doubted, and resolv'd:

For after all this race of vary'd passions,

When she had sent me out, and call'd me back,

"Tell him," she cried, "who has intrusted thee,

That Zara's heart is fix'd, nor shrinks at danger;

And that my faithful friend will, at the hour,

Expect and introduce him to his wish."

Osm. Enough—begone—I have no ear for more.

[Exit Melidor.]

Leave me, thou, too, Orasmin. Leave me, life;
For ev'ry mortal aspect moves my hate:
Leave me to my distraction. I grow mad,
And cannot bear the visage of a friend.
Leave me to rage, despair, and shame and
wrongs;
Leave me to seek myself, and shun mankind.

[*Exit Orasmin.*
Who am I? Heav'n! Who am I? What resolve
I?

Zara! Nerestan! sounds the words like names
Decreed to join? Why pause I? Perish Zara!
Would I could tear her image from my heart!
'Twere happier not to live at all, than live
Her scorn.

Enter ORASMIN.

Orasmin! Friend, return; I cannot bear
This absence from thy reason. 'Twas unkind,
'Twas cruel to obey me, thus distress'd,
And wanting power to think, when I had lost
thee.

How goes the hour? has he appear'd, this rival?
Perish the shameful sound! This villain Chris-
tian!

Has he appear'd below?

Oras. Silent and dark,
Th' unbreathing world is hush'd, as if it heard,
And listen'd to your sorrows.

Osm. Oh! treacherous night!
Thou lend'st thy ready veil to ev'ry treason,
And teeming mischiefs thrive beneath thy shade.
Heardst thou nothing?

Oras. My lord!

Osm. A voice, like dying groans?

Oras. I listen, but can hear nothing.

Osm. Again! look out—he comes!

Oras. Nor tread of mortal foot, nor voice I
hear;

The still seraglio lies profoundly plung'd
In death-like silence, nothing stirs. The air
Is soft as infant sleep, no breathing wind
Steals through the shadows to awaken night.

Osm. Horrors a thousand times more dark than
these

Benight my suffering soul. Thou dost not know
To what excess of tenderness I lov'd her.
I knew no happiness but what she gave me;
Nor could have felt a misery but for her.
Pity this weakness: mine are tears, Orasmin,
That fall not oft, nor lightly.

Oras. Tears! Oh, heaven!

Osm. The first which ever yet unmann'd my
eyes.

Oh! pity Zara—pity me, Orasmin.
These but forerun the tears of destin'd blood.

Oras. Oh! my unhappy lord! I tremble for
you.

Osm. Do, tremble at my sufferings, at my
love;

At my revenge, too, tremble; for 'tis due,
And will not be deluded.

Oras. Hark! I hear

The steps of men along the neighb'ring wall.

Osm. Fly—seize him—'tis Nerestan! Wait no
chains,

But drag him down to my impatient eye.

[*Exit Orasmin.*

Enter ZARA and SELIMA, in the dark.

Zara. Where art thou, Selima? Give me thy
hand.

It is so dark, I tremble as I step,
With fears and startings never felt till now.

[*Exit with Selima.*

Osm. Damnation! 'tis her voice; the well-known
sound,

That has so often obarm'd me into baseness!

Oh! the perfidious hypocrite! she goes

To meet th' inviting infidel! now now,

(*Drawing a dagger.*)

Revenge, stand firm, and intercept his wishes!

Revenge! on whom? No matter: earth and hea-
ven

Would blush, should I forbear. Now, Zara, now!

(*Drops the dagger.*)

I must not, cannot strike; the starting steel

Unwilling flies my hand, and shuns to wound her.

Enter ZARA and SELIMA.

Zara. This is the private path; come nearer,
lead me.

Are we not notic'd, think'st thou?

Sel. Fear not, madam;

It cannot now be long ere we shall meet him.

Osm. That word has given me back my ebbing
rage. (*Recovers the dagger.*)

Zara. I walk in terror, and my heart fore-
bodes—

Who's there? Nerestan! Is it you? Oh! wel-
come—

Osm. (*Stabbing her.*) This to thy heart! 'Tis

not the traitor meets thee,

'Tis the betray'd—who writes it in thy blood.

Zara. Oh! gracious heaven! receive my parting
soul,

And take thy trembling servant to thy mercy.

(*Dies.*)

Osm. "Soul!" then revenge has reach'd thee. I
will now

Haste from this fatal place. I cannot leave her!

Whom did I strike? Was this the act of love?

Swallow me, earth! She's silent—Zara's dead!

And should I live to see returning day,

'Twill shew me but her blood! shew me, left joy-
less:

In wide, empty world, with nothing round me

But penitence and pain. And yet, 'twas just;

Hark! Destiny has sent her lover to me,

To fill my vengeance, and restore my joy!

Enter ORASMIN with NERESTAN.

Approach, thou wretch! thou more than curs'd!
come near:

Thou, who, in gratitude for freedom gain'd,

Hast given me miseries beyond thy own!

Thou heart of hero with a traitor's soul!

Go; reap thy due reward; prepare to suffer

Whate'er inventive malice can inflict,

To make thee feel thy death, and perish slow.

Are my commands obey'd?

Oras. All is prepared.

Osm. Thy wanton eyes look round in search of
her,

Whose love descending to a slave like thee,

From my dishonour'd hand receiv'd her doom.

See, where she lies!

Ner. Oh! fatal, rash mistake!

Osm. Dost thou behold her, slave?

Ner. Unhappy sister!

Osm. Sister! Didst thou say, "sister?" If thou
didst,

Bless me with deafness, heaven!

Ner. Tyrant, I did.

She was my sister. All that now is left thee

Despatch. From my distracted heart drain next

The remnant of the royal Christian blood:

Old Lusignan, expiring in my arms,

Sent us too wretched son, with his last blessing,

To his now murder'd daughter.

Osm. Thy sister! Lussignan her father! Selima,
Can this be true?

Sel. Thy love was all the cloud, 'twixt her and
heav'n.

Osm. Be dumb! for thou art base, to add dis-
traction

To my already more than bleeding heart.

And was thy love sincere? What then re-
mains?

Ner. Why should a tyrant hesitate on mur-
der?

There now remains but mine of all the blood
Which, through thy father's cruel reign and
thine,

Has never ceas'd to stream on Syria's sands!

Restore a wretch to his unhappy race;

Nor hope that torments, after such a scene,

Can force one feeble groan, to feast thy anger.

I waste my fruitless words in empty air;

The tyrant, o'er the bleeding wound he made,

Hangs his unmoving eye, and heeds not me.

Osm. Oh, Zara!

Oras. Alas! my lord, return; whither would
grief

Transport your generous heart? This Christian
dog—

Osm. Take off his fetters, and observe my
will—

To him and all his friends give instant liberty:
Pour a profusion of the richest gifts

On these unhappy Christians; and when heap'd

With varied benefits, and charg'd with riches,

Give them safe conduct to the nearest port.

Oras. But, sir—

Osm. Reply not, but obey:

Fly; nor dispute thy master's last command;

Thy prince, who orders, and thy friend, who loves
thee.

Unhappy warrior! yet less lost than I,

Haste from our bloody land; and to thy own,

Convey this poor, pale object of my rage.

Thy king, and all his Christians, when they hear

Thy miseries, shall mourn them with their tears;

But, if thou tell'st them mine, and tell'st them
truly,

They, who hate my crime, shall pity me.

Take, too, this poniard with thee, which my
hand

Has stain'd with blood far dearer than my own;

Tell them, with this I murder'd her I lov'd;

The noblest and most virtuous among women!

The soul of innocence, and pride of truth!

Tell them, I laid my empire at her feet;

Tell them, I plung'd my dagger in her blood;

Tell them, I so ador'd—and thus reveng'd her.

(Stabs himself.)

HE'S MUCH TO BLAME;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.



Act IV.—Scene I.

CHARACTERS.

LORD VIBRATE
SIR GEORGE VERSATILE
DR. GOSTERMAN
DELAVAL

THOMPSON
WILLIAMS
HARRY
SERVANTS

LADY VIBRATE
LADY JANE
MARIA
LUCY

ACT I,

SCENE I.—*The Hall of an hotel, with a spacious staircase.*

Enter the Master and JENKINS meeting.

Master. Why, where are all the fellows, Jenkins? Don't you hear the bell No. 9?

Jenk. Tom is gone up to answer it, sir.

Master. Who occupies that apartment?

Jenk. The handsome youth and girl that arrived late last night.

Master. Just as I was going to bed?

Jenk. Yes, sir.

Master. He is quite a boy.

Jenk. Razor has never robbed him of a hair.

Master. Some stripling, perhaps, that has run away with his mother's maid.

Jenk. They ordered separate beds.

Master. Well, see what they want.

Jenk. Yes, sir.

Master. And, harkye! be attentive the moment you hear Lord and Lady Vibrate, or their daughter, stirring. People of quality must never be neglected.

Jenk. Oh! no, sir. Here is Doctor Gosterman.

[Exit.

Enter DOCTOR GOSTERMAN.

Master. Good morrow, Doctor.

Doctor. Coot morgen, my tear friend. Is de Fiprate family fisible to see?

Master. Not yet.

Doctor. My lordship and my latyship vas sharge me to mit dem betime.

Master. You are a great favourite there, Doctor.

Doctor. Ya, sair. Dat I am eferywhere.

Master. You act in a double capacity: physician, and privy-counsellor.

Doctor. Und I am as better in de von as in de oder.

Master. Why, ay, Doctor, you have a smooth pleasant manner.

Doctor. Ya, sair. Dat is my vay. I mix de syrup mit all my prescription.

Master. Ay, ay, you are a useful person.

Doctor. Ya, sair. Dat is my vay. I leave Yarmy, and I com at Englandt mit little money, und great cunning in de art und de science. I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, un! de electric, und de magnetio, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, and all dat vas subject under my command. So I make de nation benefit, und myself rich. Dat is my vay.

Master. Yes; you can tickle the guineas into your pocket.

Doctor. Ya, sair. Dat is my vay.

Master. You have had many patients.

Doctor. Ya, sair. I af cure tousand und tousand. Dat is my vay.

Master. And how many have you killed, Doctor?

Doctor. Der teufel, sair! Kill! Ven my patient

vas die, dat vas nature dat vas kill. Ven dey vas cure, dat vas Doctor Von Gostermans. Dat is my vay. No sair; Doctor Vou Gostermans vas kill himself, dat oder people may liv.

Master. How do you mean kill yourself, Doctor?

Doctor. Der teufel, sair! Vas I not be call here? Vas I not be call dere? Vas I not be call eferywhere? I af hundert and tousand patient dat die efery day till I vas com. So I vas drive to de oity; und dere I vas meet my besten friend, de gout, de apoplexy, und de asthmatica: und den I vas drive to de inn of court, und de lawyer; und dere I vas find more of my besten friend; de hydropica, de rheumatica, und de paralytica.

Master. What, Doctor, the lawyers and inns of court paralytic?

Doctor. Ya, sair.

Master. I wish they were, with all my soul!

Doctor. Und den I vas drive and make my reverence mit de lordt, und mit de duke, und mit de grandee; und dere I vas meet mosh oder of my besten friend; de hypochondriaca, de spasmodica, de hysterica, de marasma, de morbid affection, de tremor, und de mist before de eye.

Master. Morbid affections, tremors, and mists before the eyes, the diseases of the great?

Doctor. Ya, sair. Und dey vas grow worse und worse eferyday!

Master. Well, well, they have chosen a skilful doctor.

Doctor. Ya, sair. I shall do all deir business, efery von. Dat is my vay. I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, und all dat vas subject under my command. Dat is my vay. Bote dat is as noting at all. Ah! sair, my liebste; you vas my besten friend. You make me acquaint myself mit all de patient dat vas come to your house; and so I vas your besten friend, und I vas gif de physic for yourself, und de physic for your shile, und de physic for your wife.

Master. For which my wife will never more thank you, Doctor.

Doctor. No; your wife vas die, und you vas tank me yourself. So now you tell me: af you any new customer dat vas com?

Master. Yes; a youth, and a girl that looks like a waiting-maid, arrived late last night.

Doctor. Which it vas a person of grandeur?

Master. Oh! no; wholly unattended.

Doctor. Ah, ha! Which it vas a lofing couple, den?

Master. It seems not.

Doctor. A poy and a vaiting-vomans! Dere shall be something mystery in dat.

Master. So I think. Here comes the girl.

Doctor. Ah, ha! Let me do. I shall talk to her. I shall begin by make acquaintance mit her.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Pray, sir, desire the waiter to make haste with breakfast.

Master. Here, Jenkins! Breakfast to No. 9. Be quick.

Jenk. (Without.) Yes, sir.

Master. Tea or coffee, madam?

Lucy. Tea.

Doctor. How do you do, my tear? You vas pretty young frau; fery pretty girl, my tear. Perhaps you vas stranger, my tear?

Lucy. Perhaps I am.

Doctor. Ah! Vat is your name, my tear?

Lucy. That which my godmother gave me.

Doctor. Your maistair af made de long journey, my tear.

Lucy. Has he?

Doctor. From vat country you com, my tear?

Lucy. Hem!

Doctor. I ask, from vat country you com, my tear.

Lucy. Ask again.

Doctor. From de town of—eh!

Lucy. Ay. How do you call it?

Doctor. Dat is vat I vant you shall tell.

Lucy. I see you do.

Doctor. Your maistair is fery young, my tear.

Lucy. Thank you, sir.

Doctor. For vat you tank me?

Lucy. For your news.

Doctor. Ah, ha! You are fery vitty und pretty, my tear.

Lucy. More news. Thank you again.

Doctor. Vat vas you call de young gentleman's name?

Lucy. I will ask, and send you word.

Doctor. How long shall he be stay in town?

Lucy. Till he goes into the country.

Doctor. Vat is your capacity, my tear?

Lucy. Like your's, little enough.

Doctor. You not understandt me, my tear. Vat is your post, your office?

Lucy. To answer rude questions.

Doctor. Your maistair is a man of family?

Lucy. Yes. He had a father and mother, and uncles and aunts.

Doctor. Und tey vas tead?

Lucy. I am not a tombstone.

Doctor. Com, com, my tear, let you make me answer.

Lucy. Anan!

Enter Waiter.

Waiter. Here is the breakfast, madam.

Lucy. Take it up stairs. *[Exit with Waiter.]*

Doctor. Der teufel! A cunning yipsey! She has make me raise my curiosity. My tear! My tear! Com pack, my tear!—*[LUCY returns.]*—Do my compliment to your maistair, und I shall make me mosh happy if I shall af de honneur to make me acquaintance mit him. My name is call Docteur Von Gostermans. I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, und all dat vas subject under my command. I shall af de best recommendation for de honest docteur dat vas possible. My Lordt and my Lady Fiprate vas my besten friend. I vas practice mit all de piggst family in de uniferse. Docteur Von Gostermans vas know eferybody; und eferybody vas know Docteur Von Gostermans. You tell him dat, my tear.

Lucy. Tell him that! I cannot remember half of it. Are you, sir, acquainted with Lord Vibrate's family?

Doctor. Ya, my tear. I vas make friendship mit dem more as many year.

Lucy. And do you know where they are?

Master. To be sure he does. They are in this—

Doctor. Hush! Silence your tongue! Dere is something mystery. *(Aside to Master.)* If you shall make me introduce to your maistair, my tear, I shall tell him eferyting und more as cat, my tear. Vill you, my tear?

Lucy. I will go and enquire.

Doctor. Tank you, my tear. You are fery pretty girl, my tear; fery vitty, pretty—Ah! you are so sly, cunning, little yipsey, my tear. Ah, ha!

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A Chamber.

MARIA discovered, in man's clothes, with a letter in her hand, and walking with anxiety. The Waiter enters and leaves breakfast.

Maria. *(Reading the letter.)* "Dear sister,—The letter I now write is almost needless, for I shall leave

Italy and follow it immediately; having at last obtained intelligence of your faithless lover. I am sorry to inform you that, in addition to your unpardonable wrongs, I have my own to vindicate. But I have threatened too long. You have heard of the Earl of Vibrate. He and his family are by this arrived in England; your betrayer accompanies them, and I am in close pursuit. PAUL DELAVAL." In what will this end? Must they meet? Must they fight? Must one or both of them fall? Oh, horror! Shall I be the cause of murder? And whose blood is to be spilled? That of the most generous of brothers, or of the man on whom my first and last affections have been fixed. Is there no safety; no means?

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Why, look here now, madam, you are letting the breakfast grow cold. You have been reading that letter again. I do believe I shall never get you to eat any more. Come now, pray, do take some of this French roll; and I'll pour out the tea. Do, pray, do; pray, do.

Maria. I cannot eat, Lucy; I am eaten. Terror and despair are devouring me.

Lucy. Dear, dear! What will all this come to? Did not you promise me that as soon as you had got safe to London in your disguise, you would be better?

Maria. Can it be? My kind, my gentle, my true-hearted George!

Lucy. True-hearted! No, no, madam, he was never true-hearted; or he could not so soon have changed, because his ill fortune changed to good. Everybody knows true love never changes.

Maria. What have I done? How have I offended! His caresses, his protestations, his tender endearments! Is, then, the man in whom my soul was wrapt, a vil—Oh!

Lucy. I declare, madam, if you take on this way, you will break my heart as well as your own. Beside, you forget all the while what you put on this dress and came up to London for.

Maria. Oh! no. It was, if possible to prevent mischief—murder! They have never met; they do not know each other. But how shall I discover Sir George? Of whom shall I inquire?

Lucy. If you would but eat your breakfast, I do think I could put you in the way.

Maria. You?

Lucy. Yes.

Maria. By what means?

Lucy. Will you eat your breakfast, then?

Maria. I cannot eat. Speak.

Lucy. Why, I have just been talking to an outlandish comical Doctor, that says he is acquainted with Lord Vibrate.

Maria. Indeed! Where is this Doctor?

Lucy. He is waiting without; for I knew you would wish to speak to him.

Maria. Shew him in immediately.

Lucy. I'll tell him you are not well; which is but too true; though you must remember, madam, you are a man. So, dry your eyes, forget your misfortunes, and, there, cock your hat o' that fashion, and try to swagger a little, or you will be found out. You stand so like a statue, and look so pitiful! Lord! that's not the way. If you are timorous, and silent, and bashful, nobody on earth will take you for a youth of fortune and fashion. *[Exit.]*

Maria. If they should meet—Heavens! They must not.

Re-enter LUCY with DOCTOR GOSTERMAN.

Lucy. My master is not very well: he eats neither breakfast, dinner, nor supper; and gets no sleep.

Doctor. He noder eat, noder drink, noder sleep! Dat is pad; fery pad. But dat is as noting at all,

my tear. Let me do. You shall see presently, py and py, vat is my way.

Maria. Your servant, sir.

Doctor. Sair, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, sair. My name is call Docteur Von Gostermans. I shall af de best recommendation for de honest Docteur dat vas possible. I vas practice mit all de piggest family in de uniferse. Docteur Von Gostermans is know eferypody; and eferypody is know Docteur Von Gostermans. De pretty cooquise young frau tell me dat you not fery fell. You not eat, you not drink, you not sleep. Dat is pad; fery pad. Bote dat is as noting at all. You tell me de diagnostie und de prognostic of all vat you vill ail; and I shall make you prescripe for de anodyne, oder de epipastic, oder de balsamic, oder de narcotic, oder de diaphoretic, oder de expectoratic, oder de restoratif, oder de emulsif, oder de incisif; which is eferyting so shveet und so delectable as all vat is possible.

Maria. Your pardon, sir, but I wish to see you on business of another nature.

Doctor. Ah, ha! Something of de prifate affair? Dat is coot. I shall be as better for dat as for de oder. I vas know de vorl. I vas know eferypody, und eferypody vas know me. Dat is my way.

Maria. Perhaps, then, you happen to know Sir George Versatile?

Doctor. Oh! der teufel, sair! Ya, ya Sair Shorge is my bestien friend. Which it vas six month dat he vas succeed to his title und estate; und den I vas make acquaintance mit him. Dat is my way.

Maria. But he has been abroad since.

Doctor. Ya, sair. Ven he vas poor, he vas fall in lofe mit fery pretty young frau. Bote so soon as he vas become rich paronet, dat vas anoder ting. So, his relation und his friend vas sent him to make de gran tour.

Maria. And he was easily persuaded.

Doctor. Ya, sair. He vas vat you call fery coot nature; he vas alway comply.

Maria. Compliance with him is more than a weakness; I fear it is a vice.

Doctor. So, he vas make acquaintance mit Lordt und mit Laty Fiprate; und den he vas tink no more of de pretty young frau, because he vas fall in lofe mit anoder.

Maria. Sir! Another! What other?

Doctor. Vat you shall ail, sair? You shange colour.

Maria. With whom has he fallen in love?

Doctor. Mit te taughter of Lordt Fiprate.

Maria. With Lady Jane?

Doctor. Ya, sair; mit Laty Shane. My Cot! sair, vat you shall ail! You not make fall in lofe yourself mit Laty Shane?

Maria. No, no. They are, no doubt, to be married.

Doctor. My Cot! sair, you so pale as death's My Cot! you shall faint.

Lucy. Faint, indeed! Bear up, madam. *(Aside.)* My master is too much of a man to faint. I'll run for a glass of water. *[Exit.]*

Maria. The charming Lady Jane! Where is she?

Doctor. My Lordt und my Laty Fiprate und my Laty Shane vas all in de house here.

Maria. In this house?

Doctor. Ya, sair.

Maria. And is Sir George here, too?

Doctor. He is com und go alway sometime efery tay.

Maria. Are they to be married?

Doctor. My Cot! sair, you af de agde ft.

Maria. Are they to be married?

Doctor. My Laty Fiprate vas mosh inoline to Sair Shorge; und my lordt vas sometime mosh ineline too; und den he vas sometime not mosh in-

oline; and den he vas doubt; und den he vas do me de honneur to consult mit me.

Maria. And what is your advice?

Doctor. My Lordt Vibrate vas my besten friends, und I vas adlice dat he shall do all as vat he please; und Sair Shorge vas my besten friends, too, und I vas adlice dat he shall do all as vat he please; und my Lady Fiprate vas petter as my besten friends, und den I vas more adlice dat she shall do all as vat she please.

Maria. But Lady Jane had another lover.

Doctor. Ya, sair. Mr. Delafal vas make lofe mit her. He yas com from de East Indie, und he vas lose her fery mosh; und she vas go mit de family to Italy, und my Lady Fiprate vas make acquaintance mit Sair Shorge, because he vas so mosh pleasant und coot humeur, und he say all as vat she say; which vas de vay to alvay make agréable.

Maria. Could you do me the favour to introduce me to Lady Jane?

Doctor. Ya, sair, I shall do all as vat shall make agréable. Dat is my vay.

Re-enter LUCY hastily.

Lucy. (*Aside to her mistress.*) Oh! madam, don't be terrified, but I declare I have spilled almost all the water.

Maria. What is the matter?

Lucy. He is come.

Maria. Who? Sir George?

Lucy. No; don't be frightened: Mr. Delaval, from abroad.

Maria. My brother! Heavens! Did he see you?

Lucy. No. I had a glimpse of him, and whisked away just as he stepped out of the post-chaise.

Maria. Should he meet me in this disguise, what will he say?

Lucy. Send away the Doctor, and let us lock ourselves up.

Maria. (*To the Doctor.*) I must beg you will excuse me, sir; but it is necessary, at present, I should be alone. With your permission I will see you again in the afternoon; and, in the meantime—
(*Gives him money.*)

Doctor. Oh! sair, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, sair. I shall make you mosh more fisit; und den you shall tell me de diagnostic und de prognostic of all vat you vill ail.

Lucy. Yes, yes; another time.

Doctor. Und I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, und all dat vas subject under my command.

Lucy. You have told us all that before.

Doctor. Und I shall make you prescripe for de anodyne, oder de epipastic, oder de balsamic, oder de soporific, oder de narcotic, oder de diaphoretic, oder de expectoratic, oder de restoratif, oder de emulsif, oder de incisif, which is eferying so shweet und delectable as all vat is possible.

Lucy. Was ever anything so provoking? (*Aside.*) Pray, sir, make haste.

Doctor. You shall make remembrance of Docteur Von Gostermans. I am practice mit all de piggest family in de uniferse. Sair, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, sir. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Hall of the hotel.*

Enter DELAVAL, WILLIAMS, Master, and JENKINS.

Del. Is the portmanteau safe?

Wil. Yes, sir.

Del. And the trunks?

Wil. All right.

Del. Have you paid the postillions?

Wil. Yes, sir.

Master. (*To Del.*) This way, if you please, sir.

Jenk. Coming, sir.

Master. Shew the damask room. What will you please to have for breakfast, sir?

Del. Nothing.

Master. Sir?

Del. Anything.

Master. Bring tea, coffee, and new laid eggs.

Jenk. In a minute, sir.

Del. (*To Wil.*) Observe the direction I gave you. Inquire immediately, and find if the Vibrate family be in town.

Wil. I will be careful, sir. Eh! Sir, sir!

Del. Well?

Wil. Look! Here comes Lord Vibrate's secretary.

Enter THOMPSON.

Del. Mr. Thompson!

Thom. Ah! Mr. Delaval, I am heartily glad to see you in England.

Del. Thank you, my good friend. But how is this? Where is the family? Where is Lady Jane?

Thom. I thought that would be your question. They are all in this house.

Del. Indeed!

Thom. I knew, when Lady Jane left Italy, your stay there would be short.

Del. Ay, ay; the follies and frenzies of the madman are visible to all eyes except his own.

Thom. I see you are dissatisfied.

Del. Tortured, till my thoughts and temper are so changed that I am almost as odious to myself as the world is become hateful to me.

Thom. I own you have some cause.

Del. Would my injuries were all! But there are other and still deeper stabs. It is not yet ten months since I returned from India; my heart how light, my eye how cheerful, and my hand prompt at any commendable act. I could then be moved to joy, and sorrow, and every sympathising passion. Smiles and mock courtesy passed current on me; the word of man and woman was taken on trust, and I lived in the sunshine of an open, unsuspecting soul. But I am now otherwise taught. I am changed. My better part is brutalized; and the wrongs that lie rankling here have stripped me of human affections, and made me almost savage.

Thom. What can be said? Patience is the—

Del. Talk not of patience: I must act. I may then, perhaps, inquire whether I have acted rightly. But I must first see Lady Jane, and Lord Vibrate.

Thom. Shall I inform his lordship of your arrival?

Del. By no means. Having injured, he may wish not to see me; and I would not afford him time to invent excuses, and avoid giving me a hearing. Though my wrongs must be endured, they shall be told.

Thom. I own they are great.

Del. Those that you know are heavy; yet, severe as the struggle would be, 'tis possible they might be hushed to rest; but there are others which blood only can obliterate; which can only sleep in death. Such is the road I must travel. Not long since nature was jocund, the azure heavens were bright, and pleasure was in every path; but now darkness, fathomless gulphs, guilty terrors, and all the dreadful phantoms of meditated desolation, lie before me.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.

LORD VIBRATE discovered at a table, reading a book.

Lord V. The ancient sceptics doubted of everything, affirmed nothing, and kept the judgment always in suspense. All things, said they, are equally indifferent, uncertain, and indeterminate. The mind is never to assent to anything; that it

may never be astonished, or disturbed, but enjoy a perfect calm. (*Rises, with important wisdom in his looks.*) Such were the maxims of Pyrrho, and his disciples; those renowned sages of antiquity! Well! And such, too, have been my maxims, practically. All my life have I been wavering, uncertain, and indeterminate. A sagacious sceptic without knowing it; and, as it were, by instinct. It was but lately I discovered what a wise man I am. And yet, it seems to me as if I were scarcely half wise enough, for I am told that I am to doubt of everything which I find rather difficult. For example: that my wife Lady Vibrate is an extravagant, rackety, rantpole woman of fashion; can I doubt that? No. That she squanders my money, disturbs my peace, and contradicts for contradiction's sake; can I doubt that? No. Then, have I not a daughter to marry, a law-suit to begin, and a thousand perplexing affairs, so that I do not know which way to turn? Why, all this appears true to me; but the sceptics teach that appearances deceive, and that nothing is certain. I may be Lord Vibrate, or I may be the Grand Turk. These doctrines are prodigiously deep. (*Considers.*) But I must think of something else just now. I have a thousand things to do, and know as little where to begin as where they will end. *Ay*; all is uncertainty. (*Rings.*) Harry, Edward!

Enter JENKINS.

Jenk. Did your lordship call?

Lord V. Where are my servants? I want some of my plagues.

Jenk. They are ready at hand, my lord. Here is your lordship's secretary. [*Exit.*]

Enter MR. THOMPSON.

Lord V. What is the reason, Mr. Thompson, that nobody waits? Here am I, fretting myself to a mummy for the good of my family, while everybody about me is as drowsy as the court of common-council after dinner. Have they taken laudanum? Are they in a lethargy? Are they all dead?

Thom. If they were, your lordship would have the goodness to raise them.

Lord V. Don't you know how many people I have to see, and places I have to go to?

Thom. No, my lord.

Lord V. Why, did not I tell you?

Thom. Yes, my lord.

Lord V. Then how can you say you don't know?

Thom. Because I venture to presume, my lord, you do not know yourself.

Lord V. I am distracted with doubts. Harry!

Enter HARRY.

Harry. Did your lordship call?

Lord V. Where are you all? What are you about? I think you have lived long enough with me to know my way.

Harry. Yes, my lord; we know it very well.

Lord V. If you are not more attentive, I'll discharge you every one.

Harry. Oh! no; you will not do that. (*Aside.*)

Lord V. What are you muttering, sirrah?

Harry. Only, my lord, that we know your way.

Lord V. Order the coachman at eleven.

Harry. Yes, my lord.

Lord V. No. Order it at one.

Harry. Yes, my lord.

Lord V. Come back. Order it in ten minutes, and remember I am not at home. Come back. Don't order it at all.

Harry. Must visitors be admitted?

Lord V. Yes—No—I cannot tell. I will consider. Be within call. Thompson? [*Exit Harry.*]

Thom. My lord?

Lord V. Step to that picture-dealer. I will have the Guido. Yet, 'tis a great sum. No—it is a master-piece. I must have it. Why don't you go?

Thom. The picture is sold, my lord.

Lord V. Sold! Gone! Have I lost it? This is always the way. I am for ever disappointed. Harry!

Re-enter HARRY.

Harry. My lord.

Lord V. Did you go with the message to the stable-keeper, last night?

Harry. Yes, my lord.

Lord V. Let me know when he comes.

Harry. He will come no more, my lord.

Lord V. Come no more?

Harry. No, my lord.

Lord V. Why so?

Harry. He says you never know your own mind, my lord.

Lord V. Insolent fellow!

Harry. Doctor Gosterman is below.

Lord V. Admit him.—Stay.—I cannot see him yet. In half-an-hour. In ten minutes. By-and-by. [*Exit Harry.*] I must not waste my time in these trifles. I must attend to this law business. I wish I could determine. What am I to do, Thompson?

Thom. In what, my lord?

Lord V. The affair of the ejectment. If I once embroil myself in law, there will be no end; and if I do not, the consequences are still worse.

Thom. Then they are bad, indeed, my lord.

Lord V. 'Tis strange that I can come to no resolution on this subject.

Thom. (*Aside.*) Nor on any other.

Lord V. I must decide this very day, or the time will be elapsed.

Thom. A lawyer, I should suppose, my lord, would give you the best advice.

Lord V. How? Are you mad, Thompson? A lawyer give good advice!

Thom. The present possessor has held the estate twenty years.

Lord V. Not till to-morrow. I have time still to make my claim. How shall I act? Shall I never leave this hotel! Has the builder been here?

Thom. No, my lord.

Lord V. I can get nothing done. My whole life long I have been distracted with the multiplicity of my affairs.

Thom. And so, I am afraid, my lord, you always will be.

Lord V. Why so, sir?

Thom. Because your lordship undertakes so much, and does so little.

Lord V. So, he has not been here?

Thom. No, my lord.

Lord V. Nor the lawyers?

Thom. No, my lord.

Lord V. Nor my steward?

Thom. No, my lord.

Lord V. Nor Sir George?

Thom. No, my lord.

Lord V. Where is Lady Vibrate? Where is Lady Jane? Are they all in their graves? Have none of them shewn signs of life yet?

Thom. Not one. Your lordship is the only person in the family who begin your miseries so soon in a morning.

Lord V. The crosses and cares that prey upon me are enough to make any man on earth miserable.

Thom. Pardon me, my lord, but if you would care less, both yourself and your servants would sleep the more. My lady cares for nothing; and she can sleep when she is in bed; and sing, and dance, and laugh at your lordship's cares and fears when she is up.

Lord V. She will drive me mad.

Thom. Ah! here she is, as it were, for the purpose.

Lord V. Tell Harry to admit the Doctor—No; not just yet. Yes. In five minutes. I don't know when.

[*Exit Thompson.*]

Enter LADY VIBRATE.

Lady V. Upon my honour, my lord, you are the most insupportable person imaginable. You vociferate worse than the man who calls when my carriage stops the way. Is anybody dying? Is the house on fire? Is the world at an end?

Lord V. By the life your ladyship leads, I should suppose it is pretty near.

Lady V. You always give me such shocking head-aches of a morning.

Lord V. You always give me such shocking heart-aches of an evening.

Lady V. Did not I send to you last night, to request your lordship would not disturb me?

Lord V. It has been your ladyship's amusement to disturb me all your life.

Lady V. Your lordship knows I love amusement.

Lord V. I have not slept a wink since.

Lady V. You had slept quite enough before. Pray, how long are we to remain in this hotel? Your lordship should remember, it is degrading for a man of rank to doze away life in the style of a colonel reduced to half-pay.

Lord V. Your ladyship should remember, it is degrading for a woman of rank to riot away life, and reduce her creditors to live without pay.

Lady V. Psha! That is the old story.

Lord V. But it is a very true story. It is a great misfortune that persons so opposite should pair.

Lady V. A terrible one, indeed. I am all gaiety and good humour; you are all turmoil and lamentation. I sing, laugh, and welcome pleasure wherever I find it; you take your lantern to look for misery, which the sun itself cannot discover.

Lord V. I am overwhelmed by crosses and vexations; and you participate in none of them.

Lady V. No. Heaven be praised!

Lord V. Will you attend to me, my lady, for half-an-hour?

Lady V. Merely! Attend to you for half-an-hour! You, my lord, may think proper to be as miserable as Job; but I am not Job's wife.

Lord V. I insist, Lady Vibrate, on a serious answer. How ought I to act? What should I do, in this law affair?

Lady V. I cannot tell what you ought to do; but I know what you will do.

Lord V. Do you? What?

Lady V. Nothing.

Lord V. The recovery of this property would enable me to give my daughter a portion suitable to her rank. If it be lost, she will be almost destitute of fortune.

Lady V. You should have thought of that before, my lord.

Lord V. Before! Why, I have thought of nothing else for years. I have asked everybody's advice.

Lady V. And followed nobody's.

Lord V. It shall be so. The ejectment shall be served: proceedings shall commence.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha!

Lord V. I say they shall. I am determined.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! I knew you, my lord.

Lord V. You know! I say they shall, if it be only to prove that you know nothing of the matter.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! A pleasant motive! But even that will not be strong enough.

Lord V. But it will, my lady.

Lady V. But it won't, my lord.

Enter DOCTOR GOSTERMAN,

Lord V. I say it will, my lady.

Lady V. I say it won't, my lord.

Doctor. Coot morgen, to my coot lordt und my coot laty.

Lord V. For heaven's sake, Doctor, stop my lady's tongue.

Lady V. For heaven's sake, Doctor, give my lord a quieting draught.

Doctor. I shall do efferying as vat you desire, my coot lordt und my coot laty.

Lord V. Can nothing silence you, Lady Vibrate? Shall I never have a quiet hearing? I wanted to talk with you and the Doctor on a thousand things.

Lady V. Yes; you wish to have all the talk to yourself.

Lord V. On the marriage of our daughter.

Lady V. Oh! with all my heart. A marriage, at least, begins with music, feasting, and dancing. So say on.

Lord V. I am not yet determined in favour of Sir George.

Lady V. But I am. (*While they speak, the Doctor gesticulates in favour of each.*)

Lord V. Mr. Delaval is an unobjectionable gentleman; and he was the first suitor.

Lady V. Sir George can sing; Sir George can dance; Sir George has air, grace, fashion, and fortune.

Lord V. Psha! His best qualities are prudence, and attention to his own concerns. Ask the Doctor.

Doctor. He has fery mosh prudence, my coot lordt.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! I vow, Sir George is the most airy, thoughtless, pleasant person living, except myself.

Doctor. Ya, Sir Shorge is fery mosh pleasant; und my latyship is fery mosh more pleasant.

Lord V. Absurd. His humour is calm, cold, and serious.

Doctor. Fery serious, inteed.

Lady V. Whimsical, animated, delightful.

Doctor. Fery animate, fery teightful, upon my vordt.

Lord V. I never met a more discreet, sensible man in my life.

Lady V. True: for he thinks of nothing but his pleasures.

Lord V. His affairs, you mean.

Lady V. I tell you, my lord, he is exactly what I wish, the very soul of levity, whim, and laughter.

Lord V. I tell you, my lady, he is exactly like myself; prudent, and full of sage hesitation. He considers before he acts. Does he not, Doctor?

Doctor. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot lordt.

Lady V. He never considers at all. Does he, Doctor?

Doctor. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot laty.

Lord V. How so? We cannot both be right.

Doctor. You shall please to make me parton, my coot lordt. Sair Shorge vas all as vat you say; und all as vat my coot laty say. Mit my laty, he vas merry; mit my lordt he vas sad. Mit my laty he vas laugh, und vas sing, und vas tance; und he vas make melancholy, und misery, und vas do all dat shall make agreable mit my lordt.

Lord V. Is he so variable?

Doctor. Ya, he vas fery mosh comply; fery mosh coot humeur. He vas alway make agreable. Bote vas my lordtship und my latyship know dat Mr. Delaval vas oom from Italy?

Lady V. Come where? To England?

Doctor. He vas in de house below. I vas see und speak mit his falet.

Lord V. In this hotel?

Doctor. He vas yast arrife, und vas demandt dat he shall see my lordship; oder my latyship.

Lady V. I am very sorry he is here. He is a dun of the most disagreeable kind, and shall not see me; and, I hope, my lord, you will no longer permit his addresses to Lady Jane. My word is given to Sir George. Come with me, Doctor.

[*Exit with the Doctor.*]

Enter MR. DELAVAL.

Del. Pardon me, my lord, if I intrude with too little ceremony. Something, I hope, will be allowed to a mind much disturbed, and a heart deeply wounded and impatient to ease its pangs.

Lord V. Which way deeply wounded, Mr. Delaval?

Del. Can your lordship ask? Was it not with your permission I paid my addresses to Lady Jane? And was the ardour of my affection or the extent of my hopes unknown?

Lord V. Why, I did permit, and I did not. I had my doubts.

Del. My visits were daily, their purpose was declared, and I should imagine I spoke more respectfully to say, that you permitted, than that you connived at them.

Lord V. True: but still I had my doubts.

Dol. Those doubts have stung me to the soul; and I could wish you had expressed them more decidedly.

Lord V. Impossible! Doubts here, doubts there, doubts everywhere. No rational man can be decided on any point whatever. My doubts are my continual plagues; my whole life is consumed by them.

Del. It appears, my lord, you have conquered them on one subject.

Lord V. Ay, indeed. I wish to heaven I had! What subject is that?

Del. You have affianced your daughter to Sir George Versatile.

Lord V. Humph! Yes, and no. I have and I have not. I cannot determine. Sir George is a prudent man, his estate is large, and the Versatiles are an ancient race. But your family is ancient, you are prudent, and the wealth left by your uncle is at least equal. What can I say? What can I do? I don't know which to take nor which to refuse. I am everlastingly in these difficulties. I am harassed night and day by them; they are the nightmare, they sit upon my bosom, oppress me, suffocate me. I cannot act. I cannot move.

Del. This, my lord, may be an apology to yourself, but the consequence to me is misery. Your daughter lived in my heart; with her I had promised myself ages of happiness; and had cherished a passion, impatient, perhaps, but ardent and pure as her own thoughts. This passion your conduct authorized. My fortune, my life, my soul, were devoted to her. Mine was no light or wanton dalliance; nor did I expect a light and wanton conduct from the noble family of which your lordship is the head.

Lord V. What do you mean, Mr. Delaval? I told you I was undecided; and so I am still. My lady, you know, was never much your friend. Sir George is her favourite.

Del. And is Lady Jane equally changeable?

Lord V. I don't know. She is my daughter; and, judging by myself, I should suppose she is perplexed and doubtful. She never, I believe, declared in your favour.

Del. Not expressly, my lord. She referred me to time and you. 'Tis true, I flattered myself her affections were wholly mine. Should she prefer Sir George, or any other man, be my feelings what they will, I am then silenced. My heart could not be satisfied with cold compliance; oh! no; 'tis of a

different stamp. I am told she is not at home. I hope, however, she will not have the cruelty to deny me a last interview: till when I take my leave. Only suffer me to remark that, had you discovered in me any secret vice, any defects dangerous to the happiness of the woman I adore, you then were justified in your present conduct. But, if you have no such accusation to prefer, I must do my feelings the violence to declare I cannot but think it highly unworthy of a man of honour. [*Exit.*]

Lord V. Mr. Delaval! Insolent! Highly unworthy of a man of honour! I will challenge him. He shall find whether I am a man of honour, or no. I will challenge him. Harry!

Enter HARRY.

Harry. My lord.

Lord V. Run, tell that Mr. Delaval—Hold—Yes, fly; tell him—Stay; get me pen, ink, and paper: I will teach him to insult—No; I will not do him the honour to write. Order him back.

Harry. Order who, my lord?

Lord V. He shall give me satisfaction. In that, at least, I am determined. He shall give—And yet, what is satisfaction? Is it to be run through the body, shot through the head? A man may then, indeed, be said to be satisfied. I had forgotten my doubts on duelling. Tell my lady I wish to speak to her. No—

Harry. She is here, my lord.

[*Exit.*]

Enter LADY VIBRATE and DOCTOR GOSTERMAN.

Lady V. What is the matter, my lord? You seem to be even in a worse humour than usual.

Lord V. Mr. Delaval has treated me disrespectfully.

Lady V. Have not I a thousand times told you he is a disagreeable impertinent person?

Lord V. Why, God forgive me, but I really find myself of your ladyship's opinion. 'Tis a thing, I believe, that never happened before.

Lady V. And a thing, I believe, that will never happen again. I hope, my lord, you are now determined in favour of Sir George.

Lord V. Positively. Finally. I pledge my honour.

Lady V. You hear, Doctor?

Doctor. Ya, my coot laty; I vas hear.

Lord V. I say, I pledge my honour. I authorise you, my lady, to deliver that message to the baronet; and, that I may not have time to begin to doubt, I will instantly begone. [*Exit.*]

Lady V. This is fortunate.

Doctor. Oh! fery mosh fortunate; fery mosh.

Lady V. Had Mr. Delaval married my daughter, we should have had a continual sermon on reason, common sense, and good order. And these and such like antediluvian notions must have been introduced to our family.

Doctor. Ah! dat shall be pad; fery pad, intee, my coot laty.

Lady V. Now that Sir George is the man, the danger is over.

Doctor. Dat is oreat plessing.

Lady V. But what, think you, are my daughter's thoughts? I fear she has a kind of esteem for Delaval. He was her first lover.

Doctor. Ya; she vas fery mosh esteem Mr. Delaval, my coot laty.

Lady V. But I observe she listens with great pleasure to the gay prattle of Sir George.

Doctor. Oh! fery oreat, intee, my coot laty.

Lady V. We must second the rising passion; for we must get rid of that solemn sir.

Doctor. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot laty.

Lady V. Go to her, Doctor; convince her how

intolerable it will be to have a husband whom she cannot quarrel with nor reprove. Paint, in the most lively colours, the stupid life she must lead with so reasonable a man.

Doctor. I shall do everything as you shall make agreeable, my good lady. That is my way. My lady, I was your most obedient servant, my lady. [Exit.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Hall of the hotel.

LUCY discovered, speaking to the Master of the hotel.

Enter WILLIAMS and HARRY.

Wil. All you say is very true, Mr. Harry. Our masters suppose we have neither sense nor feeling, yet exact everything that requires the five senses in perfection. They expect we should know their meaning before they open their lips, yet won't allow we have common understanding.

Harry. More shame for them. I warrant, for all that, we can game, run in debt, get in drink, and be as proud and domineering as they are for their lives.

Wil. Yes, yes: let them but change places, and they would soon find out we could rise to their vices, and they could sink to ours, with all the ease imaginable.

Harry. They have no such notion though, Mr. Williams.

Wil. That is their vanity, Mr. Harry. I have lived with Mr. Delaval ever since he returned from India; and, though he is a good—(sees Lucy)—Eh! surely, it must be her. Do you know that young woman, Mr. Harry?

Harry. No; but I have heard a strange story about her.

Wil. Ay, it is.—What—I am sure it is Lucy.—What strange story have you heard?

Harry. Why, that she came here late last night with a young gentleman, now above, pretending to be his waiting-maid.

Wil. With a gentleman! (Aside.) Oh! the jilt! Waiting-maid to a man? I never heard of such a thing.

Harry. Nor anybody else.

Wil. (Aside.) The deceitful hussey!

Harry. (Bell rings.) That's my lord's bell: I told you he is never easy. I must go.

Wil. (Aside.) I am glad of it. By all means, Mr. Harry. Good day! [Exit Harry.] Run away with a gentleman! Oh!

Lucy. (Coming forward.) I declare, there is Mr. Williams.

Wil. (Aside.) What a fool was I to believe she loved me!

Lucy. (Aside.) How my heart beats! Dear, dear! I could wish to speak to him; but then, if any harm should come of it!

Wil. (Aside.) She shall not escape me.

Lucy. (Aside.) I should like to ask him now he does. But I must not betray my dear lady. (Going.)

Wil. (Placing himself in her way.) I beg pardon, madam.

Lucy. (Aside.) Does not he know me?

Wil. I thought I had seen you before; but I find I am mistaken.

Lucy. (Aside.) What does he mean?

Wil. You are very like a young woman I once knew.

Lucy. (Aside.) How angry he looks!

Wil. But she was a modest, pretty behaved person; and not an arrant jilt.

Lucy. Who is a jilt, Mr. Williams?

Wil. One Lucy Langford, that I courted and promised to marry; but I know better now.

Lucy. You do, Mr. Williams?

Wil. I do, madam.

Lucy. It is very well, Mr. Williams; it is very well. Pray, let me go about my business.

Wil. Oh! to be sure. I have no right to stop you.

Lucy. You have no right to speak to me as you do, Mr. Williams.

Wil. No, no. Ha, ha, ha! I dare say, I have not.

Lucy. No, you have not; and so I beg you will let me pass. My mistress—I mean—

Wil. Ay, ay; you mean your master.

Lucy. Do I, sir? Well, since you please to think so, so be it.

Wil. All the servants know it is a man. Would you deny it?

Lucy. I deny nothing, Mr. Williams; and, if you are minded to make this an excuse for being as treacherous as the rest of your sex, you are very welcome, Mr. Williams. I shall neither die nor cry at parting.

Wil. I dare say not. The young gentleman above stairs will comfort you.

Lucy. (Bursts into tears.) It is a base, false story. I have no young gentleman above stairs, nor below stairs neither, to comfort me; and you ought to know me better.

Wil. Did you or did you not come here last night?

Lucy. What of that?

Wil. With a young gentleman?

Lucy. No—Yes. Don't ask me such questions.

Wil. No. You are ashamed to answer them.

MARIA appears above.

Maria. Lucy!

Lucy. Ma'am—Sir? Coming, sir.

Wil. There, there! I will see what sort of a spark it is, however.

Lucy. (Struggling.) Be quiet, then. Keep away. You shan't.

Maria. (Descending.) What is the matter? Who is molesting you?

Lucy. (To Maria.) Go back, sir; go back.

Wil. I will see, I am determined.

DELAVAL appears at a room-door.

Del. Williams!

Wil. I tell you, I will. (Looking at Maria.) Eh! Bless me!

Maria. Why, Lucy—Mr. Williams!

Wil. My young lady, as I live!

Del. Why do not you answer, Williams?

Wil. Coming, sir.

Maria. Mercy! It is my brother's voice: what shall I do?

Lucy. Hide your face with your handkerchief, madam. Pull down your hat.

Maria. Pray, do not betray me, Mr. Williams.

Lucy. If you do, I will never speak to you as long as I have breath to draw.

Wil. How betray?

Lucy. Don't say you know us. Mind! Not for the world. [Exit Maria.]

Del. What is it you are about, Williams?

Wil. Nothing, sir.

Del. What do you mean by nothing? Whom were you wrangling with?

Wil. Me, sir! Wrangling, sir?

Del. Why are you so confused?

Wil. Why, sir, I—I committed a small mistake. I was asking—asking after a gentleman—that—that proved not to be a gentleman—that is, not—not the gentleman that I supposed.

Del. Why did you not come back with your message? Have you learnt the address of Sir George?

Wil. Yes, sir; he lives in Upper Grosvenor-street; his name on the door.

Del. Well, be in the way. The day shall not pass before I see him. My own wrongs I could forgive. He, it seems, is preferred; and, perhaps, I have no right to complain: but for his injuries to my sister he shall render me a dear account. *[Exit.]*

Wil. What can be the reason of Miss Delaval's disguise?

Lucy. *(Above.)* Hist, hist! Mr. Williams!

Wil. Is it you? Oh! now I shall know.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

LADY VIBRATE and LADY JANE discovered.

Lady V. Really, daughter, I cannot understand you.

Lady J. No wonder, madam; for I do not half understand myself.

Lady V. Is it possible you can hesitate? The good-humour and complaisance of Sir George might captivate any woman.

Lady J. They are very engaging, but they are dangerous.

Lady V. Which way?

Lady J. His character is too pliant. If others are merry, so is he: if they are sad, he is the same. Their joys and sorrows play upon his countenance; but, though they may slightly graze, they do not penetrate his heart. Even while he relieves, he scarcely feels them.

Lady V. Psha! He is a delightful man.

Lady J. I grant he does his utmost. But it is a folly to be the slave even of an endeavour to please.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! Upon my honour, you are a whimsical young lady. Afraid of marrying a man because of his assiduous endeavours to please! As if that were a husband's failing! You can prefer no such accusation against Mr. Delaval.

Lady J. I own he is of a very different character. Firm and inflexible, he imagines he makes virtue his rule and reason his guide.

Lady V. Firm, indeed! No, no: ferocious, obstinate, perverse. Sir George tries to be agreeable, and is successful; Mr. Delaval has no fear of offending, and does not miss his aim.

Lady J. Heaven help us! We all have faults and follies enough.

Lady V. Mr. Delaval never was approved by me; and this morning he has insulted your father.

Lady J. Insulted! How do you mean, madam? Mr. Delaval is abroad. Has he written!

Lady V. No. He is here.

Lady J. Here! And has he not thought proper to let me know of his arrival?

Lady V. No, no. The haughty gentleman has only thought proper to reproach Lord Vibrate for admitting the pretensions of Sir George. He is too proud to endure a competitor.

Lady J. Indeed! Such pride is the very way to insure his competitor success. Insulted my father!

Lady V. I will leave you to judge how deeply, when I tell you that, fluctuating and undecided as Lord Vibrate always is, he was so offended that he pledged his honour in favour of Sir George.

Lady V. Insult my father, and not deign to let me know of his arrival.

Lady V. I hope, when Sir George comes, you will admit him.

Lady J. Certainly, madam; certainly.

Lady V. And that Mr. Delaval will be denied.

Lady J. It seems I need give myself no concern

about that; the gentleman will not even take the trouble to send up his name.

Lady V. I am glad you feel it properly.

Lady J. Pardon me, madam, I will not condescend to feel it in the least. It shall not affect me; no, not for a moment. I had, indeed, conceived a very different opinion of Mr. Delaval. I am glad I have discovered my error before it is too late. I could not have believed it possible. But it shall not disturb me. It shall give me no uneasiness. I will keep myself perfectly cool and unconcerned, and—ungenerous, unfeeling man! *[Exit.]*

Lady V. She is delightfully piqued, and Sir George will succeed.

Sir G. *(Without.)* Are the ladies above?

Foot. *(Without.)* Yes, sir.

Lady V. I hear him. The very sound of his voice inspires mirth.

Enter SIR GEORGE VERSATILE.

Sir G. Ah! my dear lady.

Lady V. I am infinitely glad to see you, Sir George; you are come at a lucky moment.

Sir G. Is, then, my fate decided?

Lady V. It is, it is.

Sir G. Happy tidings!

Lady V. But first tell me—

Sir G. Anything—everything. Speak.

Lady V. Are you not of my opinion?

Sir G. To be sure I am. What is it?

Lady V. That pleasure is the business of life.

Sir G. Oh! beyond all doubt.

Lady V. That inspecting accounts—

Sir G. Is vulgar drudgery.

Lady V. And looking after our affairs—

Sir G. A vile loss of time.

Lady V. That care in the face denotes—

Sir G. The owner a fool.

Lady V. And that sorrow is a very ridiculous thing.

Sir G. Fit only to excite laughter.

Lady V. Why, then, Sir George, I am your friend.

Sir G. Ten thousand thousand thanks! But, what says my lord?

Lady V. Would you believe it? He consents, has pledged his honour, and sent the message by me.

Sir G. Rapture, enchantment!

Lady V. Yes. The reign of pleasure is about to begin.

Sir G. Light, free, and fantastic; dancing an eternal round.

Lady V. No domestic troubles—

Sir G. No grave looks.

Lady V. No serious thoughts—

Sir G. We will never think at all.

Lady V. No cares, no frowns.

Sir G. None, none, by heavens, none! It shall be spring and sunshine all the year.

Lady V. Then our appearance in public!

Sir G. Splendid, dazzling! Driving to the opera!

Lady V. Dressing for Ranelagh.

Sir G. A phaëton to-day.

Lady V. A curriole to-morrow.

Sir G. Dash over the downs of Piccadilly, descend the heights of St. James's, make the tour of Pall-Mall, coast Whitehall—

Lady V. Back again to Bond-street—

Sir G. Scour the squares, thunder at the doors.

Lady V. How do you do? How do you do? How do you do?

Sir G. And away we rattle, till stone walls are but gliding shadows, and the whole world a galaxy shew.

Lady V. You are a charming man, Sir George; and Lady Jane is your's.

Sir G. My dear lady, your words inspire me: I am all air, spirit, soul! I tread the milky way, and step upon the stars.

Lady V. But you must not, before the marriage, talk thus to Lord Vibrate. Silly man! He and you will never agree.

Sir G. Oh! yes, but we shall. I—I—I like his humour.

Lady V. Do you?

Sir G. Prodigiously. Whenever I am in his company, I am as grave as Good Friday.

Lady V. Indeed!

Sir G. He is full of sage reflection: so am I. Doubtful of everything: so am I. Anxious for the present, provident for the future: so am I. Overflowing with prudential maxims; sententious, sentimental, and solemn: so am I.

Lady V. You sentimental!

Sir G. As grace before meat in the mouth of an ulderman.

Lady V. You solemn!

Sir G. As the black patch on a judge's wig.

Lady V. I must tell you, Sir George, I hate sentiment.

Sir G. Oh! so do I.

Lady V. Solemnity is all a farce.

Sir G. And those that act it buffoons. I know it.

Lady V. I love mirth, pleasantry—

Sir G. Humour, whim, wit, feasting, revelry, about, song, dance, and joke. So do I, so do I, so do I!

Lady V. The very mention of duties and cares makes me splenetic.

Sir G. Curse catch duties! I hate them. Give me life, the wide world, the fair sun, and the free air.

Lady V. I say, give me midnight, the rattling of chariot-wheels, and the lighted flambeau.

Sir G. Ay, a rout! A crash of coaches—a lane of footmen—a blazing stair-case—a squeeze through the antichamber—card-tables—wax-lights—patent lamps—Bath stoves and suffocation! Oh, lord! oh, lord!

Lady V. Exquisite! You are a delightful man.

Sir G. Am I?

Lady V. You enter perfectly into all my ideas.

Sir G. Do I?

Lady V. And describe them even better than I myself can.

Sir G. Oh! my dear lady.

Lady V. Yes, you do.

Sir G. No, no.

Lady V. But, then—Ha, ha, ha!—That you should be able to fall in with my lord's absurdities so readily!

Sir G. Nothing more easy: I have one infallible rule to please all tempers. I learnt it of our friend the Doctor.

Lady V. Sure! What is that?

Sir G. I prove that everybody is always in the right.

Lady V. Prove my husband to be in the right. Do, if you can.

Sir G. My lord loves to be restless, and doubtful, and distressed; he delights in teasing and tormenting himself; and why should I interrupt his pleasures?

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! Very true.

Sir G. I fall in with his humour. I shew him how rational it is; afford him new arguments of discontent, and encourage him to be miserable.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! Oh! you malicious devil!

Sir G. My dear lady, you mistake: I do it from pure compassion. It makes him happy. Every child deludes in the squeaking of its own trumpet; and shall I have the cruelty to break the toy? A well-bred person is cautious never to contradict.

It is become a very essential requisite to say ay and no in the most complying manner possible.

Lady V. Ah! Sir George, you are one of the dear inimitable few.

Sir G. Only a copy of your charming self.

Lady V. You and I must totally reform our stupid family. Amusement shall be our perpetual occupation.

Sir G. Day and night.

Lady V. We will commence with your marriage. It shall be a splendid one.

Sir G. A fête, a concert, a ball! The whole town shall ring with it.

Lady V. I hate a private wedding. A small select party is my aversion.

Sir G. Oh! nothing is so insipid! Pleasure cannot be calm.

Lady V. I wish to be seen, and heard—

Sir G. And talked of, and paraphrased, and praised, and blamed, and admired, and envied, and laughed at, and imitated!

Lady V. I live but in a crowd.

Sir G. Give me hurry, noise, embarrassment—

Lady V. Confusion, disorder—

Sir G. Tumult, tempest, uproar, elbowing, squeezing, pressing, pushing, squeaking, squalling, fainting!

Lady V. Exquisite! transporting!

Sir G. You remember I receive masks this evening.

Lady V. Can I forget?

Sir G. You will be there?

Lady V. There! Ay; though I should come in my coffin.

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! An excellent idea! I never yet saw a mask in the character of a *memento mori*.

Lady V. Ah! Turn about, and you will see a *memento mori* without a mask!

Sir G. What, my lord?

Lord V. (Without.) I cannot tell. I will consider, and send an answer.

Lady V. Here he comes, to interrupt our delightful dreams: a very antidote to mirth and pleasure. He will give you a full dose of the dismal. But you must stay and speak to him. Remember, his honour is pledged: insist upon that. I pity, but cannot relieve you. [Exit.

Enter LORD VIBRATE.

Lord V. I have been too sudden. I ought not to have pledged my honour. This is the consequence of hasty determination; of not doubting before we decide. Shall I never correct myself of that fault? (Sees Sir George. They look full at each other, till Sir George catches the same dismal kind of countenance.) Ah! Sir George, here am I, brimful of anxiety and turmoil!

Sir G. Alas! man was born to trouble.

Lord V. Perplexed on every side; thwarted in every plan: no domestic comfort, no friend to grieve with me, no creature to share my miseries.

Sir G. Melancholy case!

Lord V. One crossing me, another blaming me, and my wife driving me mad!

Sir G. Distressing situation!

Lord V. My cares laughed at, my vigilance mocked, my sufferings insulted! And why? Because I am cautious! because I doubt! because I am provident! What is man without money?

Sir G. A fountain without water.

Lord V. A clock without a dial.

Sir G. What is it that buys respect, and honour, and power, and privilege, and houses, and lands, and wit, and beauty, and learning, and lords, and commons, and—

Lord V. Why money!—Then the manners of this dissipated age—

Sir G. They are truly shocking! They—~~they~~—they are absurd, ridiculous, odious, abominable.

Lord V. And to what do they lead?

Sir G. To everything that is horrid! To loss of peace, loss of property, loss of principle, loss of respect; bankruptcy, ruin, contempt, disease, and death!

Lord V. (Aside.) Yes, yes: he's the man! I do not think I repent. Heaven be praised! Sir George, you are a man of understanding; an economist. You will regulate your family and affairs to my heart's content.

Sir G. Oh! it shall be my study; my daily practice, my duty, my delight!

Lord V. You make me happy. And yet I cannot but wonder, being so rational a man, how you and my lady should agree so well.

Sir G. Dear, my lord, why so? Women are the most manageable good creatures upon earth.

Lord V. Women good?

Sir G. Indubitably; when they are pleased.

Lord V. So they say is the devil.

Sir G. The sweet angels deserve to be honoured. Their smiles are so enchanting! And, should they frown, who can be angry when we know the dear wayward sirens will only look the more bewitching, as soon as they are out of their pouts? It is so delightful to see the sun breaking from behind a cloud.

Lord V. Psha! When a woman begins to grow old—

Sir G. Hush! The sun—the sun never grows old. I grant you that, formerly, there used to be old women; but there are none now!

Lord V. Then you think me a fool for being wretched at my wife's thoughtlessness, caprice, and impertinence?

Sir G. No, I don't. Every body tells us that wives were born to be the plague of their husbands.

Lord V. And mine is the greatest of plagues!

Sir G. What is a wife's duty? To obey her lord and master. 'Tis her marriage promise, and the law binds her to it. She is the minister of his pleasures, the landmaid of his wants, his goods, his chattels, his vendible property.

Lord V. Ay; we find the husband may take the wife to market in a halter.

Sir G. In which I should hope he would afterwards hang himself!

Lord V. My lady thinks of nothing but revelling, and racketing, and turning the world upside down!

Sir G. 'Tis a great pity.

Lord V. Her tongue is my torment.

Sir G. The perpetual motion! It never ceases.

Lord V. Then how can you like her company?

Sir G. She is not my wife.

Lord V. No, or you would not be such good friends. Did she say anything concerning the marriage?

Sir G. Oh! yes. She delivered your lordship's kind message.

Lord V. What, that I had pledged my honour?

Sir G. Irrevocably.

Lord V. I was very rash. Hasty resolutions bring long repentance. She insists that the nuptials shall be public.

Sir G. Does she, indeed!

Lord V. For my part, I hate any display of vanity.

Sir G. It is extremely ridiculous! What would our ostentation, pomp, and magnificence be, but advertising ourselves to the world as fools and oxcombs?

Lord V. Is that a rational use of money?

Sir G. Should it not be applied to relieve the aged, comfort the poor, succour the distressed—

Lord V. What?

Sir G. Reward merit, encourage industry, and promote the public good?

Lord V. Promote a farce?

Sir G. Very true; the public good is a farce!

Lord V. The true use of money is to defend our rights—

Sir G. Revenge our wrongs, purchase for the present, provide for the future, secure power, buy friends, bid defiance to enemies, and lead the world in a string!

Lord V. Ay; now you talk sense. So, if I should consent, the wedding shall be private.

Sir G. Calm; tranquil!

Lord V. No feasting.

Sir G. No dancing, no music, no pantomime pleasures; but all silent, serene, pure, and undisturbed.

Lord V. We will just invite a select party.

Sir G. A chosen few.

Lord V. None but our real and sincere friends.

Sir G. And then we shall be sure the house will hold them.

Enter HARRY.

Harry. My lord, the builder desires to know if you will see him?

Lord V. I am coming. I will be with him in five minutes.

Harry. He says he can stay no longer.

Lord V. Then let him go. I will be with him presently.

Harry. The lawyers have sent word they are waiting for your lordship, at Counsellor Demar's chambers.

Lord V. Very well. There let them wait. The law is slow, and every man ought to be slow who is going to law. Come with me, Sir George; I have some papers to consult you upon.

Harry. The tradespeople, too, are below.

Lord V. Thus it is: I am eternally besieged; I never have a moment to myself.

Harry. This is the tenth time they have been here, by your lordship's own appointment.

Lord V. What of that?

Harry. They are become quite surly. They all abuse me: and some of them don't spare your lordship.

Lord V. Do you hear, Sir George?

Sir G. Oh, shocking! Your tradespeople are a sad, unreasonable set. You cannot convince them that, if we were to keep our own appointments, be punctual in our payments, and know what we do want, and what we do not, we should no longer be persons of fashion.

Enter THOMPSON.

Thom. I am just come from the lawyers, my lord. The courts are sitting, their clients waiting; and if your lordship do not go immediately, they will be gone.

Lord V. Very true; and this last opportunity of serving an ejectment will be lost. I have a thousand things to attend to. Would you be kind enough, Sir George, to go and—Hold! no; I don't know what to do! The estate is valuable: but law is damnable. I may lose the cause: it may cost even more than it is worth. Writs of error!—Brought into Chancery!—Carried up to the Lords!

Sir G. Then the stupidity of juries; the fictions of law: the chicanery of lawyers, their tricking, twisting, turning, lying, wrangling, browbeating, cajoling!

Lord V. Their frauds, collusions, perjuries, robberies—

Sir G. Ay! Detinue, replevin, plea, imparlance, replication, rejoinder, rebutter, surrejoinder, surrebutter, demurrer—

Lord V. Take breath! We ought both to demur: for it is the devil's dance, and both plaintiff and defendant are obliged to pay the piper. *[Exit.]*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Apartments of Lord Vibrats.*

LADY JANE, *her Woman*, DOCTOR GOSTERMAN, and a Footman, *discovered.*

Lady J. (To Footman.) Tell the young gentleman I wait his pleasure. [*Exit Footman.*] It is very singular! men, I believe, do not often travel attended by waiting-maids!

Doctor. Dat is de mystery, my Laty Shane.

Lady J. What can he want to say to me?

Doctor. Dat is de more mystery, my Laty Shane. He vas fery mosh young, und fery mosh handsome, und he has fery mosh make fall in love mit you, my Laty Shane.

Lady J. Nonsense!

Doctor. My Laty Shane vas so full of de beauty, dat you vas make sharm efery body, my Laty Shane! Und as your name vas make mention, my Laty Shane, he vas all so pale as death!

Lady J. (Aside to her Woman.) You are sure, you say, Mr. Delaval made inquiries, and sent up his name?

Woman. (Apart to Lady J.) La! my lady, could you think he would not? I saw him before ten o'clock; just as you sent me where I was kept so long. And, goodness! had you beheld what a looking he was in! I warrant you, my lady, he asked a hundred and a hundred questions in a breath, and all about you!

Lady J. Well, go now where I desired you.

Woman. Yes, my lady. [*Exit.*]

Enter a Footman, who introduces MARIA, and exit.

Maria. (Aside.) Why do I tremble thus?

Lady J. (To Doctor.) What a charming countenance!

Doctor. Oh! fery mosh sharming!

Lady J. How prepossessing his appearance!

Doctor. Ya; he vas fery mosh possess.

Re-enter Footman.

Foot. Sir George has sent this domino and mask to know if they meet your ladyship's approbation.

Lady J. Ha, ha, ha! Italian refinement, copied after some Venetian cicisbeo. Put them down.

Maria. (Aside. Regarding the domino and mask.) Here his presents, and here his affections are now directed! How shall I support the scene?

Lady J. You wish, sir, to speak to me.

Maria. (Faltering.) Embarrassed by the liberty I have taken—

Lady J. Let me request you to waive all apology, and tell me which way I can oblige or serve you.

Maria. You are acquainted with Sir George—I—*you*—Pray pardon me. I am overcome. My spirits are so agitated—

Lady J. (Reaching a chair.) Sit down, sir. You are unwell. Bless me! Doctor—

Doctor. (To Lady J.) I vas tell my Laty Shane vat it vas—Here, sair, you shnell mit dat elixir; und I shall make your neck-bandt tie loose und—*(Going to loosen her neckcloth.)*

Maria. (Alarmed.) Pray, forbear!

Doctor. (Aside. Imitates a woman.) Ah, ha! Der teufel! he vas a vemens!

Lady J. Are you better?

Maria. A moment's air. *(Goes to the window.)*

Doctor. (Aside.) Dat vas de someting mystery!

Maria. (To Lady J.) If you would indulge me a few minutes in private—

Lady J. By all means. Doctor—*(Whispers.)*

Doctor. Ya, ya; my Laty Shane, I vas understandt and I vas do efery ting as vat shall make

agréable. Dat is my way.—Sair, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, sair. I vas understandt. My Laty Shane, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, my Laty Shane.—*(Aside.)* Ha, ha! [*Exit.*]

Lady J. Take courage, sir.

Maria. I am unequal to the task. This disguise sits ill upon me.

Lady J. What disguise?

Maria. I am not what I seem. I—

Lady J. Speak!

Maria. I am a woman.

Lady J. Heavens!

Maria. Distressed—

Lady J. By poverty?

MSria. Oh! no; I come to claim your counsel.

Lady J. In what way?

Maria. To prevent mischief—the shedding of blood.

Lady J. The shedding of blood?

Sir G. (Without.) I will be with you again presently, my lady.

Maria. Mercy! it is Sir George! What shall I do? He must not see me! This way—*(Puts on the domino and mask.)* Aid me, dear lady, to conceal myself; and excuse conduct which I cannot now explain. *(Retires.)*

Lady J. Depend upon me, madam.—*(Aside.)* This is as unaccountable as it is alarming!

Enter SIR GEORGE VERSATILE.

Sir G. I come, my charming Lady Jane, flying, and full of business, to consult you on a thousand important affairs!

Lady J. Surely! What are they?

Sir G. Upon my soul, I don't know!

Lady J. Heyday!

Sir G. They have every one slipped my memory.

Lady J. Miraculous!

Sir G. Whenever I have the inexpressible pleasure of enjoying your smiles, I can think of nothing else.

Maria. (Aside.) Perjured man!

Lady J. My smiles! Ha, ha, ha! What if I should happen to frown?

Sir G. Impossible! No lowering clouds of discontent dare ever shade the heavenly brightness of your brow.

Maria. (Aside.) Oh!

Lady J. Very prettily said, upon my word. Where did you learn it?

Sir G. From you: 'tis pure inspiration, and you are my muse.

Lady J. No; 'tis a flight beyond me. I love plain prose.

Sir G. So do I. A mere common-place, matter-of-fact man, I! The weather; the time of the day; the history of where I dined last; the names and titles of the company; the dishes brought to table; the health, sickness, death, birth, and marriage, of my acquaintance; and such like toothpick topics for me! I am as literal in my narratives as any town-crier, and repeat them as often.

Lady J. Yet I should wish to talk a little common sense.

Sir G. Oh! so should I, I assure you: I am for pros and cons, and whys and whereforen. Your Aristotles, and Platos, and Senecas, and Catos, are my delight; I honour their precepts, venerate their cogitations, and adore the length of their beards!—which luckily reminds me of the masquerade. Is my domino to your taste?

Lady J. Ha, ha, ha! Antient sages, dominos, and taste!

Sir G. Did you not notice the colour?

Lady J. Oh! the taste of a domino is in its colour?

Sir G. Why, no; but there may be meaning.

Lady J. Explain.

Sir G. Mine is saffron.

Lady J. What of that?

Sir G. Cruel question!—Hymen and his robe.

Lady J. Oh! oh!

Maria. (*Aside.*) She is pleased with his perfidy.

Lady J. A very significant riddle, truly!

Maria. (*Advances.*) Are you so soon to be married, sir?

Sir G. Bless me! Lady Jane, what frolicsome gentleman is this? In masquerade so early, and my domino!

Maria. Permit me once more to ask, if you are soon to be married?

Sir G. Your question, sir, is improperly addressed. Put it, if you please, to that lady.

Maria. (*Aside to Sir G.*) Is that the lady to whom the question ought to be put?

Sir G. (*Aside.*) What does he mean? Will you indulge me, sir, by taking off that mask?

Maria. No, sir.

Sir G. 'Tis mine; and I am induced to claim it, from the great curiosity I have to see your face.

Maria. Do you not adore this lady?

Sir G. (*Aside.*) An odd question!—More than language can express.

Maria. (*Aside.*) Oh, falsehood!—Then I put myself under her protection.

Sir G. You know guardian angels when you see them. Pray, however, let us become acquainted.

Maria. For what reason?

Sir G. 'Twould gratify me. I should like you.

Maria. Oh! no.

Sir G. I certainly should. There is something of pathos and music in your voice, which—which—I never heard but one to equal it.

Maria. And whose voice was that?

Sir G. Oh! that—that was a voice so ingenuous, so affectionate, so fascinating—

Maria. But whose voice was it?

Lady J. (*Aside.*) What does this mean?

Maria. Tell me, and you shall see my face.

Lady J. (*Aside.*) Astonishing!

Sir G. I must not, I dare not—I shall never hear it more!

Maria. (*Aside.*) My feelings so overpower me, I shall betray myself.—(*To Lady J.*) Permit me to retire.

Lady J. You have alarmed and strangely moved me! I hope you will return?

Maria. Oh! yes; and most happy to have your permission.

Sir G. Why do they whisper?—(*To Maria, going.*) Will you not let me know who you are?

Maria. No.

Sir G. Why?

Maria. Because—I am one you do not love.

Sir G. One I do not love!

Lady J. (*Aside.*) This is incomprehensible!

Re-enter MARIA, hastily.

Maria. (*Apart to Lady J.*) Oh, madam!

Lady J. What more is the matter?

Maria. For your life, do not mention the names of either of these gentlemen to the other!

Lady J. What gentlemen?

Maria. He is coming! They do not personally know each other: if they should, there would be murder! I dare not stay. For the love of God, beware!

[*Exit.*]

Enter DELAVAL.

Sir G. (*Calling.*) Harkye! sir, come back! My domino! I shall want it in an hour or so.—Who have we here?

Del. (*Agitated.*) Your ladyship's very humble servant.

Lady J. Oh! How do you do? How do you do?

(*Aside.*) Who can that lady be? She knows them both, it seems; and knows their rivalry! Her terror is contagious! Is their hatred so deadly? I shall certainly betray them to each other.

Del. (*Aside.*) What a strange behaviour she puts on! Does she affect to overlook me? (*Seeing Sir George.*) Who is this?

Lady J. Are you just arrived?

Del. This very morning: sooner, I fear, than—than was desired.

Lady J. Do you think so? (*To Sir G.*) Why don't you go to Lady Vibrate? She is waiting.

Sir G. 'Tis the fate of forty.

Lady J. What?

Sir G. To wait.—(*Looking at Delaval.*—*Aside.*) Who can this spark be, that she wants me gone!—Pray, what is the name of the youth that has made so free with my domino and mask?

Lady J. I really don't know.

Sir G. Don't know!

Lady J. I can't answer questions at present. I am flurried; out of humour—

Del. I fear, at my intrusion.

Lady J. I wish you had come at another time.

Del. I expected my visit would be unwelcome: let me request, however, to say a few words.

Lady J. Well, well; another time. I tell you: when I am alone.

Sir G. (*Aside.*) Oh! ho!

Del. They were meant for your private ear.

Sir G. (*Aside.*) Were they so?

Del. (*Aside.*) By her confusion and his manner, I suspect this to be the base betrayer of my sister's peace: the man, whose base image makes my heart sick, and my blood recoil.

Lady J. (*Aside.*) Will neither of them go?—Why do you loiter here, Sir Ge.—(*Coughs.*)

Sir G. I must stay till the gentleman brings back my domino and mask, you know.—(*Aside.*) I'll not leave them.

Del. (*Aside.*) I am persuaded it is he.—Excuse me, sir; would you indulge me with the favour of your name?

Sir G. My name, sir! My name is—

Lady J. (*Aside to Sir G.*) Hush! don't tell it.

Sir G. (*To Lady J.*) Why not?

Lady J. I insist upon it!

Sir G. Nay, then—My name, sir, is a very pretty name. Pray, what is yours?

Del. (*Aside.*) Yes, yes; it must be he.—Have you any reason to be ashamed of it?

Sir G. Sir! Did you please to speak? Upon my honour, you are a very polite, pleasant person.

Del. (*Aside.*) If I should be mistaken.—I acknowledge, sir, there is but one man, whose name I do, but whose person I do not know, to whom that question would not have been rude in the extreme. Should you not be the man, I ask your pardon.

Sir G. Should I not! Sir, that I may be sure I am not, allow me to ask his name.

Del. His name is—

Lady J. (*Screams.*) Oh!

Del. Good heavens!

Sir G. What has happened?

Del. Are you ill?

Sir G. Is it cramp, or spasm?

Del. Surely, you have broken a blood-vessel?

Sir G. Shall I run for a physician?

Lady J. Instantly.

Sir G. I fly! Yet I must not leave you.

Lady J. No delay, if you value my life.

Del. Your life! I will go.

Lady J. (*Detaining him.*) No, no.

Sir G. I fly! I fly!

[*Exit.*]

Enter Lady Jane's Woman.

Woman. Dear, my lady, what is the matter?

Lady J. Lead me directly to my own room.

Del. Shall I carry you?

Lady J. No; only give me your arm, and come with me. I want to talk to you. I wish to hear what you have to say.—*(Aside to her Woman.)* When Sir George comes back, tell him I am partly recovered, but must not be disturbed. It is my positive order.

Del. *(Aside.)* What does she whisper?

Lady J. Stay! The doctor may come in; but not Sir George. Mind, on your life! not Sir George.—Come, sir.

Del. *(Aside.)* This sudden change is mysterious.

Lady J. Come, come.

[Exit with Delaval.]
Woman. I purtest, it has put me in such a flutter, that I am quite all of a twitter!

Enter SIR GEORGE VERSATILE, followed by DOCTOR GOSTERMAN.

Sir G. Come along, Doctor! Make haste!—Where is Lady Jane?

Woman. In her own room.

Sir G. Is she worse?

Woman. No, sir; much better. But she must not be disturbed.

Sir G. Nay, nay; I must see her.

Woman. Indeed, sir, I can let nobody in but the Doctor.

Sir G. Why so? Is not the gentleman I left here now with her?

Woman. I suppose so, sir.

Sir G. And I not admitted?

Woman. On no account whatever.

Sir G. He allowed, and I excluded! Indeed, I shall attend the Doctor.

Woman. Upon my honour, sir, you must not.

Sir G. Upon my honour, I will! My rival shall not escape me!

Doctor. Ha, ha! De rital! Ha, ha, ha! Dat is coot! De young fer dat vas mit Laty Shane vas make yob shenlousy? Ha, ha, ha! Dat is coot! Bote dat is as noting at all. I shall tell you de someting mystery. He vas no gentlemen. Ha, ha! He vas a voman!

Sir G. A woman!

Doctor. Ya, sair. He vas make acquaintance mit me, und I vas make acquaintance mit him; und he vas make faint, und I vas tie loose de neck-bandt, und den, ha, ha! I was discover de mans vas a voman!

Sir G. You astonish me!

Doctor. Ya, sair; I vas make astonish myself.

Woman. Won't you go to my lady, Doctor?

Doctor. Ya, my tear. Let me do. Laty Shane is fery pad; und I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, und all, &c. *[Exit, talking.]*

Sir G. I should never have suspected a woman! A stout, tall, robust figure! And for what purpose disguise herself? That may be worth inquiry. I will wait; and, if possible, have another look at the lady.

Enter LORD VIBRATE and MR. THOMPSON.

Lord V. Two hundred and forty pounds! 'Tis a very large sum, Mr. Thompson.

Thom. So large, my lord, that I have no means of paying it. I must languish out my life in a prison.

Lord V. No, Mr. Thompson, no; you shall not do that. I will—And yet, two hundred—A prison—I don't know what to say. If I pay this money for you, I shall but encourage all around me to run in debt.

Thom. It is a favour too great for me to hope.

Lord V. You are a worthy man, and a prison is a bad place. I—you—Pray, what is your opinion, Sir George? Is it not dangerous for a man to have the character of being charitable?

Sir G. No doubt, my lord. It is the very certain way for his house to be besieged by beggars.

Lord V. The master who pays the debts of one domestic, makes himself the debtor of all the rest.

Sir G. He changes a set of servants into a set of duns. He first encourages them to be extravagant, and then makes it incumbent upon himself to pay for their follies and vices: he not only bribes them to be idle and insolent, but to waste his property as well as their own.

Lord V. It is, as you say, a very serious case.—I—I am sorry for your misfortune, Mr. Thompson, very sorry; but really—

Sir G. Misfortune! What misfortune?

Lord V. He has foolishly been bound for his sister's husband, and must go to prison for the debt.

Sir G. To prison!

Lord V. You have shewn me how dangerous it would be for me to interfere.

Sir G. Very true, very true. He has lived with your lordship several years!

Lord V. He has; and I esteem him highly.

Sir G. A worthy man, whom it would be no disgrace to call your friend?

Lord V. None. Still, however, consequences must be weighed. I must take time to consider: 'tis folly to act in a hurry.

Sir G. Very true. Caution, caution. Is it a large sum?

Lord V. No less than two hundred and forty pounds!

Sir G. Caution is a very excellent thing—Two hundred and forty—A fine virtue—Two—I would advise your lordship to it by all means—hundred and forty—*(Looks round.)* Will you permit me just to write a short memorandum; a bit of a note? *(Goes to a table.)* I must send to a certain place. *(Writes.)* Excuse me a moment.

Lord V. What can be done in this affair, Mr. Thompson?

Thom. Nothing, my lord. I am resigned. When I assisted my brother, I did no more than my duty. Those who lock me up in a prison, may, for aught I know, do theirs; yet, though they are at liberty, and I shall be confined, I would neither change duties nor hearts with them. *(Going.)*

Sir G. Harkye! harkye! Mr. Thompson, will you just desire this to be taken as it is directed? *(Apart.)* Don't say a word; 'tis a draft on my banker. Discharge your debt, and be silent.—You are very right, my lord; we cannot be too considerate, lest, by mistaken benevolence, we should encourage vice.

Thom. Sir George—My lord—

Sir G. Why now will you not oblige me, Mr. Thompson? Pray, let that be delivered as it is directed. You, surely, will not deny me such a favour.—For you know, my lord, if we give—

Thom. Indeed, I—

Sir G. Will you begone? Will you begone? *(Pushes him kindly off.)*—If we give without—without—

Lord V. Poor fellow! I suppose he is afraid of being taken.

Sir G. Oh! Is that it?—If we give, I say, with too—Psha! I have lost the thread of my argument.

Lord V. I must own, this is a dubious case. Perhaps I ought to pay the money. *(Calls.)* Mr. Thompson!—I don't think I ought to let him go to prison. What shall I do, Sir George?

Sir G. Whatever your lordship thinks best.

Lord V. But there is the difficulty.—Mr. Thomp-

son! He is gone! How foolish this is now! (*As he is going off.*) Harry! Run after Mr. Thompson, and call him back. One would think a man going to prison, would, like me, be wise enough to doubt, and take time to consider of it. [*Exit.*]

Enter LADY VIBRATE.

Lady V. I assure you, Sir George, I am very angry. I have been waiting an age, expecting you would come and give your opinion on my masquerade dress.

Sir G. Why did not your ladyship put it on?

Lady V. On, indeed! It has been on and off twenty times. I have sent it to have some alteration. Besides, it is growing late; masks will be calling in on you, in their way to the Opera-house, and you not at home to receive them!

Sir G. I ask ten thousand pounds; but you know I am the most thoughtless creature on earth.

Lady V. So I would have you. Were you like the sober, punctual Mr. Delaval, I should hate you: but then—

Re-enter DELAVAL.

Lady V. (*Aside.*) Here the wretch comes!

Sir G. (*Aside.*) So, so! Now I shall interrogate the lady. She has a very masculine air! (*Delaval bows to Lady V.*) A tolerable bow that for a woman!

Lady V. (*Aside.*) He wishes, I suppose, to sermonize me; but I shall not give him an opportunity.—Are you coming, Sir George?

Del. (*Aside.*) Ha!

Sir G. I will follow your ladyship in a minute.

Del. (*Aside.*) I was right! it is he!

Sir G. (*Aside.*) She eyes me very ferociously!

Lady V. I shall just call in upon you; or, if not, we shall meet afterwards. I expect you to be very whimsical and satiric upon all my friends; so, pray, put on your best humour. Grave airs, you know, are my aversion. [*Exit.*]

Del. (*Aside.*) That was intended for me. Now for my gentleman.

Sir G. (*Aside.*) She really has a very fierce look! a kind of threatening physiognomy, and would make no bad grenadier!

Del. I understand your name is Sir George Versatile?

Sir G. (*Aside.*) A bass voice, too!—At your service, sir, or madam; I really cannot tell which.

Del. Cannot!

Sir G. No, I cannot, upon my soul!—(*Aside.*) A devilish black chin!

Del. I have an account to settle with you, sir.

Sir G. Have you?—(*Aside.*) What the plague can she mean?

Del. When can I find you at leisure, and alone?

Sir G. Alone?

Del. Yes, sir; alone.

Sir G. Must this account, then, be privately settled, madam?

Del. Madam!

Sir G. I beg your pardon; sir, since you prefer it.

Del. If you know me, sir, your insolence is but a confirmation of the baseness of your character!

Sir G. I beg a million of pardons; I really do not know you.

Del. Then, sir, when you do, you will find cause to be a little more serious.

Sir G. (*Aside.*) What a Joan of Arc it is! There is danger she should knock me down.

Del. Be pleased to name your time.

Sir G. (*Aside.*) Zounds! She insists upon a *à-la-tête*!—I hope you will be kind enough to excuse me; but I am just now so pressed for time, that I have not a moment to spare. Company is

waiting. I must begone to the masquerade. Yes, I presume, are for the same place, and are ready dressed. I am your most obedient—

Del. (*Seizing him.*) Sir, I insist upon your naming an hour, to-morrow; and an early one.

Sir G. Why, what the plague! Here must be some mistake! Permit me to ask, do you know Dr. Gosterman?

Del. Yes, sir.

Sir G. Was you not just now in danger of fainting?

Del. Faint! I faint!

Sir G. It would, I think, be a very extraordinary thing! But, so he told me; with other particulars.

Del. Absurd! Doctor Gosterman has not seen me for several months.

Sir G. He said, sir, you were a woman; and, perhaps, from that error, I may have, unconsciously, provoked you to behaviour, which would else have been rather strange. Have I given you any other offence?

Del. Yes, sir; a mortal one.

Sir G. Mortal!

Del. And mortal must be the atonement.

Sir G. If so, the sooner the better. Let it be immediately.

Del. No: I have serious concerns to settle, so have you. 'Tis time you should think of things very different from masquerading. Name your hour to-morrow morning; then, take an enemy's advice, retire to your closet, and make your will.

Sir G. To whom am I indebted for this high menace, and this haughty warning? Your name, sir?

Del. That you shall know when next we meet; not before.

Sir G. What age are you, sir?

Del. Age!

Sir G. Such peremptory heroes are not usually long-lived.

Del. You are right, sir; my life is probably doomed to be short. But this is trifling: name your hour.

Sir G. At ten to-morrow morning.

Del. The very time I could wish. I will be with you at your own house; inform you who I am; and, then—

Sir G. So be it.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The House of Sir George Versatile.—A suite of Apartments richly decorated.*

SIR GEORGE VERSATILE, LADY VIBRATE, and numerous Masks, discovered.

Lady V. What is the matter with you, Sir George? You are suddenly become as dull, and almost as intolerable, as my lord himself.

Sir G. I own, I had something on my spirits; but it is gone. Your ladyship's vivacity is an antidote to splenetic fits.

Lady V. Oh! if you are subject to fits of the spleen, I renounce you.

Sir G. No, no! Heigho! Ha, ha, ha! Let me go merrily down the dance of life!

Lady V. Ay; or I will not be you partner.

Sir G. As for recollections, retrospective anxieties, and painful thoughts, I—I—I hate them. They shall not trouble me. For, if a man, you know, were to be sprung on a mine to-morrow,—ha, ha, ha!—it were folly to let that trouble him to-day.

Lady V. Sprung on a mine! You talk wildly.

Sir G. True. I am a wild, unaccountable nondescript. I am anything, everything, and soon may be—

Lady V. What?

Sir G. Nothing. Strange events are possible, and possible events are strange.

Lady V. Come, come; cast off this disagreeable humour, and join the masks.

Sir G. With all my heart. A mask is an excellent utensil, and may be worn with a naked face.

Lady V. (Retiring.) Why don't you come? you used to be all compliance.

Sir G. So I fear I shall always be. 'Tis my worst virtue. Call it a vice, if you please; and perhaps it is even then my worst.

Lady V. I really do not comprehend you.

Sir G. No wonder. Man is an incomprehensible animal! But no matter for that; we will be merry still; say I—at least, till to-morrow.

Lady V. (Joins the masks.) Yonder is Lady Jane.

Sir G. Nay, then, I am on the wing!

Maria. (Advancing.) Whither?

Sir G. Ah! Have I found you again! So much the better. I have been thinking of you this half hour.

Maria. Ay? That must have been a prodigious effort!

Sir G. What?

Maria. To think of one person for so great a length of time.

Sir G. True. Were you my bitterest enemy, you could not have uttered a more galling truth. I am glad I have met with you, however.

Maria. So am I. 'Tis my errand here.

Sir G. You now, I hope, will let me see your face?

Maria. I might, perhaps, were it but possible to see your heart.

Sir G. No, no; that cannot be: I have no heart.

Maria. I am sorry for it.

Sir G. So am I. But come, I wish to be better acquainted with you.

Maria. And I wish you to be better acquainted with yourself: you know not half your own good qualities.

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! My good qualities! Heigho!

Maria. Your fame is gone abroad. Your gallantry, your free humour, your frolics in England and Italy, your—Apropos: I am told, Lady Jane is captivated by the ardour and delicacy of your passion! Is it true?

Sir G. Are you an inquisitor?

Maria. Are you afraid of inquisitors?

Sir G. Yes.

Maria. I believe you.

Sir G. You may. Keep me no longer in this suspense. Let me know who you are?

Maria. An old acquaintance.

Sir G. Of mine?

Maria. Of one who was formerly your friend.

Sir G. Whom do you mean?

Maria. You must have been a man of uncommon worth; for I have heard him bestow such praises upon you, that my heart has palpitated if your name was but mentioned.

Sir G. Of whom are you talking?

Maria. Lord! that you should be so forgetful! That can only have happened since you became a person of fashion; for no man once remembered his friends better. It is true, they were then useful to you.

Sir G. Sir, I—Be warned! Pursue this no farther.

Maria. You little suspected, at that time, you were on the eve of being a wealthy baronet. Oh, no! And to see how kind and grateful you were to those who loved you! No one would have believed you could so soon have become a perfect man of the mode; and, with so polite and easy an indifference, so entirely have forgotten all your old acquaintance! I dare say you scarcely remember the late Colonel Delaval.

Sir G. Sir!

Maria. His daughter, too, has utterly slipped your memory?

Sir G. I insist on knowing who you are!

Maria. How different it was when, your merit neglected, your spirits depressed, and your poverty despised, you groaned under the oppression of an unjust and selfish world! How did your drooping spirits revive by the fostering smiles of the man who first noticed you, took you to his house and heart, and adopted you as his son!—Poor Maria! Silly girl, to love as she did! Where is she?

Sir G. This is not to be endured!

Maria. What was her offence? You became a baronet! Ay; true, that was her crime. Yet, when your fortunes were low, it was not imputed to you as guilt.

Sir G. (Aside.) D—n!

Maria. Are your new friends more affectionate than your old? Fortune smiles, and so do they. Poor Maria! Has Lady Jane ever heard her name? Will you invite her to your wedding? (*Her voice continually faltering.*) Do. She should have been your bride; then let her be your bride-maid. She is greatly altered—she will be less beautiful, now, than her fair rival. Her birth is not quite so high, but if a heart—a heart—a heart—(*Struggling with her feelings, sinks into Sir George's arms, and her mask falls off.*)

Sir G. Heaven and earth!—'Tis she!—Help!—'Tis Maria!—Who waits?

Enter LADY JANE.

Lady J. What is the matter?

Sir G. Help, help!—Salts, hartshorn, water!—Help!

Lady J. Bless me! this lady again.

Sir G. Is she, then, known to you?

Lady J. No. Who is she?

Sir G. Quick, quick!

Lady J. Nay, but tell me?

Sir G. I cannot, must not!

Lady G. Must not!

Sir G. Dare not!—She revives; and, to my confusion, will soon tell you herself. Maria! Are you better, Maria?

Maria. I am very faint.

Lady J. My carriage is at the door. Will you trust yourself to me?

Maria. Oh! yes. I am weak; very weak, and very foolish! But I shall not long disturb your happiness; I hope soon to be past that.

Sir G. Past! Oh! Maria, I have no utterance. Lady Jane, you will presently know of me what to know of myself is—Oh!—No matter. Not, then, for my sake, but for pity, for the love of suffering virtue, be careful of this lady; whom, when you know, as soon you must, you will despise and abhor the lunatic, the wretch, that could—Maria—I—I—

[Exit.]

Enter DELAVAL.

Del. What is the matter? Any accident? Was not that Sir George?—Good God! my sister!

Lady J. Your sister!

Del. How comes this? Why this dress? And with that apostate! that wretch! Speak, Maria!

Maria. I cannot.

Lady J. Mr. Delaval, be more temperate. Your sister's spirits and health ought not to be trifled with by your violence. I do not know, though I think I guess, her story. I hope you have a brother's tenderness for her?

Del. That shall be shortly seen. A few hours will show how dear she is to my heart.

Lady J. I fear you cherish bad passions; such as I never can love, and never will share.

Del. Well, well, Lady Jane, that is not to be

argued now. I am a man, and subject to the mistakes of man. There are feelings which can, and feelings which cannot be subdued. I must run my course, and take all consequences.

Maria. Oh, God! in what will they end?

Lady J. No more of this Mr. Delaval. Come with me: lead your sister to my carriage. She shall be under my care. She can inspire those sympathies, which your too stubborn temper seems to despise.

Del. Indeed, indeed, you wrong me! [Exeunt.]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*MARIA in her own dress, LADY JANE, and LUCY, discovered at breakfast. Footmen waiting.*

Lady J. Remove those things. We have done.

[Exeunt Footmen.]

Maria. What is it o'clock?

Lucy. Just struck ten, ma'am.

Lady J. Lady Vibrate is a sad rake! She did not leave the masquerade till five this morning.

Maria. And Sir George not there!

Lady J. After the discovery of last night, could you suppose he would be seen revelling at such a place?

Maria. I dread another and more horrible cause! My brother!

Lady J. Mr. Delaval, you know, slept in this house.

Maria. But he has been out these two hours.

Lucy. What then, ma'am? Is not Mr. Williams on the watch? You know, ma'am, you may trust Mr. Williams with your life.

Maria. If all were safe, he would be back.

Lady J. Pray, calm your spirits.

Maria. Nay, nay—But Mr. Williams must have been here before this, if something fatal had not happened.

Lucy. I am sure, ma'am, you frighten me to death!

Lady J. (Aside.) Her terrors are but too well founded!

Maria. (Footsteps without.) What noise is that?

Lucy. Bless me!

Lady J. See who it is.

Lucy. (After opening the door.) La! ma'am, I declare it is Mr. Williams.

Enter WILLIAMS.

Lucy. Well, Mr. Williams; everything is right; is not it? All is as it should be?

Wil. That is more than I know.

Maria. Why, then, the worst is past.

Wil. No, ma'am; I can't say that, either.

Lady J. Nay—But what news do you bring? Speak.

Wil. Why, you know, my master, last night, made inquiries how to find the chambers of Counsellor Demur; so, when he went out this morning, I observed your directions, and followed him. He went to the counsellor's in Lincoln's Inn, and there I left him, and hurried away to Sir George's, to inquire and hear all I could; though it was rather unlucky that I was not acquainted in the family.

Lady J. Did not you make use of my name?

Wil. Oh! yes, my lady. Besides, servants, your ladyship knows, are not so suspicious as their masters; they soon become friendly together; so, in five minutes, Sir George's valet and I were on as intimate a footing as we could wish.

Maria. And what did he say? Tell me.

Wil. Why, ma'am, he said, that Sir George did not leave his own house last night, after the fainting of the young gentleman.

Lucy. That was you, you know, ma'am.

Wil. And, what is more, that he did not go to bed; but walked up and down the room till daylight in the morning; and then called, I don't know how often, to warn the servants that he should not be at home to anybody whatever, except to a strange gentleman.

Maria. My brother!

Wil. Why, yea, ma'am; according to the description, it could be nobody else.

Lady J. And at what hour was Mr. Delaval to be there?

Wil. (Aside.) Zooks! I forgot to ask.—That—that, my lady, I did not learn. So, this being all the servants told me, I ran post haste to my report to you.

Maria. The worst I foreboded will happen!

Lady J. What can be done?

Wil. Perhaps it will be best for me to go back to Sir George's; wait for the arrival of my master; and, if he should come, hasten away as fast as I can to inform you of it.

Lucy. That is a good thought, Mr. Williams. Is not it, madam? A very good thought, indeed! Don't you think it is, my lady?

Lady J. I know not what we can do better.

Maria. Nay, but while Williams is bringing us the intelligence, everything we most dread may happen.

Lucy. Dear! so it may.

Wil. Suppose, then, madam, I should stay at my post, and despatch Sir George's valet to you with the news?

Lucy. Well, that is the best thought of all! I am sure you will own it is, madam.

Maria. I know not what to think.

Lady J. We must resolve; or, while we are deliberating—

Maria. Merciful God! Run, Williams! Fly! Save my brother! Save Sir George!

Lady J. Succeed but in this, and command all we have to give.

Wil. I will do my best.

Lucy. That I am sure he will.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in the house of Sir George Versatile.*

SIR GEORGE VERSATILE discovered walking, and greatly agitated.

Sir G. (Looking at his watch.) He will soon be here. Five minutes, but five minutes, and then—*(Walks again; throws himself on a sofa; takes up a book, throws it away, and then rises.)* What is man's first duty? To be happy. Short-sighted fool! The happiness of this hour is the misery of the next! *(Walks again, and looks at his watch.)* What is life? A tissue of follies! inconsistencies! Joys that make reason weep, and sorrows at which wisdom smiles. Fsha! There is not between ape and oyster so ridiculous or so wretched a creature as man! *(Walks.)* Oh, Maria!—*(Looking at his watch.)* I want but a few seconds: my watch, perhaps, is too fast. *(Rings.)*

Enter a Footman.

Sir G. Has nobody yet been here?

Foot. No, sir.

Sir G. 'Tis the time to a minute. *(Loud knocking.)* Fly! If it be the person I have described, admit him.

[Exit Footman.]

Sir G. Now let the thunder strike!

Enter DELAVAL.

Sir G. Good morning, sir!

Del. You recollect me?

Sir G. Perfectly.

Del. 'Tis well.

Sir G. I have been anxious for your coming. Your menace lives in my memory; and I shall be glad to know the name of him who has threatened such mortal enmity.

Del. A little patience will be necessary. I must preface my proceedings with a short story.

Sir G. I shall be all attention. Please to be seated. Waive ceremony, and to the subject.—*(They sit.)* Now, sir.

Del. About six years ago, a certain youth came up from college, poor, and unprotected. He was a scholar, pleasing in manners, warm and generous of temper, of a respectable family, and seemed to possess the germ of every virtue.

Sir G. Well, sir?

Del. Hear me on. My praises will not be tedious. Chance made him known to a man who desired to cherish his good qualities; and the purse, the experience, and the power of his benefactor, such as they were, he profited by to the utmost. Received as a son, he soon became dear to the family; but most dear to the daughter of his friend, whose tender age, and glowing affections, made her apt to admire the virtues she heard her father so ardently praise and encourage. You are uneasy?

Sir G. Be pleased to continue.

Del. The assiduities of the youth to gain her heart were unabating; and his pretensions, poor and unknown as he then was, were not rejected. The noble nature of his friend scorned to make his poverty his crime. Why do you bite your lip? Was it not generous?

Sir G. Sir!

Del. Was it not?

Sir G. Certainly! Nothing could—equal the—generosity.

Del. The health of his benefactor was declining fast; and the only thing required of the youth was that he should qualify himself for the cares of life, by some profession, he, therefore, entered a student in the Temple; and the means were furnished by his protector, till the end was obtained. Was not this friendship?

Sir G. It was.

Del. The lady, almost a child when first he knew her, increased in grace and beauty faster than in years. Sweetness and smiles played upon her countenance. She was the delight of her friends, the admiration of the world, and the coveted of every eye. Lovers of fortune and fashion contended for her hand; but she had bestowed her heart; had bestowed it on a—Sit still, sir; I shall soon have done. I am coming to the point. Five years elapsed, during which the youth received every kindness friendship could afford, and every proof chaste affection had to give. These he returned with promises and protestations that seemed too vast for his heart, 'I would say for his tongue—Are you unwell, sir?

Sir G. Go on with your tale.

Del. His benefactor, feeling the hand of death steal on, was anxious to see the two persons dearest to his heart, happy before he expired; and the marriage was determined upon, the day fixed, and the friends of the family invited. The intended bridegroom appeared half frantic with his approaching bliss. Now, sir, mark his proceeding. In this short interval, by sudden and unexpected deaths, he becomes the heir to a title and large estate. Well! Does he not fly to the arms of his languishing friend? Does he not pour his new treasures and his transports into the lap of love? Coward and monster!—

Sir G. *(Both starting up.)* Sir!

Del. Viler than words can paint! Having robbed a family of honour, a friend of peace, and an

angel of every human solace, he fled, like a thief, and concealed himself from immediate contempt and vengeance in a foreign country. But contempt and vengeance have at length overtaken him: they beset him: they face him at this instant. The friend he wrouged ~~in~~ dead: but the son of that friend lives, and I am he.

Sir G. 'Tis as I thought! *(Aside.)*

Del. You are—I will not defile my lips by telling you what you are.

Sir G. I own that what I have done—

Del. Forbear to interrupt me, sir. You have nothing to plead, and much to hear. First say, did my sister, by any improper conduct, levity of behaviour, or fault or vice whatever, give you just cause to abandon her?

Sir G. None! none! Her purity is only exceeded by her love.

Del. Then how, barbarian, how had you the heart to disgrace the family and endanger the life of a woman, whose sanctified affection would have embraced you in poverty, pestilence, or death; and who, had she possessed empires, would have bestowed them with an imperial affection?

Sir G. Sir, if you ask, have I committed errors? call them crimes if you will—yes. If you demand, will you justify them?—no. If you require me to atone for them, here is my heart: you have wrongs to revenge, strike; and, if you can, inflict a pang greater than any it yet has known.

Del. Justice is not to be disarmed by being braved. To the question. It can be no part of your intention, and certainly not of mine, that you should marry my sister. Something very different must be done.

Sir G. What? Name it.

Del. You must give me an acknowledgment, written and signed by yourself, that you have basely and most dishonourably injured, insulted, and betrayed Maria Delaval: and this paper, immediately as I leave your house, I shall publish in every possible way, till my sister shall be so appeased, and horror so satiated, that vengeance itself shall cry, hold!

Sir G. Written by me! Published! No. I will sign no such paper.

Del. So I supposed, and the alternative follows. Here I am: nor will I quit you, go where you will, till you consent to retire with me to some place from which one of us shall never return. Should I be the victor, flight, banishment from my native country, and the bitterest recollections of the villainies of man, must be the fate of me and my sister. If I fall, you then may triumph, and she languish and die unrevenged. This, or the written acknowledgment. Consider, and choose.

Sir G. What can I answer? The paper you shall not have. My life you are welcome to: take it.

Del. Have you not brought disgrace enough on my family? Would you make me an assassin? My sister and my father loved you. Let me, if possible, feel some little return of respect for you.

Sir G. Having wronged your sister, would you have me murder the brother? Already the most guilty of men, would you make me worst of friends? Though an enemy, be a generous one.

Del. Plausible sophist! The paper, sir: or man to man, and arm to arm, close the scene of my dishonour, or your own. The written acknowledgment. Determine. *(Walks away and views the pictures.)*

Sir G. *(Apart.)* Why, ay! 'Tis come home! I have sought it, deserved it, 'tis fallen, and the rock must crush the reptile! Then welcome ruin! The sword must decide. *(Goes to take his sword, but stops.)* The sword? What! Betray the sister and assassinate the brother? Oh, God! And such a brother! Stern, but noble-minded: indignant

of injury, peerless in affection, and proud of a sister whom the world might worship; but whom I, worthless wretch, in levity and pride of heart, have abandoned. (*Aloud.*) Mr. Delaval!

Del. Have you resolved to sign?

Sir G. Hear me.

Del. The written acknowledgment!

Sir G. My behaviour to your sister is—what I cannot endure to name—'Tis hateful! 'Tis—infamous! My obligations to your most excellent father, the respect you have inspired me with, and my love for Maria—

Del. Insolent! Insufferable meanness! The paper, sir!

Sir G. Angry though you are, Mr. Delaval, you must hear me. I say, my love, my adoration of Maria has but increased my guilt. It has made me dread her contempt. I durst not face the angel whom I had so deeply injured.

Del. Artifice! Evasion! Cowardice!—Your signature!

Sir G. (*Snatching up his sword from the table.*) You shall have it. Follow me.

Del. Fear me not.

Sir G. (*Stopping short.*) Hold, Mr. Delaval. Justice is on your side. If your firmness be not a savage spirit of revenge, if you do not thirst for blood, you will feel my only resource will be to fall on your sword. I cannot lift my arm against you.

Del. Then sign the acknowledgment.

Sir G. Can you, in the spirit even of an enemy, ask it? Do you not already despise me enough? Think for a moment: am I the only man that ever erred? Is it so wonderful, that a giddy youth, whose habitual failing was compliance, by sudden accident elevated to the pinnacle of fortune, surrounded by proud and selfish relations, of whose approbation I was vain; is it so strange, that I should be overpowered by their dictates, and yield to their entreaties? Your friendship or my death is now the only alternative. Suppose the latter: will it honour you among men? At the man of blood the heart of man revolts! Will it endear you to Maria? Kind, forgiving angel, and hateful to myself as her affection makes me, I last night found that affection still as strong, still as pure, as in the first hour of our infant loves. Lady Jane—

Del. Forbear to name her! 'Tis profanation from your lips! No more casuistry! No subterfuge! The paper!

Sir G. Can no motives—

Del. None!

Sir G. My future life—my soul, shall be devoted to Maria.

Del. The paper!

Sir G. Obdurate man! (*Reflects a moment.*) You shall have it. (*Goes to the table to write, during which Delaval remains in deep thought, and much agitated.*) Here, sir! since you will not be generous, let me be just. 'Tis proper I remove every taint of suspicion from the deeply wronged Maria. (*Gives the paper.*)

Del. (*Ready with a faltering voice.*) "I, George Versatile, once poor and dependent, since vain, fickle, and faithless, do, under my hand, acknowledge I have perfidiously—broken my pledged promise—to the most deserving, lovely, and—" (*Begins in much agitation to tear the paper.*)

Sir G. Mr. Delaval!

Del. Danna it—I can't—I can't speak. Here! Here! (*Striking his bosom.*)

Sir G. Mr. Delaval?

Del. My brother!

[friend]

Sir G. (*Falls on his neck.*) Can it be? My *Del.* This stubborn temper—always in extremes! The tiger or the child.

Sir G. Oh, no! 'Twas not to be forgiven! Best of men!

Del. Well, well; we are friends.

Sir G. Everlastingly! brothers!

Del. Yes; brothers.

Enter WILLIAMS, hastily.

Wil. Sir!—

Del. How now?

Wil. I beg your pardon, but Lady Jane and your sister are below. They insist on coming up, and the servants are afraid to—

Sir G. Maria! Let us fly.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Apartments of Lord Vibrate.*

LADY VIBRATE and DOCTOR GOSTERMAN discovered.

Doctor. Ya, my coot laty; dat vas efery vordt so true as vat I say. I vas discover it vas a voman; und Sair Shorge, und my Laty Shane, und de vaiting-vomans vas discover to me all as vat I say more.

Lady V. Ay, ay; that was the reason Sir George was not at the masquerade.

Doctor. Ya, my coot laty.

Lady V. I observed he was in a strange moody humour.

Doctor. My Lordt Fiprate vas fery mosh amazement, ven I vas make him discover all as vat I vas make discover mit my coot laty.

Lady V. Sir George has behaved very improperly.

Enter LORD VIBRATE.

Lord V. So, so, so! All I foreboded has come to pass: the day has slipped away, a new one is here, and every possibility of recovering the estate is gone.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha!

Lord V. Do you laugh?

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! I do, indeed.

Lord V. Is your daughter's loss the subject of your mirth?

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! No, no; not her loss, but your positive determination to prove I did not know you. Ha, ha, ha! When I told you that even that motive would not be strong enough, how you stormed! "But it will, my lady. But it won't, my lord. I say it will, my lady. I say it won't, my lord." Ha, ha, ha! Will you believe that I know you now?

Lord V. What shall I do? Advise me, Doctor.

Doctor. I vas adlice, my coot lordt, dat you shall do eferyting as vat you please.

Lady V. Ay, think; ask advice. Ha, ha, ha! Now that you can do nothing, the inquiry will be very amusing.

Enter THOMPSON.

Lord V. Well, Thompson, what says Counsellor Demur? Has the time absolutely elapsed?

Thom. Absolutely, my lord.

Lady V. How wisely your lordship doubts before you decide! Eh! Doctor?

Thom. I have good news, nevertheless.

Lord V. Good news! Speak: of what kind?

Thom. The honesty of the opposite party.

Lord V. What, the holder of the land?

Thom. Yes, my lord.

Lord V. Which way? Explain.

Thom. He has engaged to Mr. Demur, I being present, that, if your lordship will only shew the legality of your late title, he will resign the estate.

Lord V. Is it possible?

Lady V. It cannot be: the last purchaser is in India.

Thom. The last purchaser is dead; and it has descended to one whom you, my lord and lady, little suspect to be its possessor.

Lord V. Who?

Lady V. Who?

Thom. Mr. Delaval.

Lady V. Mr. Delaval!

Lord V. Mr. Delaval resign it on exhibiting the legality of my title?

Thom. He will, my lord.

Lord V. Did he make no conditions?

Thom. None.

Lord V. What, did he not mention Lady Jane?

Thom. Her name did escape his lips; but rising passion, and, if I rightly read his heart, emotions of the most delicate sensibility, immediately closed them; as if he would not endure the love he bore her to be profaned by any the slightest semblance of barter and sale.

Lord V. What do you say to that, Lady Vibrate? What do you say to that?

Lady V. The proceeding is honourable, I own.

Lord V. Did I not always tell you, Mr. Delaval was a man of honour?

Lady V. You tell me, my lord? Why, you were going to challenge him yesterday morning.

Lord V. He is no such weathercock as your favourite, Sir George.

Lady V. You mistake: Sir George is no favourite of mine. Is he, Doctor?

Doctor. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot laty.

Lord V. What, he did not come to make a buffoon of himself, for your diversion, at the masquerade last night? Eh! Doctor?

Doctor. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot lordt.

Lady V. His perfidious treatment of Miss Delaval is unpardonable.

Doctor. Dat vas pad; fery pad, inteet.

Lord V. Ay, ay; he has plenty of words, but he has no heart.

Doctor. Dat is pad; fery pad, inteet.

Thom. Pardon me, my lord; Sir George may have committed mistakes, but to the goodness of his heart I am a witness.

Lady V. You?

Lord V. How so?

Thom. By his benevolence I was yesterday relieved from the disgrace and the horrors of a prison.

Lord V. Indeed!

Lady V. Which way?

Thom. He paid a debt, which, had I been confined, I never could have discharged; and, for this unexpected act of humanity, he would not suffer so much as my thanks.

Lord V. Did Sir George pay the two hundred and forty pounds, Mr. Thompson?

Thom. The note, which he pretended to write

and send by me, was a draft on his banker for three hundred.

Lord V. Why, he confirmed all my arguments against it; and added twice as many of his own.

Doctor. Sair Shorge vas alway make agréable. Dat vas his vay.

Lady V. I own, however, I am still more surprised at the unexampled generosity of Mr. Delaval.

Enter WILLIAMS.

Lady V. Where is your master, Mr. Williams?

Wil. They are all coming, my lady.

Lady V. Who is coming?

Wil. Mr. Delaval, Lady Jane, Miss Delaval, and Sir George. There has been sad work; but it is all over, and they are now so happy! Here they are.

Enter MR. DELAVAL leading LADY JANE, and SIR GEORGE VERSATILE with MARIA, followed by LUCY.

Lord V. Mr. Delaval, I have great obligations to you. Thompson has been telling me of your disinterested equity.

Del. The obligation, my lord, was mine. Your lordship well knows that the first of obligations is to be just.

Lord V. Well, well; but the estate you are so willing to resign will still, I hope, be your's.

Del. Nay, my lord.

Lord V. Dubious as all things are, that is a subject on which I protest I do not believe I shall ever have any doubts. What say you, Lady Jane? But now I have my doubts again.

Lady J. What doubts, my lord?

Lord V. I doubt whether you understand me?

Lady J. Would your lordship teach me to dissemble?

Lord V. Hum! I doubt whether that would be much for your good.

Del. I hope Lady Vibrate will not oppose our union?

Lady V. No, Mr. Delaval. Your last generous action has charmed me; and Sir George—

Sir G. Has declined in your good opinion. But you cannot think so ill of me as I do of myself; and if ever again I should recover my own self-respect, I shall be indebted for it to this best of men, and to this most incomparable and affectionate of women.

Maria. My present joys are inexpressible—

Del. Which my impetuous indignation threatened for ever to destroy. How dangerous are extremes! Sometimes we doubt, and indecision is our bane; at others, hurried away by the sudden impulse of passion, our course is marked with misery. One man is too compliant; another too intractable. Yet happiness is the aim of all. Since, then, all are so liable to be misled, let gentle forbearance, indulgent thoughts, and a mild forgiving spirit, be ever held as the sacred duties of man to man. [*Exeunt.*]

THE CURFEW;

A PLAY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY JOHN TOBIN.



ACT II.—SCENE 3

CHARACTERS

BARON DE TRACY
ROBERT
FITZTHARDING
BLRTRAND

WALTER
PHILIP
CONRAD
ARMSTRONG

VASSALS
TRIAL
MATILDA
FLORANCE

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Room in Baron de Tracy's Castle.
BARON DE TRACY discovered, kneeling to a picture of Matilda

Baron. Thou frail memorial of that blessed spirit, Which, after earthly martyrdom, now sittest Thron'd with rejoicing angels—see me kneel With the prone spirit of contrition, And deep despair, to do thee reverence. If that foul deed, as horrible as mine, Do ever at the throne of grace find mercy, Be thou my advocate, with boundless love, Larger than thy exceeding wrongs, plead for me. That what cannot be pardon'd, may thro' thee Provoke a lighter penance (*Rises.*) So, that done, My heart hath heav'd off somewhat of its load, For when, in full confession, we pour forth The inward meditation of dark deeds, They cease awhile to haunt us.

Enter PHILIP

What brings you?

Philip. Old Walter, the curfew-toller, is without, and impatient to speak with your lordship.

Baron. Let him come in. [*Exit Philip.*]
A talkative old fool!
What can he want?

Enter WALTER

Well, sir, your business briefly?

Walter. Out of respect to your lordship, I will dispatch it with all brevity and circumlocution.

Baron. Proceed, then

Walter. Your lordship has, no doubt, heard of old Margery?

Baron. What! the strange woman on the heath?

Walter. Ay, my lord, they say all over the vil-

lage that she's a witch, and has dealings with the devil—brings blight upon the corn, and marraim among the cattle, she is charged with having conjured the late terrible drought, and she certainly caused the flood that followed it, for she was heard the day before to wish for rain—she turns her nose up at all our country pastimes—pores all day over books of magic, and prowls all night about the fens and hedges, gathering poisonous herbs, which she boils in a three cornered kettle—she has more hard words at her tongue's end than a content of monks, and has actually been seen taking an airing on a broomstick. 'Tis plain she converses with people of the other world, for she never talks to anybody in this, and 'tis impossible that any woman can be always holding her tongue.

Baron. What's this to me?

Walter. They wish your lordship to have her to the castle and examine her—for, if she be a witch, your lordship knows we have a very wise law, that she must be drowned alive, or in plainer terms, suffer confiscation.

Baron. Well, well, we'll send for her. Is there aught else? [*Your lordship.*]

Walter. Something that more nearly concerns

Baron. That concerns me?

Walter. Your lordship cannot be ignorant that I am an officer of the peace to his most gracious majesty, King William, whose business it is to see that all his majesty's merry-making subjects put out fire and candle at the tolling of my bell. I am a sort of eight o'clock extinguisher.

Baron. And is this, fellow, what so nearly concerns me?

Walter. Your lordship shall hear. In going my

rounds I have noted, for some evenings past, a glimmering light, after curfew-time, in the north tower of your lordship's castle.

Baron. A light in the north tower? Thou dreamest, fellow; 'tis uninhabited.

Walter. Why, then, 'twas the devil, or a will-o'-the-wisp; though they never open their mouths, and I'm sure I heard voices.

Baron. Are you sure of that?

Walter. Positive, my lord. They didn't talk very loud, indeed, for when people are doing things contrary to law, they seldom make much noise.

Baron. You've mentioned this to no one?

Walter. Not to a post, saving your lordship.

Baron. Then keep your counsel still.

Walter. Yes, my lord. I hope your lordship is not offended.

Baron. No, no; you've done your duty.

Walter. Your lordship knows if a rushlight be seen to twinkle in the hamlet, after the stopping of my clapper, (my bell-clapper I mean, my lord,) I am in visible danger of losing my place, and his majesty a most faithful officer.

Baron. Psha! this tediousness!

Walter. Tediousness! (*Aside.*) I wish your lordship a good day. My tediousness! (*Ande.*) I wish your lordship many happy returns of it; you—your lordship won't forget to examine old Margery. [*Exit.*]

Baron. A light in the north tower, and voices heard!

What should this mean? Can it be possible?

Oh! Florence, if, in spite of my forbidding,

Basely forgetting you high rank and fortune,

You have declin'd upon a peasant slate,

Sorrow and shame light on you! [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in the castle.*

BERTRAND and FLORENCE discovered.

Florence. Urge me no more, I will not hear it,

Bertrand:

No more I'll risk the breaking of our law,

Lest I bring danger on my father's house

And mine own honour.

Bertrand. Well, at curfew, then,

We'll weep, and bid adieu; yet, sure, the hour

Sacred to love, when all the world is still,

When lovers cheat the stern commandment

Of such a tyrant law, outweighs in value

The dull unvaried round of common time:

For danger gives fresh keenness to delight,

When we usurp the joy we fear to lose,

And tremble whilst possessing

Florence. Tempt me not,

For we must part to-night, to meet no more.

Bertrand. Or meet to-night, never to part again.

The abbot of St. Cuthbert's is my friend,

His charitable aid will join our hands,

And make me master of the richest treasure

That ever lover sigh'd for.

Florence. Nay, forbear;

Think of my father: he will ne'er consent.

Bertrand. I know he'll take it sternly at the first,

But as his storm of passion heaves to rest,

Nature will softly whisper for his child;

And his affection take a quicker sense

From his short-lived unkindness. Speak, my

Florence:

Florence. Nay, do not press me.

Bertrand. Come, you must be mine.

There is a kind consenting in your eye,

Which mocks the faint refusal of your tongue;

Love, on your rising bosom, reigns supreme,

And speaks his triumph in this yielding sigh.

Florence. There is my hand; to-night I will be thine:

My kindred, dwelling, and proud hopes I quit,

To cleave to thee, and thy poor, humble fortunes.

Bertrand. At sun-set, then, you'll meet me at the abbey.

And lest your person should create suspicion,
Suppose you come apparell'd as a boy;
And wear, like many a gallant, cap'ring knight,
Whose smooth complexion scarce would hazard
twice

The keen encounter of the northern wind,

The front of Hector with a woman's heart.

Florence. Is it so easy, then, to play the hero?

Bertrand. 'Tis but to strut, and swell, and knit
your brow,

Tell twenty lies in a breath, and round them off

With twice as many oaths; to wear a sword

Longer than other men's, and clap your hand

Upon the hilt, when the wind stirs, to shew

How quick the sense of valour beats within you.

How many valiant cowards in brave armour,

Have bluster'd, unsuspected, to their graves!

Nay, afterwards, frown'd terrible in marble,

Who, at the trumpet's charge, had stood aghast,

And shrunk, like tortoises, into their shells,

To die with apprehension. (*Noise without.*)

Florence. Hark! my father.

Bertrand. You will not fail?

Florence. Away! if I appear not,

Conclude me dead.

Bertrand. Farewell, then. [*Exit.*]

Florence. It was not fancy. Hush! again it comes
Along the gallery.

Enter BARON DE TRACY.

My father!

Baron. Florence!

What do you here?

Florence. My lord—

Baron. Nay, answer quickly.

Florence. I came—

Baron. To meet young Bertrand.

Florence. You have said it.

Baron. There have been lights observ'd in the
north tow'r,

And voices heard long after curfew-time.

Florence. The light was mine, sir.

Baron. Whose the voices?

Florence. Mine and Bertrand's.

Baron. Have I not forbid your meeting?

Florence. When 'twas too late. You let our
early years

Beyond the reach of fate, entwine our hearts;

Then do not, in the blossom, kill the hope

Which, in the bud, you cherish'd. I have been e—

A most obedient child; from mem'ry's dawn

Have hung, with silent awe, upon your lips,

And in my heart your counsels treasure'd up,

Next to the hallow'd precepts of my God.

But with a new delight my bosom throbb'd,

When first you talk'd of Bertrand: you observ'd,
sir,

He was a handsome youth; I thought so, too;

A brave one. My heart beat with fearful joy.

Not rich, you added: there I heav'd a sigh

And turn'd my head aside; but whilst the tear

Stood in my eye, you said, that fortune's gifts

Were poor, compar'd with nature's: then, my fa—

You bade me learn to love him. [*ther,*]

Baron. Once, indeed,

I had a foolish dream of such a thing.

Florence. Nay, but I dream so still.

Baron. 'Tis time to wake, then.

Hear me, and let thy froward heart determine.

If thou hast grace to scorn this abject passion,

Here is thy father's bosom, in it hide

Thy kindling blushes, and be mine again.

What! stubborn to the last, and unrelenting!

Then hear me, and let thy free choice decide:

If in the headstrong course of thy desires,

And the rank pride of disobedience,

Thou wed'st thyself to this my low-born vassal,

Living, my persecution shall attend thee,

And when I die, my curses be thy portion.

You know me resolute, and know my purpose;

And as you dread or alight a father's wrath,
So shape your course of action.

Florence. Stay, my father.

He's gone and will not listen to his child.
Then, since a cruel parent has disown'd me,
Bertrand, I am all thine.

And now that I have giv'n up all to thee,
And cast off every other hope of joy,
If thou shouldst ever treat me with unkindness,
Reprove me with sharp words, or frowning looks,
Or (which is keenest agony to those
Who deeply love) torture me to the soul
With civil, cutting, cold indifference—
No; thou art truth itself, I will not doubt thee. *[Exit.]*

SCENE III.—A Forest.

Enter FITZHARDING and ARMSTRONG.

Armstrong. Now, then, we are alone, and secret;
your business, captain?

Fitzharding. You are my enemy.

Armstrong. Indeed!

Fitzharding. You sav'd my life.

Armstrong. I did, and at some peril. Does that
offend you? *[sir.]*

Fitzharding. So mortally, that day and night, e'er
I've studied how I should despatch you.

Armstrong. How! 'tis rather a new mode of re-
turning such an obligation. *[here]*

Fitzharding. 'Twas in the outskirts of the forest
We fell in with the officers of justice.

Armstrong. Ay, not a month since.

Fitzharding. We stood them stoutly, till your
sword being broke

To the hilt, and I fast bleeding with my wounds,
We were compell'd to fly; the tangling wood,

Familiar to our steps, confounded theirs;
And we had lost the yell of their pursuit,

When, quite exhausted with the loss of blood,
I sunk into your arms, in which you rais'd me,

And as the lion bears her wounded whelp
From the thick danger of the hunters' spears,

You bore me home; there, being arriv'd, I fainted.
Armstrong. I thought 'twas an act of kindness.

Fitzharding. So far I was your debtor, but what
follow'd? *[then?]*

You stripp'd me to get at my wounds. What
Nay, you perceiv'd it. Speak.

Armstrong. I saw a brand upon your left shoulder,
that— *[awoke,*

Fitzharding. I know you did: for when I first
Your eyes were to that quarter rivetted.

You know my secret, sir, and have revealed it.
Armstrong. No, on my soul.

Fitzharding. Swear some tremendous oath,
It ne'er has pass'd thy lips.

Armstrong. May mercy never reach me, if I e'er
breathed a syllable of it.

Fitzharding. Thou art my friend, then. Hark!
Armstrong. 'Tis a man's tread.

Fitzharding. A lusty one. Stand back and let us
note him. *Enter a Friar.*

Whither so fast, good father? *(Stopping him.)*

Friar. Stay me not;
I have most pressing business at the castle.

Fitzharding. At the castle! *(Aside.)* What's thy
business there?

Friar. You are rude, son.
It is of private import.

Fitzharding. Answer me,
Or I will pluck it from thy heart.

Armstrong. Speak quickly.
Friar. Well, well—

Fitzharding. No preface, sir.
Friar. Well, thus it is, then:

The Baron hath a reckon'g with his conscience,
Which I must settle for him.

Fitzharding. Does he know you?
I mean, your person?

Friar. He has never seen it. *[you, sir?]*
Fitzharding. But his attendants—they have seen

Friar. None of them.

Fitzharding. And thy name: thy name is—
Friar. Dunstan.

Fitzharding. It shall be so. *(Aside.)* Quickly
unhood thee, friar,

And cast thy robe of reverence; nay, quickly,
Or I shall call some myrmidons about us,

Will strip thee at the peril of thy skin.
(Takes the Friar's hood and cloak.)

So, that is well. Now mark me: to thy convent
Speed straight, and nimble; and, as you would 'scape

A deadly cold, take not the air to-night:
I have my spirits abroad: home to thy beads,

Fast, pray, confess thyself, do something, nothing,
But keep within doors, or—

Friar. I will observe.
May heav'n, in the abundance of its mercy,

Pardon this outrage on the church.
Fitzharding. Away! *[Exit Friar.]*

You apprehend my meaning?
Armstrong. I can guess it. *[mand]*

Fitzharding. Back to our company; to your com-
I trust the leading of this night's adventures.

You'll find some stirring friends within the castle
Shall smooth your passage there.

Armstrong. Till then, good night. *[Exit.]*
Fitzharding. The Baron's conscience rid, and I

his priest!
(For so I must be.) Surely, out of this

Revenge may fashion something strangely cruel,
Whose bloody memory, in after times,

This truth shall teach inexorable man,
Who has no touch of mercy tow'rd his fellow:

Most injuries a noble mind may pardon,
But there are insults cannot be forgiv'n. *[Exit.]*

ACT II.—SCENE I.—The Inside of a Cottage.

Robert. *(Without.)* Higt, hist! Mother!

Enter ROBERT.
Not at home? Then I'll leave this purse on the

table, and call for her blessing another time.
Enter MATILDA.

Matilda. My son.
Robert. Your blessing, mother; let it be a short

one. There is something will keep famine from
the door till I return.

Matilda. Where got you this?
Robert. Ask no questions; 'tis your's. *[guilt.]*

Matilda. No, not for worlds would I partake thy
How came it thine? Oh! my foreboding heart!

Where have you slept these three nights?
Robert. Peace, I say. *[vague ruffians—]*

Matilda. Should you have join'd the band of sa-
Robert. I have; what then?

Matilda. What then! hast thou a moment
Weigh'd the full horrors of an outlaw's life?

T' exchange the noblest attributes of man
For the worst quality of beasts; to herd

With the vile dregs and offscum of society,
And bear about a conscience that will start

And tremble at the rustling of a leaf;
To shroud all day in darkness, and steal forth,

Cursing the moon, that with inquiring eye
Watches your silent and felonious tread,

And every twinkling star that peeps abroad
A minister of terror—

Robert. Peace, I say. *[sweet influence]*
Matilda. The blessed sleep you know not, whose

Ere he can stretch his labour-aching limbs,
Softly seals up the peasant's weary lids.

On the cold earth, with over-watching spent,
You stir and fret in feverish wakefulness;

Till nature, wearied out, at length o'ercomee
The strong conceit of fear, and 'gins to doze;

But as oblivion steals upon your senses,
The hollow groaning wind uprears you quick,

And you sit, catching with suspended breath,
Well as the beating of your heart will let you,

The fancied step of justice.

Robert. Hark! who's there?

Matilda. No one, my son.

Robert. Again! 'tis a man's footing.

Matilda. I hear nothing;

Nor ought do I behold, save on yon tree,
The miserable remnant of a wretch
That was hang'd there for murder. Look!

Robert. I dare not.

Can you look on it?

Matilda. It annoys not me:

I am no murderer.

Robert. Nor I, nor I:

I am no murderer neither; yet, for worlds,
I dare not look that way.

Matilda. You are a robber;
And he who robs, by sharp resistance press'd,
Will end the deed in blood: 'twas so with him;
He once possess'd a soul, quick as your own
To mercy, and would quake as you do now,
At the bare apprehension of the act
That has consign'd him to yon naked tree,
Where every blast to memorize his shame
May whistle shrilly through his hollow bones,
And in his tongueless jaws a voice renew,
To preach with more than mortal eloquence.

Robert. 'Tis a damned life, and I will leave it,
mother—to-morrow.

Matilda. Nay, to night; why not to-night?

Robert. To-night I cannot. (A knocking at the door.) Hark!

Matilda. There's some one now.

Robert. To-morrow, mother, I am your's again.

Matilda. To-morrow, then—[Exit Robert.]—

What visitor is this

That knocks so gently? (Opens the door.)

Enter PHILIP.

Is it thou, old man? (Aside.)

What brings thee o'er the bitter breathing heath,

Out of thy dwelling at this freezing hour?

The piercing air will not respect thine age,

Or do thy white hairs reverence. Who art thou?

Philip. Servant to the Baron; or, rather, one
grown out of service; yet he keeps me, like an old
tree that has borne good fruit in its time. He had
a lady once, and I a mistress; once do I say? She
may be yet alive; strange things have come to
pass; they report you have the gift of knowing all
events, that nothing can betide on earth, sea, or
air, but you are acquainted with it.

Matilda. They have abused thee.

Philip. Be not offended: if you would but tell
me whether my dear lady outlived the wreck—

Matilda. You would reveal it.

Philip. Never.

Matilda. Yes, you would reveal it;
Old men and women will be ever babbling.

Philip. No, as I'm a man. [swear.]

Matilda. I almost trust thee, for thou dost not
If I should tell thee, then, that she surviv'd—

Philip. I would bless thy voice for ever.

Matilda. Should guide thee to the spot which
she inhabits—

Philip. I would walk barefoot to it over flint.

Matilda. If I should shew her to thy wand'ring
sight— [follow'd.]

Philip. I would gaze on her though blindness

Matilda. Look at me: I am she.

Philip. Nay, now you mock me.

Matilda. I am not on such subjects us'd to jest.
Old Philip, too, forget me?

Philip. Nay, now I look again, it is—it is my
lady; my ever-honoured lady, my sweet lady, my
kind lady!—but how did you escape the winds and
the waters? Does my young master—yet, I fear

Matilda. He lives, and is a man. [to ask—]

Philip. Thank heaven, thank heaven! [cries,

Matilda. The warring elements, that heard my
Would not divorce a mother from her child;
We were both sav'd: to yonder dreary coast

The guardian waves their trembling burden bore.
A little treasure, from the wreck preserv'd,
Bought us this humble dwelling.

Philip. 'Tis a sad one; but you shall change it
soon. I am sent by the Baron to bring you to the
Matilda. How? [castle.]

Philip. The foolish people have accused you of
being a witch. [this]

Matilda. Of witchcraft! Well; I see an end in
Most level to my wishes. Come, let's on.
All will be set to rights.

Philip. Grant heav'n it may! [streams]

Matilda. We shall be happy yet; and like two
United once, and parted by mischance,
Meet at the close, and end our course together. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—A Heath.

Enter FLORENCE, in male attire.

Florence. Thus far I have not met a living soul,
Save, on the heath, an homeward villager,
Who chid his barking cur, and bade good night
With such kind greeting, that my sinking heart
Took courage.

Enter CONRAD and other Robbers, who surround
Florence.

Heav'n! what are ye?

Conrad. Don't be frightened, young man: your
money; come, your valuables; give us all you have,
and we sha'n't do you the least injury; only, if you
make any disturbance, we shall beat your brains
out, that's all.—[Enter BERTRAND.]

Bertrand. Unhand the trembling fawn, if ye are
And dare a nobler spoil. [men]

Conrad. So, there'll be some blood-letting here.
I'll make use of my bird, however. No resistance,
youth; 'tis vain.

[Whilst Bertrand is contending with some of
the Robbers, the rest carry off Florence,
and, as he is on the point of being over-
come, some of the Baron's vassals enter
and rescue him: the Robbers run off, and
are pursued.]

1 Vassal. (To Bertrand.) Come, you must with
us to the castle. [wood]

Bertrand. Nay, let us plunge into the thickest
And track these savage felons to their den.

1 Vassal. No, no; there are enough gone upon
that errand; our orders are to bring you to the
castle. [her thus—]

Bertrand. Unhand me, coward slaves! to lose

1 Vassal. We dare not disobey orders.

Bertrand. Dare not! Slaves! [Exit.]

SCENE III.—The Robber's Cave.

ARMSTRONG, HERMAN, and other Robbers disco-
vered, drinking.

CHORUS OF ROBBERS.

What tho' we shroud in savage den

From day's all-piercing eye,

Yet have we joys, as other men;

Our watchful fears,

Our perils, cares,

We sweeten still with liberty.

The rising sun let others greet,

We worship his declining ray;

And whilst the midnight cask we drain,

Where sparkling meet

His light and heat,

We feel alive in ev'ry vein

The spirit of departed day.

Herman. Come, push the liquor about. Here's
heavy purses and light fingers. So, the captain,
you say, has made free with a friar's canonicals?

Armstrong. Ay, and with his character, too, for
a short time.

Herman. And in that disguise means to enter the
castle? (A whistle without.) Hark!

Armstrong. 'Tis Conrad's whistle; pass the
countersign. (They pass the countersign.)

Enter CONRAD and Robbers, with FLORENCE.
Welcome, lads, welcome! Who have you got there?

Conrad. A youth that we picked up in our travels; we found him near the monastery, going, as I conjecture, to pray for a beard, for his chin seems to have a marvellous lack of bristle. He'll bear some plucking, though.

Armstrong. Ay, ay, the bird's in pretty feather. Speak, stripling, who are you? whence come you? and whither were you going? [not.]

Florence. Good gentlemen, I pray you, harm me

Conrad. You're too rough with him; the youth's abashed at being in strange company; he hasn't been used to converse with gentlemen in our sphere; and to say truth, I don't wonder he's a little ashamed. Don't be alarmed, my pretty boy; there's nothing here to frighten you; our worthy commander would know your history,

Florence. I am a simple lad; [that's all.] Honest, though very poor, yet what I have is freely yours. This purse contains a trifle. Would it were better worth your kind acceptance! But, as it is, you're very welcome.

Conrad. [Taking the purse.] A pretty spoken youth, and perfectly understands good breeding.

Armstrong. Sit down and eat, boy. Our fare is coarse, but you are welcome. Sit down, I say: do you mistrust us?

Florence. Oh! no; I never did wrong to any: Whom should I fear, then?

Armstrong. Well, sit down. [She sits at the table.] Now, Conrad, you saw our mistrusts safely on their journey?

Conrad. Ay, and the plan is thus concerted: after gaining admittance to the castle—Mind thy repeat, youth [to Florence, who appears agitated]—they'll easily procure a night's lodging—What, again! [To Florence.] Within a quarter of an hour from the tolling of the curfew we must be ready at the northern gate.

Armstrong. Enough: we understand the rest. But what is this same curfew, that has made such a noise lately?

Conrad. What is it! Why, it's a new mode with your great statesmen of keeping the people in the dark. After this same bell has tolled, 'tis a misdemeanor for a horse-shoe to strike a spark from a flint, and high treason for a glow-worm to carry fire in his tail.

Armstrong. A truce with your jests.

Conrad. Why, then, in sober sadness, this curfew custom is a clever invention of this Norman prince of darkness, to set honest men snoring, and give rogues an earlier opportunity of cutting their throats; and which, by shortening their days, will most probably lengthen ours.

Armstrong. Still listening. [Seeing Florence attentive.] I like not that boy. He has been deeply attentive to our discourse. [To Herman.]

Herman. Despatch him, then.

Armstrong. 'Twere safest.

Herman. Robert shall do it. Being last entered in our troop, it is his office. [Beckons Robert.]

Armstrong. Robert, that boy has overheard our Herman. And may betray us. [whole design.]

Robert. There's no fear of that.

Herman. Not when he's dead.

Robert. How?

Herman. You must do it.

Robert. Murder him? [patch him.]

Herman. Call it what you please, you must des-

Robert. Keep him a prisoner till to-morrow.

Armstrong. I tell you our lives are in his breath; and he must die.

Robert. Well, if it must be so—

Herman. It shall. I like not that hesitating eye. [Aside.]

Armstrong. We will but skirt the wood, and then return. You'll remember. [To Robert.]

Robert. Ay, ay.

Herman. [Aside.] I'll stay and see it done. My mind misgives me, he may want assistance.

[All the Robbers go out except Herman, who conceals himself.]

Florence. What mean their dark looks, and half smother'd speeches, Where more the eye interprets than the tongue, And silence is most horrible?

Robert. My mother's a witch, sure enough. She prophesied I should soon turn cut-throat. [Aside.] Well, youth, you can guess, I suppose, why they have left us alone. [hope.]

Florence. Indeed, I know not; for no harm, I

Robert. That I should kill thee. [fellow.]

Florence. Nay, but you will not do it, my good

What's my offence? [form.]

Robert. You ne'er offended me.

Florence. Nor any that doth bear a human

I never wrong'd the smallest living thing,

Or trod designedly upon a worm;

For I was bred to gentleness, and know [mercy.]

Nought that hath fleeting breath, too mean for

Why seek you, then, my life, which, gone from me,

Will never add a moment's breath to your's?

Robert. Peace, boy.

Florence. Oh! think upon the horror of the deed.

You have a friend, who knows—perhaps, a parent,

A father or a mother,—think on them,—[death]

'Twould almost break their hearts to learn your

In nature's common course; how would they start

To hear you had been slaughter'd in cold blood!

But if they knew you were a murderer,

Oh! they would curse the hour that gave you birth,

And die stark mad with agony.

Robert. I cannot strike; he withers up my arm.

Now, then, I'll do't. [Aside.] Speak, youth, are

you prepar'd? [rifle.]

Florence. Oh! no; for life is sweet, death ter-

The firmest stoic meets it with a pang;

How, then, should I, an unschool'd, simple boy,

Look calm at that, which makes the sternest

Robert. You must die, youth. [shudder?]

Florence. Nay, yet you will not do it;

You cannot; for your cold, relaxing hand

Loosens its gripe, and all your limbs, too,

Robert. Now then. [tremble.]

Florence. Nay, turn not thus your head aside,

I fain would see how stern the butcher looks

When he doth strike the lamb. You tremble still:

And in your eyes twin drops of mercy stand;

They fall upon your cheek; nay, then, you cannot.

Robert. Hear me: I have passed my word

to my comrades that you shall die; my hand

may shrink, mine eye may drop a tear. No matter;

'tis past, and thus—[Lifts his hand to strike.]

Florence. Have mercy on my sex—I am a woman.

Robert. A woman! [horrible]

Florence. What have I said? A thought more

Then death runs through me now.

Robert. To save her would be great. [act]

Florence. Oh! 'twould be glorious! that one single

Shall clear thee at the great day of account.

Robert. You have prevailed.

Florence. And will you save me?

Robert. Were ye a man, I couldn't hurt you

now; for you have made me woman.

Florence. I've no fit means to thank you but my

tears, my warmest prayers.

Robert. Here is a recompence which those who

have once felt will want no other motive to hu-

manity. But the night wears, my companions

will soon return. Can you trust yourself with an

Florence. Ay, through the world. [assassin?]

Robert. Come, then, I'll guide you faithfully.

Herman. You pass not here. [Interposes.]

Robert. Herman!

Herman. The same, good, trusty Robert.

Robert. Stand by, and let us pass; it is a woman.

Herman. Were it an angel, what then?

* 145

Robert. Young, fair, and innocent: nay, look upon
Can you resist that supplicating eye? [her;

Herman. I know my duty.

Robert. Do it, then; the first duty of our sex is
to protect the helplessness of hers. Come, come,
let us pass. You can't be serious.

Herman. You'll find me so.

Robert. Nay, look upon her, Herman.

Herman. Well.

Robert. Can neither her youth, her beauty, her
sex, or her condition move you?

Herman. Not a step.

Robert. You are a devil, then. [one.

Herman. If you attempt to pass, you'll find me

Robert. Why, then, there's left no argument but
this. *(Drawing his sword.)*

Herman. Which thus I answer. [blood.

Robert. If blood must be shed, it shall be man's

Herman. Your's or mine.

Robert. Come on, then. *(They fight off the*
stage.) [heaven,

Florence. Now sit upon the righteous sword, just
And where the cause is honest, give the power.
Hark! the rude clashing of their angry steel
Gives way to death-like silence.

Re-enter ROBERT.

Robert. Now then, lady.

Florence. What, is he dead?

Robert. And buried; I have thrown him
Into the roaring torrent, that must serve
Both for his shroud and knell. Think not of him;
He was a wretch without remorse or pity,
Who bloodily hath bought a bloody end.
Come, 'tis no time for words. [Exit.

ACT III.—SCENE I.—The Cottage.

Enter ROBERT, leading in FLORENCE.

Robert. This is the humble dwelling that I
spoke of. You may rest here in safety to-night, and,
to-morrow, shape your course as it pleases you.

Florence. *(Looking round.)* You know the wo-
man who inhabits here?

Robert. Ay, know her well; you'll find her a
kind soul. I would stay with you till she returned;
but I must get back before my comrades, to avoid
suspicion. Farewell! Should we meet no more,
you'll sometimes think of me.

Florence. Whilst I have life.

Robert. Farewell! [Exit.

Florence. Upon the bleak and solitary waste
Which my proud father's castle overlooks,
I've sometimes heard, there dwells a wretched
woman,

So deeply skill'd in potent herbs and flow'rs,
The wond'ring village shun her as a witch.
This must her hovel be; for, sure, a spot
So desolate, and dwelling so unshelter'd,
Can harbour no one else. *(A knocking at the door.)*

2 Vassal. *(Without.)* Open the door.

Florence. Hush! I have heard that voice.

2 Vassal. *(Without.)* Nay, open quickly.

Florence. It is my father's vassal: should he
know me—

2 Vassal. *(Without.)* Still do you hesitate?

Florence. I will assume

A tone and manner foreign to my nature,
That so, without exposure of myself,
I may betray the mischief that is hatching.

(Opens the door.)

Enter three of the Baron's Vassals.

What means this violence?

2 Vassal. 'Tis well you came,

Or we had beat the house about your ears.

Florence. Thou poor man's tyrant, and thou great
man's slave!

Wherefore this outrage? The low peasant's latch
Should be held sacred as the triple bolt
That guards a palace—ay, more sacred, fellow:
For high-rai'd mightiness is it's own shield;
But who, if lordly pow'r be first t' invade,

Shall bar the poor man's dwelling from oppres-
sion? [Baron

2 Vassal. We are commanded by our lord the
To bring before him every living thing,
That in this lonely dwelling we found shelter'd.

Florence. Well, sir, you will not shame your
lord's commands

By doing them humanely. I attend you. [Exit.

SCENE II.—Outside of the Baron's castle.

Enter ROBERT.

Robert. Once more I have a moment for reflec-
tion. Shall I return to these merciless dogs?
Yes, my safety requires it. But then, the night's
adventure: to murder a whole family in cold
blood! that I'll prevent, however. My mother,
now doubly thanked be her care, taught me the
use of letters. I have shortly stated here our hor-
rible design, yet interceded for the lives of all.
(Shoots an arrow into the castle.) So, speed it
well. My heart accuses me of treachery; yet
there is no alternative. I must either be false to
my companions or a traitor to humanity. [Exit.

SCENE III.—A Room in the castle.

Enter BARON DE TRACY with VASSALS.

Baron. You were too tame, to let them bear her off.

1 Vassal. My lord, they were too many for us.
Five, at least, to one: and all completely armed,
too. [trand in.

Baron. Well, 'tis no matter; bring young Ber-

BERTRAND is brought in.

So, sir, your noble purpose has miscarried,
And I have lost the honour you intended
To fix upon my house

Bertrand. You speak, my lord,
As if your daughter's peril touch'd you not.

Baron. So I be robb'd, what matters who the
Into what viler hands can she have fall'n, [thief?
Than mine own vassal's?

Bertrand. True, I am your vassal,
And on my body bear some ill-shap'd scars
That vouch my services; but chiefly one
Stamp'd in the bloody field of Hastings—What,
You do remember 't!—When you were unhors'd,
Prostrate beneath th' uplifted battle-axe,
With outstretch'd hand, and deprecating eye,
Had not your vassal, 'twixt descending death
And you, his forward body interpos'd,
You might have gorg'd the rav'n's vultures there.

Baron. It was thy duty, fellow.

Bertrand. Yet the act
So pleas'd you, that you call'd me your preserver,
And breath'd such wanton praises on my valour,
That I forgot the low-born thing I had been,
Outstretch'd my wing, and sought a nobler quarry;
You fann'd my young ambition; I became
The priz'd companion of your blooming daughter.
Oft when I won, at tilt or tournament,
Some hard-earn'd prize, and laid it at her feet,
With trembling admiration she survey'd me,
Breath'd a full sigh of joy at my escape;
And you applauded. We grew up together:
Our pastimes, studies, sorrows, joys, hopes, fears,
Had but one soul; and what, at first, was friendship,
Soon ripen'd into love; which you encourag'd.

Baron. Which I forbade.

Bertrand. Your reason?

Baron. Your low birth. [too late

Bertrand. That is, indeed, past cure. 'Tis now
To summon back the dust of my progenitors,
And stamp it with nobility. What then?
Am I to hang my head, creep into corners,
Because my father was a hind? I know not
Why I was pressed into this bustling world;
But here I am, and let my deeds proclaim me.
Our actions are our heralds, and they fix,
Beyond the date of tombs and epitaphs,
Renown or infamy.

Baron. You talk it highly. [a point

Bertrand. My lord, you touch'd me roughly em
At which the poor man's blood is quick to kindle.

To something of more weight:—your daughter, sir,
Is in the hands of ruffians; grant me, then,
Twenty of your attendants, nay, but ten,
Five, or if they, for a lost daughter's ransom,
Be thought too great a venture, give me freedom,
And I alone, ere food shall pass my lips
Or sleep embrace me, will recover her
Or lose myself.

Baron. We shall not trust your valour.

Enter First Vassal.

1 Vassal. My lord, a stranger from St. Cuthbert's
abbey.

Baron. Ay, I would speak with him. Bear off
this madman, and guard him strictly.

Bertrand. Heaven protect her, then!

[Exit, guarded.]

Baron. Stand up, my heart; my shrinking nerves,
wax firm!

For what to this good man I must reveal,
Will want your full assurance.

Enter FITZHARDING, disguised and Attendants.

Take good heed

That none approach us. *[To the Attend., who retir-.*

Welcome, rev'rend father,

If to the holy Dunstan I address me.

Fitzharding. I answer to that name.

Baron. It is a name

That loud report delights to send abroad
For endless deeds of saint-like charity;
But chiefly has she blazon'd your renown,
That with an excellence almost divine,
You can blow out from the distracted brain
The memory of guilt, and chase away
The frightful apparition of foul deeds,
Which, unatoned for, will not be at rest.

Fitzharding. You over-praise my poor abilities,
Tho' in the holy office you have mention'd
I am not menly skill'd.

Baron. Therein I want
Your aid and counsel.

Fitzharding. Then deliver boldly
The secret cause that preys upon your quiet;
And fully, too: for in the mind's diseases,
As in the body's, there be patients,
Who, by a scant disclosure of their ills,
(Either from foolish modesty or pride,)
Mock the physician's labour.

Baron. Trust me, father,
You shall hear all, as fully and distinctly
As were I now before heav'n's judgment seat,
To make confession of the fact.

Fitzharding. Proceed.

Baron. You know I am not native of this isle,
But born in Normandy.

Fitzharding. So I have heard. *[Lady,*

Baron. I wedded there, long since, an English
Most rare in her endowments.

Fitzharding. You were happy? *[observ'd,*

Baron. I should have been so: you must have
For you have deeply read the heart of man,
A wayward disposition in some natures,
Out of the very height of their enjoyments
To breed their discontents; and make, like devils,
A hell of paradise.

Fitzharding. Alas! 'tis true. *[lieve it?*

Baron. E'en such a man was I: would you be-
Possess'd of such a woman, for no cause
But the excess of her perfections,
Compar'd with my weak merits to deserve them,
From love's extremest dotage I fell off
To sudden jealousy; in which dark mood,
A letter reach'd me, in an unknown hand,
Containing nought but this: "Look to your wife!"

Fitzharding. Some villain—

Baron. You shall hear, and then decide.
This letter was soon follow'd by another,
Which circumstantially disclos'd my shame,
And made surmise conviction: pointed out
The time, when I might find, in mine own chamber,
My wife in guilty converse with a lover.

Think with what pangs I waited for that hour:
When, as advis'd, I did surprise my wife
In secret with a man.

Fitzharding. And in your chamber?

Baron. I stabb'd the woman; her companion fled,
And in the darkness of the night escap'd me.
Returning quickly back, I found my wife, too,
Whose wound though deep was nothing dangerous,
Had, with our only son, a tender infant,
Fled in most wild amazement. Soon in safety
She reach'd the nearest sea-port; thence embarking
For this her native land, they were both wreck'd;
And with the rest of that devoted crew,
In the wide bosom of the ocean perish'd.

Fitzharding. It was a lamentable fate, indeed!
But where's your crime in this? Was she not
guilty? *[villain,*

Baron. Nay, she was spotless: that same precious
(For that he was a villain soon was palpable,)
In a last letter clos'd this scene of horror
With these emphatic words, which, as I dread them,
Were graven on my heart: "Your wife was inno-
Yet I'm but half revenged!" *[cent;*

Fitzharding. But half reveng'd!
Some one whom you had wrong'd, then—

Baron. It should seem so;
Yet to this hour, by what resentment mov'd,
Or who the dark contriver of my shame,
I am most ignorant.

Fitzharding. That's strange, indeed!
And could you never guess?

Baron. No, on my soul. *[member no one,*

Fitzharding. Most wonderful! Could you re-
Whom by some galling wrong, some deep hex'd in-
You had most grievously provok'd? *[sult,*

Baron. No, never.

Fitzharding. Ere long I will refresh your me-
mory. *(Aside.)*

Baron. I never struck but one man to the heart,
And him I after recompens'd so nobly,
That my large bounty salv'd his ranking pride,
And drew out all his enmity.

Fitzharding. Indeed! *(Aside.)*

Baron. Besides, that man was dead.

Fitzharding. Art sure of that? *(Aside.)*

Baron. Or had he been alive, 'twere idle now
To waste the precious time in wild surmise
Who was my instigator. Here am I,
Sole actor of that woful tragedy;
Whose strong remembrance, like an evil spirit
In some lone house, usurping all my brain,
Drives reason from her seat; and scares away
The fellowship of comfortable thoughts,
To dwell alone in desolate despair.

Now, I have heard you have a charm for this,
That by some sacred and mysterious pow'r,
You can make clean my fancy—recreate me,

What once I was, a reasonable man,
Full of the common feelings of my kind,
Pray with an unlogg'd heart; that food shall neu-
That I shall laugh and weep like other men, *[rish,*
And sleep refresh me, as the dews of heav'n
Lift up the languid blossoms; in a word—

Enter First Vassal with an arrow.

How, fellow, whence this boldness?

1 Vassal. Your pardon, my lord; walking near
the northern tower, I found this arrow. This was
the feather to it; thinking it contained charac-
ters that might be of importance, I have taken
through your commands to present it. *[Kneeling,*
presents the arrow.) *[racters—*

Baron. What have we here? these look like oha-
Yet not for me to scan; peruse them, father,
And tell us what they signify. *(Gives it to Fitz.)*

1 Vassal. I hope my lord will pardon my pre-
sumption.

Baron. Well, wait without, sir;
Nor dare intrude again till you are call'd for.

[Exit First Vassal.]

Fitzharding. Confusion! *(Aside.)*

Baron. What, a churchman puzzled, too?

Fitzharding. Somewhat perplex'd, I own: let's try again.

Oh! now I understand it; 'tis a song,
A mere love-ballad, that the minstrels chaunt
In every town and village; a dulk ditty,
And not quite decent for a priest to utter,
Or for a high-bred Baron to attend to:
However, if you wish it, when at leisure
I will repeat the idle madrigal;
But let it not employ this apt occasion
For our more grave deliberations.
I have drawn in with an attentive ear
All you have utter'd: your offence is grievous.

Baron. Ay, father!

Fitzharding. But the grace of heav'n is great,
And for the truly contrite, will work wonders.
Leave me awhile to meditate alone,
That here, in still communion with myself,
And cool abstraction from all other objects,
I may devote my mind entire to you.

Baron. You'll find me in the gallery.

Fitzharding. 'Tis well!

In the meantime, be sooth'd with this assurance,
I will resolve on something speedily,
Shall give you ease for ever.

Baron. How? for ever?

So that the bloody image of that deed
Shall never rise to my remembrance more?

Fitzharding. Not even in thy dreams—for death
has none. *(Aside.)*

Baron. May heav'n assist your holy contemplations! *[Exit.]*

Fitzharding. *(Reads.)*—"Your castle will be this night surprized; yourself, and all that are in it, slaughtered: after the tolling of the curfew, look to the northern gate."

A pretty madrigal! The friar—No, no;
He would have mention'd my disguise: who then?
I do suspect that Robert. He is one,
Whom nature has so deeply wrought with pity,
That habit cannot harden him to blood.
'Twas shrewdly aim'd, but it has miss'd the mark,
Nor shall perplex me further; for this Baron,
I hold him in my eye, and, when I please,
Fast in my gripe. I do but soar aloof,
(Like the pois'd vulture hov'ring o'er his prey,)
Till having track'd him beyond human help,
I may pounce down securely.

SCENE IV.—*The Robbers' Cave.*

Enter ROBERT.

Robert. So, all's well. I have escaped the track
of the blood-hounds, though they can't be far off.
I met an half-starv'd wolf in my way, and slew him:
his blood will give a colour to my story. *(A whistle heard.)* Hark! they are at hand. Approach,
I am prepared.

Enter ARMSTRONG, CONRAD, and other Robbers.

Armstrong. Well, is it done? *(Robert shews his hands.)*

Conrad. Ay, this is well.

Armstrong. Where's the body?

Conrad. Come, give us the particulars.

Robert. I led him, by discourse, to the cliff that
overhangs the sea—

Conrad. What, where I pushed down the bald-
headed friar, whilst at his prayers, and bid him say
amen as he descended?

Robert. The same. As he gazed upon the ele-
ments, I stabbed him in the back; I heard his
body dash against the waves, and all again was silent.

Conrad. *(Looking round.)* Where's Herman?

Armstrong. I missed him soon after our setting
out. Has no one seen him?

1 Robber. Not I.

2 Robber. Nor I.

3 Robber. Nor I.

Conrad. Taking one of his solitary strolls, I
suppose; he generally avoids our company, lest he
should catch the contagion of a little humanity:
your right beast of prey always prowls by himself,

Armstrong. I wish he may not have fallen into
the hands of the wolf-hunters.

Conrad. If he be, there's not a rogue in England
will do greater justice to the gallows.

Armstrong. Nor one to whom the gallows will
do greater justice.

Conrad. I have known him since he was first
hatched; he had a trick of killing flies in his
cradle, which his mother encouraged, that she
might not spoil his temper. Before he was out of
swaddling clothes, he wrung off the neck of a fa-
vourite bird for singing too loud, and she patted
him on the cheek, and said he had an excellent ear
for music. On being breeched, he was appointed
the family-hangman to superannuated dogs, and
superannuated kittens; when a school-boy, he
would break bounds at the risk of having his back
slayed, to see an execution. As he grew to man-
hood, the lust for blood grew with him, till having
exhausted his genius in tormenting all the other
animals of the creation, he fixed, at last, on man.
But come, let's to the armoury.

Armstrong. And every man equip himself stoutly,
for we shall have a hot night's work.

Conrad. And if we should be caught, we shall
hang, cheek by jowl, like kites on a dove-cote, or
rats against a barn-door. No matter, lads; do your
duty, and leave the rest to fortune; though it may
not be our luck to escape the gallows, 'tis at least
in our power to deserve it, and that, to a man of
spirit, is always some consolation. Come, to the
armoury. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the Baron's castle.*

Enter FITZHARDING, followed by BARON DE TRACY.

Fitzharding. The place you say is private?

Baron. Still as night.

Fitzharding. Where sight nor sound, save of
ourselves alone, can find admission?

Baron. 'Tis an hallow'd spot,

Which I have chosen for the burial place
Of all my future race.—

Fitzharding. It will do well. *[O'er.]*

Baron. There, when the turmoil of my brain is
And all my senses lie benumb'd in death,
I shall sleep soundly.—

Fitzharding. Ay, and quickly, too. *(Aside.)*

Baron. There, too, my wife,—for I have raised
to her

As proud a monument as art could fashion,—

Instead of the vast ocean's stormy bed,
Should in the silent confines of cold marble
Have crumbled quietly.

Fitzharding. It is a place
Meet for our bus'ness. When the bell hath toll'd,
We will repair to that sequester'd spot,
Where, under heav'n's attesting eye alone,
We will perform a deed,—which being done,
You are a man again.

Baron. Accomplish that,

And name your recompense.

Fitzharding. For shame, my lord;

A pious act remunerates itself;

Or, if it did not, my reward is fix'd

Beyond the utmost reach of human pow'r

To give or take away. *(Music without.)*

Baron. What sounds are these?

Fitzharding. Minstrels, if I may guess.

Enter a Vassal.

Vassal. Three vagrant harpers,
Who carry in their looks long fast and travel,
Beg for refreshment and a night's repose. *[Drink.]*

Baron. We are engaged. Go give them food and
And speed them on their journey.

Fitzharding. Nay, my lord,

Do not, however weightily inclin'd,

Forget the laws of hospitality:

They are a people, harmless at the worst,

And often entertaining; and they claim,

From long establish'd custom, as their charter,
Such entertainment, as the truly great
Bestow on humble ingenuity.
I pray you give them audience.

Baron. Be it so.

[*Exit Vassal.*]

Fitzharding. They are the only records of the time;
And many a sad and merry chronicle,
Worthy the note of all posterity,
But for the kindling spirit of their strings,
Would sleep for ever in oblivion.

Enter three Robbers, disguised as Minstrels.
From what country, friends!

1 Min. From the north, father.

Fitzharding. Whither bound?

1 Min. For that

We trust to fortune. But the day being spent,
We would your debtors be for a night's lodging.
Such minstrelsy as our rude skill can touch
Shall be our thanks.

Baron. 'Tis well. We listen to you.

GLEE.—*Minstrels.*

Hark! the curfew's solemn sound

Silent darkness spreads around;

Heavy it beats on the lover's heart,

Who leaves, with a sigh, his tale half told.

The poring monk and his book must part;

And fearful the miser locks up his gold.

Now, whilst labour sleeps, and charmed sorrow,

O'er the dewy green,

By the glow-worm's light,

Dance the elves of night,

Unheard, unseen.

Yet where their midnight pranks have been

The circled turf will betray to-morrow.

Baron. 'They have perform'd it with no vulgar
taste or common execution.

Enter a Vassal.

Well, what now?

Vassal. The woman whom you sent for is with-
out, and waits your further orders.

Baron. Bring her before us.— [*Exit Vassal.*]

Stand back awhile.

[*To the Minstrels.*]

This urgent business speedily despatch'd,
We'll task you further.

[*The Minstrels retire.*]

'Tis the propheteas,

Whom you, no doubt, have heard of.

Fitzharding. Tho' not giv'n

To note the fleeting rumours of the time,

Some strange and wild reports of such a person,
Have reach'd our convent.

Enter MATILDA.

Baron. Now observe her, then.

Woman, stand forth, and answer to our charge.

The universal cry is loud against you

For practis'd witchcraft. The consuming plagues

Of murrain, blight, and mildew, that make vain

The peasant's labour, blasting his tall hopes,

Are laid to your account; they charge, moreover,

Your skill in noxious herbs, and ev'ry weed

Of pois'nous growth, the teeming earth is rank with,

Fatal to man and beast: that these collecting

By the full moon, with wicked industry,

You do apply to hellish purposes;—

To shrink up the sound limb, and, with a touch,

Plant wrinkles on the blooming cheek of youth.

This is not all: they urge most vehemently,

That you usurp the night's solemnity

For deeds of darkness, horrible to think of!

That, when the yawning church-yards vomit forth

The grisly troops of fiends, that haunt the night,

You have been heard to mutter mischief with them,

Dancing around a pile of dead men's bones

To your own howling; and, with hideous yells,

Invoking curses for the coming day.

How answer you to this?

Matilda. That it is false.

Fitzharding. You answer boldly, woman.

Matilda. Holy father,

I answer with the voice of innocence.

That I enjoy the silent hour of night,
And shun the noisy tumult of the day;
Prize the pale moon beyond the solar blaze,
And choose to meditate while others sleep.

If these be crimes, I am most culpable.

For, from the inmost feeling of my soul,

I love the awful majesty sublime

Of nature in her stillness. To o'erlook,

Fix'd on some bleak and barren promontory,

The wide, interminable waste of waves;

To gaze upon the star-wrought firmament

Till mine eyes ache with wonder; these are joys

I gather undisturb'd. The day's delights

I am proscib'd; and, if I venture forth

To taste the morning's freshness, I am star'd at

As one of nature's strangest prodigies.

At my unmeasur'd step, and rude attire,

The speechless babe is taught to point the finger;

And unbreech'd urchins hoot me as I pass,

And drive me to the shelter of my cottage.

The very dogs are taught to bark at me!

But to your charge: I am accus'd most wrongly

Of having both the faculty and will [ness;

T'infest the earth with plagues, and man with sick-

Of holding converse with superior beings.

Why, what a mockery of sense is this?

It is the wildest stuff of folly's dreams,

That I, possessing super-human pow'r,

Should thus submit to human agency;

And, being brought by your rude vassals here,

Stand to be judg'd by man!

Fitzharding. That's shrewdly put.

This is no common woman.— [*To the Baron.*]

Baron. Hear her further. [time

Matilda. Yet have I not consum'd the lapse of

In fruitless musing—something I can do,

Of mine own pow'r—for other I have none,

Of which the mention may create a smile,

A sneering smile of infidel contempt,

But whose performance would convert you all

Into the bloodless forms of staring statues.

Have you a dear, departed relative,

A buried friend, still living in your hearts,

Whom in their earthly and corporeal state

You would behold again?

Baron. Woman, beware!

Matilda. Thy wife, shall I revive her? Speak!

Baron. Away! [to thee!

Matilda. Be she in heav'n or hell, I'll bring her

Scatter'd throughout the ocean, I'll reknit

Her sea-bleach'd bones, put living flesh upon them;

Light up her eyeless sockets with twin stars;

Bid the warm blood rush through her kindling veins,

And her heart beat with new-created life:

A breathing woman she shall stand before thee;

And thou, in freezing horror and amazement,

Shalt look more like a corpse unshrouded.

Fitzharding. Nay, my lord,

You let the wild words of this foolish baldam,

Take too strong a hold upon you.

Matilda. I have promis'd, sir;

And to the very height of expectation,

I will fulfil my pledge.

Enter a Vassal with FLORENCE.

Baron. Who have you there? [to thee.

Vassal. A lad, whom we found lurking at the

Fitzharding. 'Tis time to end this foolery. [*Aside.*]

Baron. Speak, boy:

What led you to the dwelling of that woman?

Florence. I had heard mention of her wondrous

In divination, and I sorely long'd [skill

To put her to the proof; for I myself

Can tell of things to come; command that no one

Stir from this spot, till I have told my story.

Fitzharding. What can this mean? [*Aside.*]

My lord, you will not hear him?

He hath confess'd himself to be inspir'd,

Which, by the tenor of the law, is death.

Florence. Forbear a moment, I will tell you that

Shall make your blood start back upon your heart,

And all your senses pause, entranc'd with wonder.—
To-night, to-night—

Baron. What will befall to-night? [hatching,

Florence. Nay, at this moment, a foul plot is
Whose birth will be the death of all thine boue.
Thy castle walls, breaking their peaceful silence,
Ere the cock crow, will shriek to rape and murder.
I say, this very hour, almost before
The bell of night breaks off the gossip's tale,
A fierce banditti will besiege your castle.
Look to the northern gate, for there they'll enter.

Fitzharding. Peace, heedless prophet! I will
hear no more;

It is a scandal to my holy office,
A miserable waste of precious time,
And an enormous blasphemy against reason,
To listen to the lunatic discourse
Of this audacious boy.

Florence. Why, holy father,
I didn't say thy cloak conceal'd a villain;
Thou' saintly outsiders sometimes mask foul hearts;
But for those minstrels yonder, you will find
They are not what they seem.

Baron. Search them.

(*They strip off the Robbers' disguise.*)

Fitzharding. All's lost!
Curse on the hag, how narrowly she eyes me!

(*Observing Matilda looking at him.*)

Matilda. Some villain, on my life? (*Aside.*)

Florence. What think you now, sir? (*To Fitz.*)

Fitzharding. I am struck mute with wonder!

Matilda. With strong guilt. (*Aside.*)

(*They bring forward the Robbers.*)

Baron. Speak, wretches, or the torture shall
Who and what you are. [wring from ye]

1 Rob. Let your prophet tell you. 'Tis bad
policy when rogues betray each other; but he
must be a fool, indeed, that turns evidence against
himself.

2 Rob. That we come upon no charitable de-
sign, our present appearance speaks: that's all the
information you'll get from me.

3 Rob. Or from me.

Baron. Take them away, and watch them care-
fully. [*Exeunt Robbers.*]

What have you more to tell us? (*To Florence.*)

Florence. Nothing, sir.

Baron. How!

Florence. For your safety I have said enough.
Should I more circumstantially relate
The means which I have possess'd me of this secret,
I may betray myself. Urge me no farther:
What I have said will happen. My tir'd spirits
Have need of rest. [bidding.]

Baron. (*To the Vassals.*) Attend, and wait his

Florence. One thing I had forgot: amongst the
That will beset your castle, there is one, [band
A tall, fresh-colour'd youth; his curling hair
Black as the raven; but the truest mark
That shall denote him to you, is a scar
On his right cheek.

Matilda. My son! (*Aside.*)

Florence. Upon your lives,
Touch not a hair of him. As you would shun
The pangs of deep contrition, and remorse
Indelible, have mercy on that youth.

You shall know more hereafter. [*Exit with Vassals.*]

Baron. Is't not strange? (*To Fitzharding.*)

Fitzharding. Most wonderful!—That may re-
cover all. (*Aside.*)

Baron. There must be something in it. For
this woman,

Whom vulgar clamour only hath accus'd,
And no particular grievance, she is free.

Matilda. Touching my skill to raise again the dead,
You shall have full conviction.

Baron. Well, to-morrow.

Matilda. Perhaps to-night.

This priest and I must have some conference.
[*Aside.*—*Exit with Vassals.*]

Baron. To-night! What can she mean?

Fitzharding. Some things I've studied;

But I profess not to interpret woman

Baron. I am confounded with these myste-
ries. [not apt]

Fitzharding. Why, 'tis a night of riddles! Tho'
To trust foreboding tales of dreaming wizards,
And quake myself into an ague-fit,
When toothless hags have mumbled prophecies,
I cannot choose but wonder.

Baron. 'Tis most clear
Some foul play is intended.

Fitzharding. I'm afraid so. [truth]

Baron. I'll have those minstrels rack'd until the
Be forc'd from their keen tortures.

Fitzharding. Hold, my lord!

No doubt they have deserv'd the sharpest justice:
But they are stubborn villains, men of steel;
Who, with clenched teeth, will smile at your in-
And mock your bloody executioner. [fictions,
Or, if they should confess, would you believe them?
Truth is not to be torn from tortur'd limbs:

Its dwelling is the heart; and he who knows
Deepest to sound the heart, has found the key to't.

Have you not heard of most abandon'd wretches,
Deep-rate as savage beasts in their wild courses,
Dead to all punishment of pain or shame,

Who, in a dark and solitary cell,
Whence stern reflection will not be shut out,

And the persuasive rhetoric of the church,
Have felt compunction creep upon their natures,

And melting into penitence and shame,
Unbosom'd all their guilt! Such men are these:

Leave them to my discretion: presently,
I'll bring you the full scope of their intents;

Or else the wide spread fame I have acquir'd
For holy influence o'er the minds of men,

Is built on no foundation.

Baron. You shall try them.

Fitzharding. I'll touch their consciences to the
quick, depend on't:

There is a sacred something here within,
Whispers a prosperous issue.

Baron. Speed you well.

I will but give directions to my vassals,
And here attend you.

Fitzharding. You may soon expect me.

[*Exit Baron.*]

So constant spirits draw safety from their dangers.

Re-enter MATILDA.

This woman still.—Your business? I'm in haste
Matilda. No friar art thou.

Fitzharding. If not, what is't to thee?

Matilda. It is a lonely spot that you have chosen
For a mysterious work

Fitzharding. 'Twill suit the purpose.

Matilda. A ruffian hour.—What holy purpose is't,
That the sun must not look upon?

Fitzharding. A deed,

That better suits the winking eye of night. [looks.
Matilda. Some horrid meaning lives in your dark

I mark'd you at th' unmasking of the minstrel:
It was not mere surprise that shook you through,

But the strong stir of guilty apprehension
That trembled in the paleness of your cheek,

And fix'd you horror-struck.

Fitzharding. I am their captain.

You know me now—But build not upon that—
Your son—

Matilda. What of him?

Fitzharding. Safe within my gripe
He pants an easy prey. Observe me well:—

We hold him on strong grounds, a recreant traitor
To this night's enterprise; which, if it fail—

If by design or chance (no matter which)
Aught lights on me untoward to my hopes,

He dies on the instant.

Matilda. Heavenly powers protect him!

Fitzharding. It works as I could wish. (*Aside.*)
Therefore, be wise.

As for this foolish baron and his fate,
 'Tis not within the compass of thy spells :
 For vainly seeking to enfranchise him,
 You will yourself entangle. Keep aloof ;
 Home to your hovel and your housewif'ry ;
 And when the bell of night has toll'd his summons,
 Keep not abroad : there will be mischief stirring,
 Which 'twill behove thee better to avoid
 Than pry into.

Thy son, remember, he but draws his breath
 Whilst I walk harmless. Home, and be advis'd.

[*Eseunt.*]

ACT V.—SCENE I.—*The dark part of the Forest.*
The Curfew is heard tolling at a distance.

Enter ARMSTRONG, CONRAD, and a Robber.

Armstrong. All's dark as pitch.

Rob. And still as death. You may hear the falling of a leaf. As we passed the gallows of Rodolpho, methought he muttered vengeance.

Armstrong. Ay, lads, for his sake give no quarter. Remember they are Normans who have spoiled us of our inheritance, and chased us into this forest ; where, like wolves, they have set a price upon our heads.

Conrad. That's out of compliment to our understandings : 'tis not every man's head that will bear to have a price set upon it.

Armstrong. Are we worried like beasts, and shall we not turn upon our hunters? Remember, I say, they are Normans, and spare not.

Conrad. Right, noble commander! If, after tomorrow's sun-rise, a flea be seen to hop in the castle, or there be left life in an unhatched egg, 'twill be a slovenly performance.

Armstrong. Hark! Who comes?

1 Rob. (Without.) Nay, answer you.

Armstrong. Onward!

Enter the three Robbers from the Castle.

1 Rob. The same. Well met, lads.

Armstrong. Have you been discovered, then?

1 Rob. Yes ; but the captain remains snug, and will redeem everything. The bell has gone ; the whole village lies in a profound sleep ; the Baron is lulled into security, and our game is a sure one. Follow me, and you shall learn the rest as we proceed.

Armstrong. On then.

[*Eseunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Chapel, in the midst of which appears a tomb.*

Enter BARON DE TRACY and FITZHARDING.

Baron. This is the place.

Fitzharding. Are we secure from interruption?

Baron. None, on their lives, dare enter.

Fitzharding. It is well.

The silent melancholy of this spot

Will suit our ceremony.

Baron. And the moon, [brightness,
 When from the clouds which now oppress her
 She breaks into full majesty again,
 Will shed a solemn lustre o'er our purpose.

Fitzharding. We need not wait for her.

Baron. Now, then, unfold

Why with such mystic preparation,
 At this dark hour and unfrequented spot,
 We are alone together?

Fitzharding. Can you doubt?

Your crime was murder ; and it has been said,
 "Blood will have blood!"

Baron. What mean you?

Fitzharding. Such a deed

Cries for no common penance : whining pray'rs,
 Self-ratigation ; wasting abstinence ;
 A galling pilgrimage twice round the world ;
 Your wealth, whilst living, all consum'd in alms ;
 O, left, when dead, to raise up hospitals :
 These things will not absolve you from an act,
 Which has but one atonement.

Baron. Name it.

Fitzharding. Death! (*Discovers himself.*)

Baron. Ha!—What art thou? Some villain in disguise? [be thy knell.]

Fitzharding. Stir not, nor raise thy voice ; 'twill
 Has time defac'd me with so rude a hand,
 That you have forgot me?

Baron. Speak! who are you?

Fitzharding. D'y'e know me now?

(*Stripping his arm.*)

Baron. Fitzharding, and alive?

Fitzharding. I am no apparition. Look again!
 If your eyes doubt it, you shall feel me soon.
 The woman promis'd you to raise the dead ;
 I have perform'd it.

Baron. Wonder-working pow'rs!

Yet wherefore do we meet as enemies?

Fitzharding. Wherefore?

I think thou art the self-same man, [troop
 Who, some time since, in Normandy, a valiant
 Commanded ; into which, being then a boy,
 In a wild fit of spleen, I madly enter'd,
 And of the meanest soldier bore the toil.
 In angry mood, once, publicly thou gav'st me
 Some sharp rebuke, which I as sharply answer'd ;
 For this, didst thou condemn me to be branded
 As the most common felon, with a spirit
 Unworthy of a soldier—nay, a man—

A sullen, savage sensuality
 Of vengeance. In the public market-place,
 Beneath the fall blaze of a mid-day sun,
 Where all the scum and rabble of the place,
 By ling'ring preparation, were collected
 To make their vulgar comments : there it was
 This badge of infamy was fix'd upon me! [it.

Baron. It was a galling wrong ; but thou forgav'st

Fitzharding. I seemingly forgave it. Thou believ'dst me ;

And when thou held'st me to thy cred'ulous breast,
 I did not strangle thee. We drunk together,
 And still I mix'd no poison with thy wine.
 Alone, at midnight, o'er a dreary heath
 Have we pass'd ; on the extremest verge
 Of a sea-impending cliff, yet I abstain'd.
 Ask me why, thus so often strangely tempted,
 I have withheld the blow? 'Twas not in mercy.
 Say, was not this an honourable scar

(*Stripping his arm.*)

To stamp upon a young and gallant soldier?

A shame which on my body is so fix'd,
 That I must be half rotted in my grave
 Ere death can cancel it.—Thou thought'st me dead,

And so I was to all but my revenge. [bar,

The man whom thou didst find in thy wife's chamber
 Was I! The letters sent to thee were mine ;

And often, under terrible affliction, [chiding,
 When thou hast how'd to heaven's mysterious
 This arm, like thunder from a cloud, has reach'd

Baron. And are you not content? [thee.

Fitzharding. No jot appears!

Tho' I should kill thee with extremest torture,
 To 'uage the burning thirst of my revenge ;
 Drink thy blood life-warm ; tear those trembling
 limbs,

And scatter them as whirlwinds strew the dust ;
 'Mid the triumphant pantings of my soul, [tal.

Vengeance would weep to think thy pangs were mor-
 Think'at thou thy life (for thou must quickly die)

Will make me reparation?

Baron. Spare it, then. [mercy ;

Fitzharding. Thou hast no reasonable hope for
 Thou canst not have ; for when on my behalf

Petitions throng'd, thou, with a sneer, replied,
 'Hes all have justice! Justice, then, o'ertake thee.

Baron. Help! Murder! Villain! Help!

(*He is pursued by Fitzharding.—Matilda, from the tomb, interposes between them.*)

Fitzharding. What art thou? Speak!

The real existence of a living woman ;
 Or but the mind's creation of a form,
 That night and this occasion conjure up,
 To fright me from my steady resolution?

It has no human faculty of speech;
And cannot from that attitude relax,
To which 'tis spell-bound.

(*She strikes with her foot, and some of the Vassals enter.*)

Foiled at last!

And by a woman!

[hence.]

Matilda. Seize on that ruffian, and convey him
Fitzharding. Well, well, the night's not over!

[*The Vassals bear him off.*]

Matilda. Yet amaz'd? (*To the Baron.*)

Baron. My flesh creeps still, and my uncurdling
Slowly and fearfully resumes its functions. [blood
Whate'er thou art, mortal or blessed spirit,
Thy voice familiar doth proclaim the first;
But the strange apparition of that form,
Almost persuades the other; who within
The sanctuary of that hallow'd spot intomb'd thee,
That, at the very crisis of my fate,
Thou shouldst burst forth, in terrible array,
To stagger resolute murder, and make reel
Destruction back upon itself!

Matilda. Survey me.

I am the very substance of that form,
Whose apparition I do only feign.
The woman, whom you least expect to meet;
That once, you dearly lov'd, now deeply mourn;
That you would most desire, yet least dare hope
Now stands before you. [for;

Baron. If 'twere possible—

Matilda. What, that among so many sinking souls,
One should be sav'd?

Baron. Remembrance steals upon me:

The look, the voice—Yes, yes; thou art my wife!
And the wild waves were merciful.

Matilda. Speak for me,

The silent rapture of these starting tears,
These arms, that eager open to enfold thee,
And clasp thee with more transport to my heart
Than from the roaring sea, they snatch'd our child.

(*They embrace.*)

Baron. This is to live anew! Our son survives,

Matilda. He lives, but—

[too?

Baron. What? Proceed—

Enter a Vassal.

The matter, sir?

Vassal. My lord, the castle is attack'd.

Matilda. Fear nothing:

I have prepar'd your vassals to receive them.

Baron. I will myself among them; in the mean-
Within the friendly covert of the tomb, [time,
Rest you secur'd, till the rude conflict's past.

Matilda. That must not be; I will along with you;
For what remains to do, may want my help.

Baron. Come, let us on, then. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*An Apartment in the castle.*

*A skirmish between the Vassals and the Robbers,
who are driven back, and pursued.*

Enter ROBERT, pursued by BARON DE TRACY.

Baron. Then yield thee, villain!

(*They fight. Robert is overcome, and
falls. The Baron is on the point of
killing him, when MATILDA enters.*)

Matilda. Forbear! it is thy son!

Robert. My father!

Baron. Holy pow'rs!

Matilda. Disown him not:

Tho' he appear in this rude character,
He is no reprobate confirm'd.

Baron. My son!

(*They embrace.*)

Robert. In this the hand of heav'n is most miracu-
And I ne'er fall'n into this deep disgrace. [loud
Destruction would, ere this, have whelm'd you all.
The arrow, which I shot into the castle—

Baron. Well, what of that?

Robert. It bore the fall intent

Baron. To dark enterprise.

Robert. Indeed!

Robert. Most truly. [riddled! (*Aside.*)

Baron. Why, then, the priest's confusion is un-

It was well meant; but, by a subtle turn,
Which you shall know hereafter, miss'd its object.
But see, our prisoners—

*FITZHARDING, and the rest of the Robbers, are
brought in by the Vassals, headed by BERTRAND.*
Thou unhappy man! (*To Fitzharding.*)

Who, by thine own deep malice, art betray'd,

What answer wilt thou make to justice?

Fitzharding. None:

For nothing of my purpose, but it's failure,
Do I repent.

Baron. Will't live, and be my friend?

[my.

Fitzharding. Never! whilst I can die thine ene-

What you have made me, still expect to find me:

A man, struck from the common roll of men;

Exil'd from all society; stamp'd like Cain,

To wander savage and forlorn; why, then,

Revenge be still my solitary comfort;

By darkness and by daylight, my companion,

My food, my sleep, my study, and my pastime;

Pulse of my heart, and life of all my being:

For till you can divorce me from myself,

Or, put another soul into this body,

You may as soon enthroned the fires of heav'n,

Or shake the rooted earth from its foundation,

As alter me. Your friendship I disdain,

Despise your pow'r. My life I value not;

For when you stab'd my fame, you murder'd that

Which honourable men call life,—the glow

Of young ambition; the high-swell'ing hope

Of present glory, and renown immortal.

Beauty's soul thrilling smile, the social joys

Of kindling friendship. Out upon this softness!

Come, lead me to the solace of a dungeon,

Where I may curse him privately. [*Exit.*

Matilda. How fix'd

[rest—

Baron. He may be wrought on yet. But for the
To-morrow we will speak to them again.

[*Exeunt Robbers and Vassals.*]

Bertrand, your hand. I thank you for this ser-
Which shall not lack requital. [*vice,*

Enter FLORENCE.

My deliverer! [*yard?*

Florence. Am I a babbler now? A prating wi-
Is fire or miry pool to be my portion?

Baron. Look round my wide domain with curious
Whatever is most precious in thy sight, [*eye;*
There pause, and ask it boldly.

Florence. Oh! beware, sir;

My wishes may be wilder than the dreams
Of doting avarice. I may demand

This princely habitation; or, perhaps—

Baron. Ask what you will, by holy heav'n I
It shall be granted freely. [*swear,*

Florence. Then I fix

On this your humble vassal.

Here I kneel (*Takes Bertrand's hand.*)

And beg a father's, and (for I have heard

The strange and tender tale) another's blessing.

Baron. Florence!

Florence. It is, indeed, sir.

Baron. Rise, my girl!

Let me, in my daughter, clasp my preserver.

Florence. Your child was your preserver; but
not I, sir.

Being made pris'n'er by that rude banditti,
I was deliver'd to my brother's hands
For sacrifice; but only touch'd with pity,
As if instinctive nature held his hand,
He brought me thro' the dangers of the forest,
Safe from that horrid cavern: there it was
I learnt to be a prophet.

Baron. Still new wonders!

The sister by the brother's hand preserv'd,

The husband by the wife's! Is there aught else?

Or, have we reach'd, at length, the farthest maze

Of this eventful night? Come, let us in, then;

And, as we shake amazement from our senses,

Discourse more fully on these prodigies. [*Exeunt.*

WHAT NEXT?

A FARCE, IN TWO ACTS.—BY THOMAS DIBDIN.



Act I.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

COLONEL TOUCHWOOD
COLONEL CLIFFORD
MAJOR TOUCHWOOD
MORDAUNT

BRIEF
SNAGGS
SHARP
OFFICERS

MRS. PRUDENCE
CLARISSA
SOPHIA
SERVANTS

ACT I.—SCENE I.—A Village.

Enter SNAGGS.

Snaggs. Dear, dear, dear! what a busy day! I don't wonder your dentists in London make fortunes, when I have pulled out fifteen shillings' worth of teeth, taken three likenesses, and got double postage for carrying a letter, all in one day.

Enter SHARP.

Sharp. Snaggs, Mr. Snaggs!

Snaggs. Eh! who wants me? anybody with the toothache?

Sharp. Has he got it?

Snaggs. Who?

Sharp. Mr. Mordaunt, you blockhead! Did you deliver the letter?

Snaggs. Yes; and he read it, and chuckled, and asked if it come from a lady; so I put on an insignificant look—so; and he was pleased, and gave me as much as you had done.

Sharp. Bravo! why, you must be making a fortune here, my jolly Snaggs.

Snaggs. Ay, if all days were like this; but if I didn't draw pictures as well as teeth, I should make but a poorish hand on't.

Sharp. What, a painter, too, as well as dentist?

Snaggs. Yes, I takes off heads, and cures the tooth-ache.

Sharp. If taking off heads won't do it, what will? So, you paint the rosy, cherry-checked country lasses?

Snaggs. Yes, I paint fair ladies all black.

Sharp. Profiles in shade!

Snaggs. No; I does it by candlelight, with their heads again a wall, and then seduces them to a proper size: then I cures weak-sighted folks.

Sharp. An oculist!

Snaggs. No; they calls me the eye-man! Poticary says he'll prosecute me for selling nostrums, when it be nothing at all but brandy and water.

Sharp. (*Looks at his watch.*) It wants but ten minutes of the time I'm to go with my master. You're sure Colonel Touchwood wasn't at home?

Snaggs. He! bless you, he be gone to town: if he were at home, you'd hear him before you got within sight of the house. Main passionate. No, no; there be only Muster Mordaunt the visitor, the two young ladies, the servants, and the governess.

Sharp. Isn't she a complete Argus?

Snaggs. No; she's the housekeeper.

Sharp. I mean, isn't she all eyes?

Snaggs. If she be, she's plaguily unneighbourly, for she never had a bottle of my stuff since she came to the place.

Sharp. No!

Snaggs. No: nor so much as a tooth, or a picture, pulled out, or drawn, in her life.

Sharp. That is unneighbourly.

Snaggs. And pray, old acquaintance, what has brought you and your master down so alily?

Sharp. You shall see, if you wait till it be dark.

Snaggs. An odd time for seeing. Here comes lawyer Brief.

Sharp. Then I'll go. I hate lawyers, they're such rogues. Farewell! (*Going.*)

Snaggs. But, Master Sharp, wou'tee come to the club at night? I be hired there.

Sharp. Hired!

Snaggs. Yes, I comes off shot-free for saying good things out of my own head, from a book I keeps in my pocket. I takes the chair, and keeps the company alive by making 'em all die wi' laughing.

Sharp. Vastly clever, indeed; keep 'em alive by killing 'em with laughing. Well, take care of our trunks; don't blab, and I'll be with you sooner than you think. Mum! and without intruding on your pencil, lotion, or instruments, we'll make a man of you. (*Exit.*)

Snaggs. And as long as I makes a penny o' you, that be all I care for. Oh! here's Mr. Brief! he wur but lawyer's 'prentice t'other day; but now, because he be asked this thing and that by a few fools in the parish, he calls himself a solicitor.

Enter BRIEF.

Brief. Snaggs, who was that just now left you?

Snaggs. That, sir? Oh! that was—a secret, sir.

Brief. No prevarication. Do you mean to say—I ask you on your oath?

Snaggs. Me take an oath! I'll be d—d if I'll swear to please anybody. Who might you think it was, sir?

Brief. It looked like a servant of a friend of mine from London, and I thought he might be asking for me.

Snaggs. No, sir, I don't think he be in the lawyer line.

Brief. Why?

Snaggs. He says they be all such cursed rogues.

Briefs. Scan, mag!

Snaggs. Yes, they can mag; that we all know.

Brief. Valgar prejudice! I assure you that, even in London, there are not so many pettifogging members of the profession as there used to be.

Snaggs. Not since you be com'd away, I dare say, sir. But I be taking up your time, sir, and your hands be full as well as mine.

Brief. Only, you'll excuse me, I can't help thinking it's a strange way to live by taking your customer's money and teeth into the bargain.

Snaggs. It be, sir; only I do seldom pull out any o' your customer's teeth, till you haven't left any to be made on 'em.

Brief. Yes, I believe you and I get every shilling that's laid out in the village in our way.

Snaggs. And between us, I wonder there be a shilling left. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II.—*A Drawing-room, open at the back by glass doors to a garden; a door also on each side. The moon partially seen through the sash-door.*

Enter MORDAUNT cautiously from the sash-door, and takes a letter from his pocket.

Mor. At length I have got away from the company. There's no one here: my watch says eight to a minute. I've made no mistake in the letter, I hope. (*Reads.*) "Mr. Mordaunt is requested most particularly to be in Colonel Touchwood's drawing-room, which adjoins the garden, at eight o'clock on Tuesday evening: he can easily enter by the sash-door, and is desired to keep all interruption out of the way."—No signature!—It must be an assignation from a female! My pulse begins to quicken, and throbs with impatience for the lovely writer: methinks I hear her timid step! methinks I see her, with her half-fetted breath, bending her downcast eye in fearful search of me, the happy object; who, taking her gently by the hand, shall say—What, in the name of all the devils, do those men want? (*Retires a little.*)

Enter from the sash door, MAJOR TOUCHWOOD and SHARP, in dark blue cloaks.

Major T. Sharp!

Sharp. Sir!

Major T. Where is he? You said you saw him enter, and but a little while before us.

Sharp. So I did, sir, so I did; and here he is, sir; here is Mr. Mordaunt.

Mor. And pray, sir, who are you? and who may your companion be?

Major T. Why don't you know me, Mordaunt?

Mor. Know you—what—why—yes it must be too. Major Touchwood! who the devil thought of seeing you here? (*Advancing.*)

Major T. Hush! Are you alone?

Mor. I thought I were, till I saw you. But what are you doing, my good friend, in that cloak and wig? why you look twenty years older.

Major T. Do I? then I gain my point. I have fought and wounded my Colonel: I come here to conceal myself; and as my uncle is reckoned wonderfully like me, I made free with an uniform coat, and popped on a wig which he had left at my quarters; and to stop pursuit, and baffle suspicion, I mean, with your assistance, for a day or two, to deceive the whole family.

Mor. Indeed! And suppose you had not met me here?

Major T. Oh! I was certain of that.

Mor. Certain! Are you in her confidence?

Major T. Her! who?

Mor. If you be not, I must beg you to retire instantly.

Major T. Retire! I came on purpose to consult you.

Mor. You could not have chosen a worse opportunity. Look here, you rogue! (*Shows the letter.*) I conceal nothing from you; and I rather think this delightful billet is written by some beautiful creature with—

Sharp. With a wig and military boots on.

Mor. So it was you who did me the honour to make this assignation? (*To the Major.*)

Major T. I did.

Mor. I wish you a very good evening.

Major T. What, leave me when I want your assistance?

Mor. I cannot better serve you than by leaving you. I'll go instantly to the sister of your wounded Colonel, and bespeak her interest in your behalf.

Major T. The last person in the world to mention me to.

Mor. The first, you mean; for if the Colonel die, she succeeds to six thousand pounds a year.

Major T. And I shall be hanged. (*Mimics him.*)

Mor. That, of course!

Major T. Well, if you must go, do me at least the favour to tell my sister Clarissa that a gentleman wishes to speak to her in the drawing room; but do not, for your life, say who it is.

Mor. Your wishes shall be obeyed, and that in the kindest manner; for I have already proved my regard for the brother, by adoring the sister. (*Exit.*)

Major T. It's well I've no serious need of that coxcomb's assistance: I merely put him into my confidence that he might not betray my scheme, and prevent my interview with my charming cousin Sophia!

Sharp. How happy you are, sir: you are going to see the woman you love, I the one I have married. Oh! how I look forward to the joy of our meeting; and yet it's a pity, too, for my Peggy and I are never such real good friends as when we are fifty miles asunder.

Major T. Hush! here's my sister.

Enter CLARISSA.

Cl. A gentleman want me?—Oh! my dear uncle, I thought you were my brother.

Major T. Look again, sister, and say, "My dear brother, I thought you were my uncle."

Cla. And so I did. Mr. Mordaunt told me, in his way, that a gentleman, who was not my brother, waited to see me. I guessed his meaning, and flew to see.—Why, you've the oddest wig on I ever saw; it looks just like one of my uncle's.

Major T. It is rather like one of his.

Sharp. It would be devilish odd if it wasn't.

Cla. But you had just written to say we should not see you these three months; yet the moment I read your letter, I said to myself, if that isn't one of my uncle's regimentals, never believe me.

Sharp. An odd thing for a young lady to say, on reading her brother's letter.

Major T. My dear Clarissa, this is a disguise. I had an affair of honour.

Cla. A duel?

Major T. Yes, with Colonel Clifford.

Cla. With Clifford?

Major T. Yes; don't be alarmed; I received his fire, and fortunately escaped.

Cla. How shocking!

Major T. Not so shocking, as that he received mine, and with some effect. My dear girl, what's the matter?

Sharp. Don't be frightened, miss; my master isn't killed, upon my honour.

Cla. I tremble for the Colonel's danger; that is, I mean, for yours. Should any thing serious occur to Clifford—I mean to—to you—I should be most wretched.

Major T. I see, I see. In one word, you love the Colonel. Well, you shall be a peace-maker, and heal the breach between us. But I wanted an excuse to come and see my sweet cousin Sophy, and gave the duel as an ostensible reason, to keep that shallow fellow, Mordaunt, whom I pretended to put in my confidence, from suspecting me.

Cla. But how could you be so cruel as to fight such a man as the Colonel?

Major T. How could you be so cruel as to wound him in the heart, when I have only gently touched him on the shoulder.

Sharp. And a very awkward place to be touched on, too.

Cla. Well, you need not fear Mordaunt; for Sophy is going immediately to be married to—

Major T. The devil!

Sharp. Rather a bad match, I should think.

Cla. And my uncle is gone to put matters in train for the wedding.

Major T. Is she at home?

Cla. Oh! yes; she, and I, and the old house-keeper, make up the whole of the family.

Sharp. I hope our arrival will be a pleasant little addition to it.

Major T. I think, by candle-light, and an affected cold, and assuming something of my uncle's manner, I can pass on some of the family. But who is it my uncle intends for Sophy?

Cla. Your Colonel—Colonel Clifford.

Major T. Clifford! intended by my uncle to marry Sophy, my cousin?

Cla. And privately betrothed to me, Clarissa, your sister.

Major T. What's to be done?

Sharp. (Comes forward.) If I might presume to offer a word of advice—

Major T. Let's have it, Sharp.

Sharp. Let miss Clarissa go and inform the old lady that her uncle has returned without bringing the Colonel.

Cla. But why without him?

Sharp. Oh! make any common excuse; say he's killed in the duel.

Cla. Oh! no; not killed.

Sharp. Wounded, then, if you please, by a certain rattling good-for-nothing Major!

Major T. Puppy!

Sharp. Oh, fie, sir! I didn't say so. In the meantime, I will pretend to arrive, covered with dust, with a letter from you, which you needn't take the trouble to write, proposing for your cousin: to this, after some difficulty, you, as your uncle, reluctantly consent, and order the governess to prepare every thing for the nuptials. In the meantime, I'll bring an order from his Majesty, signed by myself, which obliges you, as your uncle, to repair to head-quarters.—You set out: leave your wig and square-cut accoutrements at the end of the first stage; return in your own hair and regimentals, in the character of yourself; carry off your cousin, on the supposed authority of your uncle; while he remains with Colonel Clifford, recovered of his wounds, and only to be recompensed for his lost, rich bride, by a love-match with your sister.

Cla. If I were sure it would end so.

Major T. But what will my uncle say, when he does return?

Sharp. He'll give the word to charge, fire, and cut every body to pieces; he'll be in a most tremendous rage. You'll beg his pardon very pathetically, promise him half-a-score grandchildren, as like him as yourself; and he'll know you're too much of a gentleman not to keep your word.

Cla. The closing evening, aided by the two gloomy sisters, will assist your passing on our governess for the Colonel.

Sharp. And suppose, sir, you were to have a terrible touch of the toothache; which will be an excuse for concealing your face, and disguising your voice; and to blind the old housekeeper still further, say you'll send to Mr. Snaggs, the dentist of the village, to have it out.

Major T. Good. So now, Sharp, go and write my letter to my uncle, and my sister shall apprise you when to appear and deliver it.

Sharp. I fly, sir; and I foresee the happy end of this spirited undertaking: you will marry your cousin, the Colonel will marry your sister, and all parties will join to reward the active and ingenious man who conceived, described, and executed the brilliant plan of filling your arms, and his own pockets, with what we have each the most sincere desire for.—I fly, sir! [Exit through the glass door.]

Mrs. P. (Without.) Where is Clarissa?

Cla. Here comes our governant. Take an opportunity of sending me away, that I may communicate our plans to Sophia.

Major T. I begin to feel a little awkward. Are you nervous?

Cla. No.

Major T. If I had but your coolness.

Cla. And I your impudence. But hush! remember my uncle is the most passionate, impatient, unreasonable, good-natured man in Christendom.

Enter MRS. PRUDENCE.

Mrs. P. Miss Clarissa, I have been looking for you all over the house. What's that? a man! Nay, stand away Miss, till I know by what right that person is in the house of Colonel Touchwood.

Cla. A very common right, madam; that of a gentleman taking possession of his own house. Have you forgot my uncle?

Major T. Oh—h—h!—Clary, my dear—thunder and fire! why don't you go and fetch the laudanum, and be—(Disguising his voice with affected impetuosity, and holding a handkerchief to his face.)

Cla. That's right, swear a little.

Major T. Do as I bid you.—Oh, this horrible tooth-ache!—Fly, and—Oh—h! send my daughter Sophy to me—march! [Exit Clarissa.]

Mrs. P. Dear sir, what's the cause of your sudden arrival, and your coming so unattended and unexpectedly? and where's the Colonel, who was to have married Miss Sophia?

Major T. Oh—h—h! (*Groans ferociously*) this infernal face-ache!—My arrival is what I did not expect myself; and the Colonel could not make it convenient to come, because he's killed in a duel.

Mrs. P. Killed in a duel!—I shouldn't wonder but your reprobate nephew, the Major, has done it.

Major T. Oh—h—h!—I don't think so ill of the Major as you do.

Mrs. P. But how did you come, sir?

Major T. In one of your—oh—h—h! gunpowder and perdition! send for Mr. What's-his-name, the dentist; I'll have it out.

Mrs. P. Patience, sir, patience. (*Rings.*)

Enter HARRY.

Harry, do you go directly to Mr. Snaggs, the dentist, in the village, and bid him come back with you, to cure a gentleman who has a violent pain in his face. [*Exit Harry.*] It's a sad cold you've got, by coming in the diligence, sir.

Major T. Well, but how's Sophia?

Mrs. P. As usual, whining, and pining, and moping, and sighing for that wicked man, your nephew, your honour.

Major T. Delightful! (*Aside.*)

Mrs. P. She's nineteen years old; and before you thought of a husband for her, it's odds, but she had made choice of one for herself.

Major T. And if she have—oh—h—h! by the powers! (*With delighted warmth.*)

Mrs. P. Nay, do not be angry till you're certain. See! here she comes.

Enter SOPHIA.

Soph. Yes, 'tis he!

Mrs. P. Miss Sophia, don't you feel delighted at your father's unforeseen arrival?

Major T. My dear Sophy, come to your—oh—h!

Soph. I have heard, sir, that the Colonel is—

Major T. Yes, he is, indeed; that is—my dear Sophy, tell me, frankly, did you love the Colonel?

Soph. No.

Mrs. P. And you did love—

Soph. Yes.

Major T. Who?

Soph. A very impudent young man.

Mrs. P. It's that rogue, the Major.

Major T. Ay, that rogue the Major. Is he not a

Soph. Yes, sir. [*rogue?*]

Major T. Still you love him?

Soph. He has the vanity to think so.

Mrs. P. Yes; and if he knew all—It was but the other day in your dressing room, you said—

Major T. What?

Mrs. P. Nay, you need not fear, miss; before I'd betray you, I'd out my tongue out.

Major T. You are prudence personified.

Soph. And you are impudence itself. (*Aside.*)

Enter CLARISSA.

Cl. My dear sir, here is the Major's valet-de-chambre, with a letter, which he wishes to deliver into your own hands. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter SHARP, who delivers the letter.

Mrs. P. You're a very impudent young man. Could not you have staid without?

Sharp. No, ma'am, I never do when I can get in. That letter is of the last consequence. The Major would never forgive me for not bringing it, nor himself, if he were not to read it. My poor master, the Major, madam, on hearing that Miss Sophia was to be married, went stark staring wild.

Major T. Young man, repose yourself; this letter requires a second inspection.

Sharp. So do the larder and wine cellar.

Major T. I must have time to digest its contents.

Sharp. And I, to digest the contents of the butler's pantry. [*Exit.*]

Soph. May I inquire what news your letter brings, papa?

Mrs. P. Fie, miss! how often have I told you, there's nothing so ill-bred as idle curiosity.

Major T. You've lost one lover, Sophy, and it would be a pity to lose another: in short, I'm afraid you must marry the Major.

Mrs. P. Indeed!

Major T. I'm sorry, though, very sorry—

Soph. Sorry, sir; why?

Major T. That this letter encloses an order for me to join my regiment.

Mrs. P. That's hard.

Major T. So, when the Major comes, receive him as my nephew, and your future husband.

Mrs. P. If you must go away so soon again, you had better take this money. It was left with me by your tenant, Mr. Punctual, in the absence of the steward.

Major T. No, I can't do that; keep it for my uncle.

Mrs. P. What?

Major T. Keep it till my return. [*debt.*]

Mrs. P. Perhaps you mean to pay the Major's

Major T. I'll pay the Major's debts the moment I am able.

Mrs. P. Well, since you wish the Major to marry your daughter, you cannot do better than send the money to the Jew money-lender he is so much in

Major T. Send it where you will. [*debt to.*]

Mrs. P. Who waits there?

Enter ROBERT, JOHN, HARRY, THOMAS, and WILLIAM.

His honour desires you'll go with this money to Moses Abrams, the Jew money-lender, and bring a receipt in the name of Major Touchwood.

[*Exit Robert.*]

Major T. And do you go to old Grub, the Christian money-lender, and say if he'll take one-third of the Major's debts to pay the whole, I shall be very much obliged to him. [*Exit John.*]

Mrs. P. Bless us, one-third!

Major T. It's all that's justly due, I assure you. And now, Sophia, do you receive the Major, with kindness; and do you, Mrs. Prudence, order every thing proper for the wedding.

Mrs. P. That I will, your honour. Go you to Mrs. Tiffany, the milliner; [*Exit Harry*] and go you to Mr. Brief, the lawyer, and bid him come and take instructions for the marriage articles. [*Exit Thomas.*] Am I not right, Colonel?

Major T. (*Who has been talking apart with Sophy.*) Perfectly right—and harkye, sir, order me post-horses at twelve o'clock exactly. Fly! [*Exit William.*]

Mrs. P. How surprised your nephew will be when he arrives and finds his debts paid!

Major T. He will, he will; he will be almost as much astonished as his creditors.

Re-enter CLARISSA, in haste.

Cl. Run, fly, escape, my dear brother! Our uncle is this moment arrived. (*Apart to Major Touchwood, who goes hastily off, followed by Sophy.*)

Mrs. P. Where's your hurry, Colonel?

Cl. My dear madam, only do come and look at some of the most beautiful wedding-caps—

Mrs. P. Oh! had you seen the wedding-caps worn in my younger days!

Cl. Fiddle of your younger days! Come and look at *La Belle Assemblée* of the most beautiful—

Enter COLONEL TOUCHWOOD, in the exact dress, &c. of Major Touchwood.

Col. T. Gunpowder and mortars! if ever I met with any thing like this! Where's my daughter? where's my niece? Oh! Clarissa, my love, what is the reason that—

Cl. I hope your face is better, sir! [*Exit.*]

Col. T. Face! why, what the devil—Clarissa, I say—Oh! here's old Prudence. What the devil—

Mrs. P. Bless me! I thought your honour was there. (*Points to the side where the Major went out.*) Your commands shall be obeyed; we're going to the milliner's. [*Exit.*]

Col. T. Why, I have served five-and-thirty years; have roared at reviews, fired away in battles, melted in marches on the longest summer days, been frozen in the trenches on the coldest winter nights, and thawed by red-hot shot in the morning; but may my next charge burst the barrel of my best fusée, and my sharpest flint fail me, if ever I met such a reception as this! "How d'ye do, Mrs. Prudence?" "I'm just going away to the milliner's." I wrote word I should not come for six weeks, and foolishly supposed that my unexpected appearance would make 'em all wild with joy; and instead of that, one tells me he's going to obey my commands, another asks me how my face does, and a third tells me she's going away to the milliner's.

Enter THOMAS.

Now, sir, where the devil are you going?

Tho. Lawyer Brief, sir. [*Exit.*]

Col. T. The devil fly away with lawyer Brief. I hate the whole corps.

Enter BRIEF.

What's the nature of your expedition here? Why did you heat a march into my quarters at this unreasonable hour? D'ye come to spring a mine upon me?

Brief. Nay, sir, if you choose to summon me at this late hour.

Col. T. I summon you?

Brief. If necessary, sir, I'll take my oath that I was enjoying a short vacation after the labours of the day; had got my head in a nightcap, my foot on a comfortable, my eye on a bill of costs, and my forefinger on a passage in the statute-book, 12 Geo. III. cap. 51; which says—

Col. T. Cap. 51!—d—e, I'm—Harkye! sir, put your head into your hat, your left foot on the threshold, and your right eye on the road home, you corporal in the devil's own, or, d—e, but I'll send you to join Coke, Lyttleton, and all the awkward squad of blundering big-wigs that ever went before 'em.—Troop! [*Exit Brief.*]

Enter WILLIAM.

Well, sir, what do you want?

Will. Your post-horses will be ready in half an hour, sir. [*Exit.*]

Col. T. Post-horses! what does the fellow mean by post-horses? Am I to be turned out of my house the moment I arrive.

Enter ROBERT.

Rob. Moses Abrams is gone to bed, sir; but says you may depend on his giving you a receipt in full in the morning.

Col. T. I'll give you a receipt in full this evening, you rascal, if you don't get out of my sight. [*Exit Robert.*] What next, I wonder? I've discovered some more of my nephew's tricks; he has been borrowing money of old Grub; but I'll stop that business in future; I'll send and make old Grub come to me directly.

Enter JOHN.

John. Mr. Grub's compliments, sir, and he says he'll see you d—d first. [*Exit.*]

Col. T. See me d—d first! Powder and palisadoes! what does all this mean? My nephew has been thwarting me in my views about my daughter, and trying to shoot the husband I intend for her; but I'll settle his affairs the moment I see him. If he circumvent my plans, I shall run distracted.

Enter HARRY.

Harry. Run distracted! That be all along wi' his

poor tooth-ache. (*Aside.*) Don't run distracted, sir, for be he come.

Col. T. Come, is he? Shew him in. I'll keep nothing on my mind. I'll have it out directly.

Harry. He says, sir, it will give you a mortal deal of pain.

Col. T. Give me a mortal deal of pain!

Harry. Yes; and he knows your worship will roar like an old buffalo.

Col. T. Me roar like an old buffalo!

Harry. Yes; but he bid me not tell your worship, for fear you should change your mind, and not have it out.

Col. T. But I will have it out; and not one sixpence shall he get of me, were I to die to-morrow.

Harry. I hope, sir, there be no fear of that; but he won't do it for nothing; for he says he's sure it be deeply rooted, and he feared he mus ha' two or three tugs at you.

Col. T. Two or three tugs at me?

Harry. Yes; but he will do the job, though he crack your old jaw-bone.

Col. T. He crack my old jaw-bone! D—e, I'll crack his. Shew him in.

Harry. Yes, sir: he's only getting some warm water from the housekeeper.

Col. T. Warm water!

Harry. Yes; and some brandy to wash your honour's mouth, when it be all over.

Enter SNAGGS, with a basin, a glass of brandy, and a case of instruments.

Snaggs. If you're afraid, take a little drop; it be disagreeable at first; but there's no cure like it, so let's hav'n out; only sit you down, and if ever he give you the least bit of trouble again, why blame

Col. T. What? [*me, that's all.*]

Snaggs. Sit down, sir, and Harry shall hold your poor head.

Col. T. Who the devil are you? What do you come for?

Snaggs. I come for three and sixpence at your own house, or if your honour come to me, you may have all pulled right out at a shilling a head.

Col. T. What d'ye mean, scoundrel!

Snaggs. I don't mean to be a scoundrel. I be Mr. Snaggs, dentist, 'prentice and predecessor to old Tug; and if you will but sit down quietly, I'll draw every tooth in your head, with all the pleasure in life.

Col. T. You will, will you? Get out of my house, you d—d impudent—And you, too, rascal! (*To Harry.*) I'll teach you to play tricks. (*Colonel Touchwood forces Snaggs into the chair, who struggles, and at length gets away.*) And now if old devildom doesn't explain all this, I'll send her packing after the rest of the ragamuffins; I shall find who's to blame, I warrant; and when I do—Harkye! sir, go you to my neighbour Strongthong, the saddler, and bid him send me the best horsewhip he has in the house; and then woe be to the fellow that has earned a right to hangel it. Draw my teeth! d—e, if I don't have the fellow drawn through a horse-pod. [*Exit, driving off Harry.*]

ACT II.—SCENE I.—Another Apartment.

Enter MAJOR TOUCHWOOD and CLARISSA.

Cla. My dear brother, do hide somewhere till my uncle be gone to bed; for if you should meet, gunpowder would be nothing to the explosion we might look for.

Major T. Well, then, I will: but stay, here comes that fool Mordaunt, he may perhaps advise me.

Cla. It's the part of a wise man, to be sure, to ask advice of a fool.—Now, pray, hide in that closet.

Enter MORDAUNT.

Mor. Ah! well; what here you are yet? Ah! ah! my dear Miss Clarissa, my friend here looks so like your uncle, that—

Cla. Like him! why 'tis him.

Mor. O no! I'm in the secret; but I won't blab.
Major T. Mordaunt, if you do betray me, I'll cut your throat.

Mor. The devil you will. These are hard words, d—d hard words, indeed. (*Clarissa beckons the Major to go into the closet, and leads Mordaunt forward.*)

Cla. You silly man, don't you know that he is only in joke. (*Major Touchwood shuts himself in the closet.*)

Enter COLONEL TOUCHWOOD, who takes the exact place where the Major stood.

Col. T. Here are two more devil's imps, hatching mischief, I dare say. (*Aside.*)

Mor. I tell you I won't put up with it. He said he'd cut my throat.

Col. T. Who did?

Mor. You did.

Col. T. May I be rammed into a mortar, and blown out of the touch-hole, if ever I said any such thing.

Mor. You did. You needn't disguise your voice, nor yourself either, any longer; your Colonel's not dead.

Col. T. My Colonel! what Colonel? and how d'ye mean disguised?

Mor. Disguised! why, I thought a little while ago you looked him very well, but on re-consideration, you've rather overdone it.

Col. T. Overdone what?

Mor. You've stuffed yourself out, and screwed up your nose too much. Colonel Touchwood is ugly enough of all conscience, but he's not such a d—d scarecrow as you've made him, neither.

Col. T. Clary, my dear, what is that gentleman's name? I think it's Mordaunt, isn't it?

Cla. Mr. William Mordaunt.

Mor. Esquire, at your service.

Col. T. Then Mr. William Mordaunt, Esquire, at my service, if you don't instantly get out of my house, may a twenty-four pounder crumble me to atoms, if I don't make crow's meat of you.

Mor. Ah! that's rather better; the Colonel is a ferocious beast.

Col. T. I a ferocious beast?

Mor. But I think still it's overacted; so keep quiet, and hold your tongue, or curse me, if I don't go and tell your uncle every syllable I know, immediately. [*Exit; Colonel runs after him, but is stopped by Clarissa.*]

Cla. Don't now, pray, my dear sir; he isn't worth your notice; he's such a fool, you know. Ha, ha, ha!

Col. T. A fool! D—! there's an epidemic disorder in the house; they've all got it one after another. Here comes your governess; we shall see whether she's touched or no.

Enter MRS. PRUDENCE.

Prudence, my good soul, come hither. Are you aware what quarter the moon is in? Can you guess what tarantula has been biting my household?

Mrs. P. Ah! that plaguy toothache has driven you out of your senses; but it was just the same with an old uncle of mine by the mother's side—

Col. T. The devil fly away with your old uncle.

Mrs. P. Colonel Touchwood, you horrify me! your ill-breeding is beyond bearing, and I'll thank you to provide yourself with a less polished and susceptible housekeeper, who can condescend to put up with your unmannerly tantrums. [*Exit.*]

Col. T. Get out of the house, you old devil, go!

Cla. Dear uncle, the more questions you ask, it seems the more you get bewildered. It must be some joke; leave it to me, and I'll sift it to the bottom directly. [*Exit.*]

Col. T. No, no! I'll go and — (*Sharp sings within.*) Oh! here comes more of it; by the lord, I think it gets very comical.

Enter SHARP, tipsy.

Sharp. Tol, lol, de rol! Egad, this house would

make an excellent inn; such a jarder, such big beer, small chickens, old wine, and young chambermaids.—Ah! there's my master! he told me to make free, and he little thinks how well I've obeyed his orders. Ah! sir, all goes on well; we've done the old one, I dare say, eh! haven't we, sir?— (*Making signs to the Colonel.*)

Col. T. Why, this rascal is my nephew's man! I shall now find out the reason of all this mystery.

Sharp. The play proceeds I hope to your satisfaction. Whereabouts are we? How far have we got?

Col. T. To where a drunken impertinent puppy of a servant deserves a horse-whipping.

Sharp. Bravo, sir! that is so like that comical dog, the Colonel.

Col. T. How drunk he is! but I'll humour him, and now I shall find all out.

Sharp. To-morrow you'll make your appearance as the lover. Ha, ha, ha!

Col. T. What the devil are you laughing at?

Sharp. To think how wise your worthy uncle will look, when he finds you married to his daughter.

Col. T. Oh! very wise.

Sharp. And when you touch the fortune, don't forget that I advised all this plan. Then such a fine fortune, and fine girl for a wife! I see it delights you. Ah! how wicked you do look.

Col. T. Do I?

Sharp. The Colonel to a hair! Only mention a pretty girl, and he's touched directly; he never hears a pretty girl mentioned, but he's all over—

Col. T. So I am. I am—you most abominable powder-monkey.

Sharp. You are! I know what you mean. You're a chip of the old block. Well, you'll whisk the lady to Gretna-green: put up at the best inn in the place; order the best supper; the blacksmith will be parson, I'll be clerk, witness, and bell-ringer; and, besides that, I'll dance at the wedding.

Col. T. You mean to dance?

Sharp. To be sure.

Col. T. You know how, I suppose?

Sharp. Yes, I think I do.

Col. T. Because if you'll only stop here two minutes, I think I can teach you a new step. I'll just fetch the horsewhip I sent Harry for. (*Aside.*) And, harkye, sirrah! do you know me?

Sharp. (*Gradually approaches the Colonel till he discovers him.*) Why, I think I ought, sir: I think I could tell that face through any disguise. That frown so like your uncle's; that—Eh! Why, bless me, it isn't you, as I hope to live! it's your uncle; and if he come to know it, there's an end of everything in the shape of success, for ever and ever.

Col. T. You drunken ragamuffin! you waste-but! drainer of bottles, glasses, and pewter-measures! Stand steady, you villain! stand steady, as you hope to be forgiven! Don't dare to quit this spot a moment till my return, and then I'll—Only have a moment's patience, and you shall receive a substantial reward for all your services to my nephew, and the favours you intended to bestow on me. I'll just fetch something to make you remember me. [*Exit.*]

Sharp. A reward, shall I? I'm done up! This comes of getting drunk. No, it doesn't; it comes of getting sober; for if I had but have staid, and taken another glass, it would never have happened. I'd better make it up with the old gentleman, though, if it be only to get another opportunity of playing him a trick. (*Major Touchwood, during the above, comes from the closet, down on the same side of Sharp as that on which the Colonel stood. Sharp, on turning, perceives him.*) Bless me! he's soon come back. (*Aside.*)—My dear, good sir! (*falls on his knees*) only forgive me, and I'll tell you all.

Major T. All what? I think you've played your part famously.

Sharp. Indeed! Why, is it possible? am I talking to you, sir? (*Riess.*)

Major T. Why, who else do you suppose me?

Sharp. Lord! sir, I'm so glad: I must have been in a dream. Well, it's no wonder, after taking the uncle for the nephew, that I should mistake the nephew for the uncle. He's arrived, sir.

Major T. I know it.

Sharp. Ha, ha, ha! why I thought it was you; and on this very spot, my heart o'erflowing with wine, and willingness to do you service, I'm afraid I said more than sober discretion (*hiccups*) will justify.

Major T. I heard you, booby; and thought your drunkenness counterfeited. [*nour's plot.*]

Sharp. Yes; I, unfortunately, let out your ho—
Major T. And unless you find means to let out my honour's self, I'll break every bone in your drunken body.

Sharp. This way the door is. Hush! who have we here? Button your wig, sir, and pull your coat over your face. Oh, lord! it's a dead man, as I'm alive! He's coming up the walk.

Major T. By heavens! 'tis my rival Clifford, recovered of his wounds, and come to take my Sophia! That he never shall. Where are you going, sirrah?

Sharp. I am going to the butler's pantry; I want something to keep out the cold.—A thought strikes me, sir: Colonel Clifford must have some carriage, or chaise, or horses; and what brought him, may help to take us back. (*Colonel Touchwood speaks without.*) Bless us, there's the old gentleman again!

Major T. And Clifford is joined by three strange looking men. They approach; stand aside.—Sharp, we had better reconnoitre. (*They enter the closet.*)

Enter COLONEL CLIFFORD, with two Bow-street Officers and a Postboy.

Col. C. Observe, you are to treat the young gentleman with all due respect: only get him into the chaise, and take him to town with all possible expedition. He'll not deny his being the person who killed me; or, if he should—

1 Off. We'll swear it.

Post. And I can swear to him and his servant, too, your honour, for all his wig.

2 Off. But your honour don't mean to hang the young gentleman?

Col. C. 'Tis only a frolic, I tell you. He left me, as he thought, dangerously wounded; and came down here disguised as his uncle, (who is away,) to carry off a lady we both wish to marry. I pretended to be worse than I was, that he might not expect me to follow him. All fair in love, you know.

1 Off. Oh! yes, all fair in love. (*Gruffly.*)

Col. C. You must say I'm dead. He'll go quietly with you. When I'm married, all will be made up; or, if not, and we should meet again—

2 Off. Perhaps we may have the pleasure of taking your honour in custody for killing him; we know that you gentlemen are always obliged to do the genteel thing by one another.

Col. C. He's coming yonder; I mustn't be seen, because I'm dead, you know: I'll step in here. (*Goes to the closet, which Sharp, after having listened, shuts at his approach.*) The door is fastened; and I must hide in the garden. Remember, that he'll insist on it, that he is his own uncle. [*Exit.*]

1 Off. He mustn't expect us to believe that, though, is this he? (*Looks out.*)

Post. This is he as I brought down, I'll swear it; here only wants his man to make all sure. [*They retire.*]

Re-enter COLONEL TOUCHWOOD, with a whip in his hand; goes forward cautiously to where he expects to find Sharp, who opens the door, and is seen at intervals during the following.

Col. T. Eh! Oh! the rascal's gone. I know now

what has bewitched the family; the rogues have played their last trick. (*Officers and Post-boy come forward, and surround him.*)

1 Off. So have you, sir; you must go with us.

Col. T. Go with you? why?

2 Off. Because your name's Touchwood.

Col. T. Rather an odd reason, why an honest gentleman should go with one that looks so much like a rogue.

1 Off. Civil words, if you please, sir.

Col. T. Civil words! Hear me, you vagabonds! before I raise the house, and get you all decently lodged in the coolest corner of my deepest horsepond; tell me the meaning of this daring insolence?

2 Off. You left your regiment without permission.

Col. T. Permission! D—e, I'm commanding officer.

1 Off. Killed a very honest gentleman in a duel.

Col. T. They mean that thief, my nephew. (*Aside.*)

2 Off. Came down here in that ugly wig, to pass for your honoured uncle. [*villain?*]

Col. T. What do you mean by an ugly wig, you Post. And gave me but five shillings for the last stage, though I drove like a devil.

Sharp. Now, then, it's my cue. (*Comes forward.*) Why, you little lying son of a—I beg ten thousand pardons, sir; but I gave him a dollar and eighteenpence, because you ordered me to be liberal, and travel with a silver spur.

Col. T. You did! Oh! I remember, I promised you something, and bade you stay here till I fetched it. Harry has not brought the horsewhip yet. (*Aside.*)

Sharp. To be sure you did, sir. And what would these worthy gentlemen have?

Col. T. Have! they have the impudence to say that I am my own nephew.

Sharp. And I dare say they'll have the impudence to say I am your own man.

Post. To be sure you are; and your master and you laughed all the way, and said how you should trick the old one.

Sharp. So we did, sure enough! Ha, ha, ha!

Col. T. Fire and furies!

Sharp. Nay, sir, you know I cautioned you on the road about talking so loud: the man overheard all, you find; and as our project's ruined, we may as well own it at once.

1 Off. Ay, ay, it's plain enough; the chaise waits; bring him along.

Col. T. Murder! fire! thieves?—(*The two Officers hold him; Sharp stops his mouth.*)

Sharp. (*During the above*) Hush, sir, for heaven's sake! you'll raise the house. Your uncle is arrived, and (*Beckons Major Touchwood, who appears from the closet-door.*) I declare here he is!—

(*Major Touchwood marches from the closet, boldly flourishing his cane, and takes an attitude opposite Colonel Touchwood, who is scarcely withheld by the Officers and Postboy from flying at his Nephew.*)

Col. T. Let me come at him!

Major T. Poor young man! Don't let him go.—(*In an assumed gruff voice.*)

Sharp. Would you hurt your honoured uncle?

Col. T. Fire! thieves! murder!

1 Off. What an undutiful nephew! Nothing but his youth can excuse it. Oh! then, you know, if that's the case,— [*They force him off.*]

Major T. Don't hurt the young gentleman. And now to be even with my friend Clifford, for his intended favour.

Enter HARRY, with a new horsewhip.

Harry. I have brought the horsewhip you ordered, sir; and Mr. Strongthorn says, he wouldn't be the man that affronts your honour, while you've that in your hand, not for all the world.

Major T. The horsewhip that I ordered?

Harry. Yes, sir; you know you sent me in a great hurry to—

Major T. Oh! ay; true, I remember, and a pretty time you've been gone.—(*Cracks the whip.*)

Harry. Why, I'm sure I ran.

Major T. I'll make you run. [*Cracks his whip; Harry runs off.*] Ha, ha, ha! They'll be sure to take me for my uncle if I knock 'em about a bit. Egad! I don't know whether it would not be as well to horsewhip 'em all round.—(*Goes up cracking the whip; and strikes COLONEL CLIFFORD as he enters.*)—I beg your pardon, sir, I didn't intend that favour for you. [ception!]

Col. C. No, nor did I expect it. A pretty re-

Major T. Any commands with me, sir!—(*In a short, military tone.*)

Col. C. Don't you know your friend Clifford, sir? You have already been informed by letter, that I think your daughter Sophia a most delightful young lady, and would feel happy in the honour of your alliance.

Major T. To the right about, Colonel.—Sophia is engaged.

Col. C. To whom, sir?

Major T. To a very worthy young man, one Major Touchwood.

Col. C. Your nephew sir?

Major T. Who is, I understand, under some extraordinary obligations to you.

Col. C. In that respect, I think we are pretty even. He quarrelled with me for mere similarity of taste; would have shot me through the head, and did through the shoulder; but conceiving his better fortune in the field entitled him to the hand of the lady, I have followed him down here, and by a fair *ruse d'amour* sent him off to London, in the same chaise which brought him here.

Major T. No, have you?

Col. C. Yes, I have. I thought you'd like it. He began the scheme; but, what a fool is that man who baits a trap for another, and falls into it himself!

Major T. So you have sent him off?

Col. C. I have, I tell you.

Major T. Not you indeed, sir.

Col. C. Nay, sir, you may inquire,

Major T. I shall not inquire, sir; being perfectly convinced there is not a syllable of truth in any one title of what you have advanced.

Col. C. Would to heaven you could do me one favour!

Major T. Name it. [pearance.

Col. C. Divest yourself of that venerable ap-

Major T. Any thing to oblige you, [*Pulls off his wig.*] I owe you a kindness for getting the old gentleman out of the way, and leaving a clear field for your luckier rival.

Col. C. Major Touchwood! Astonishment! Was it indeed your uncle, then, who—

Major T. It was, it was! You'll forgive my mirth, Colonel Clifford, but—ha, ha, ha! What a fool is that man who baits a trap for another, and has the good luck to fall into it himself.

Col. C. A fool indeed! To your uncle I shall apologize: for you, sir—defend yourself. (*Draws.*)

Major T. Oh, dear sir, with all my heart. (*They fight.*)

Re-enter CLARISSA, with SOPHIA, who interpose.

Sophia runs to Major Touchwood, Clarissa to Colonel Clifford, who are on opposite sides.

Soph. My dear, dear Major, for heaven's sake—

Cla. My dear Clifford, would you, a second time, raise your arm against the brother of her you profess to love?

Col. C. Your brother! my dear Sophia?

Major T. Can my sister be the girl he calls Sophia? Colonel Clifford, I begin to see cause to apologize. In speaking of your Sophia, you meant—

Col. C. This lady, sir.

Soph. When we first saw that gentleman at

Brighton, by an accident in conversation, he mistook our Christian names—

Cla. We thoughtlessly humoured the mistake; the Colonel proposed, by letter, to my uncle, for Sophia instead of me.

Major T. And hence arose our first quarrel. You see, ladies, what mischief you have caused.

Col. C. (*Without.*) Where are they? I'll teach the mutineers to—

Cla. Oh, heavens! Let's get out of his way.

Major T. No; stay, stay. Having cleared up our own differences, we must accommodate matters with my uncle.

Col. C. But how?

Major T. I must pretend to quarrel with you; he who can't bear to see anybody in a passion but himself, will forgive your tricks out of opposition to me: then for my share in the plot, we have only to—but he comes, follow my example.—(*Colonel Clifford and Major Touchwood pretend to fight. The Women scream.*)

Re-enter COLONEL TOUCHWOOD, driving SHARP on before him, and followed by MORDAUNT. He runs between the pretended combatants, picks up his wig, and throws it at one, while he knocks down the sword of the other with his cane. Mordaunt runs to the young Ladies.

Col. T. Hear me, ye demons of discord! or I'll finish your work by setting fire to the house. What's the meaning of this? I came home from a wildgoose-chase of one Colonel—rot his name,—who proposes for my daughter and breaks his appointment; I find my family all run raving mad; coolly ask the reason, when I am popped into a post-chaise by two police puppies; have the great good luck to get overturned into one of my own ditches; escape with whole bones to find my house full of fighting cockcombs, screaming women, and impudent valets, who perhaps will hardly condescend to answer my question, when I civilly inquire, what the devil do you all mean to do next?

Col. C. Your nephew, the Major, sir, will perhaps explain.

Major T. Your friend, sir, there, the Colonel—Colonel Rot-his-name, I think you just called him, was the person by whose orders you were so disgracefully crammed into that infernal postchaise; in addition to which, he refuses to marry your daughter Sophia. I, respecting your honour as my own, drew my sword in vindication of your rights.

Col. T. And pray, sirs, how dare you vindicate my honour without my permission?

Major T. Sir, while I have the honour to wear this coat—

Col. T. And how came you by that coat, sir? Where was your honour when you made free with my property?

Major T. In short, sir, while the Colonel proposed for your daughter, he paid his addresses to my sister, so that if you choose to be so easily satisfied, I am not.

Col. C. Hold, sir! the ladies' fortunes are equal; give me Clarissa, and her dowry may go with your daughter to my friend, the Major.

Col. T. So, I'm to treat Clary ill because her lover and her brother are a couple of hot-headed fools. I've a great mind to call ye both out. But I find ye all to be such a set of madmen and madcaps, that I shall bind ye over to keep the peace; yourselves in two wedding-rings, your wives in proper marriage securities, and—

Soph. What next, papa?

Col. T. Why, your children to be sure, hussy! And if any friends here, yet untired of the tricks we have played to-night, should, with a view to-morrow, condescend to ask "What's Next?" we respectfully beg leave to answer, by repeating the question. [*Exeunt.*]

THE PURSE;

OR, THE BENEVOLENT TAR:

A MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT, IN ONE ACT.—BY J. C. CROSS.



Scene 5.

CHARACTERS.

THE BARON
WILL STEADY

THEODORE
EDMUND

PAGE
SALLY

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Baron's Castle.*

THEODORE discovered.

Theodore. Cursed infatuation! Madness! to risk so vast a sum, and not my own, too! Gaming will work my ruin. The Baron's partiality must decrease, when he discovers the embezzlement! Against his return must my accounts be truly stated. What's to be done? How to look him in the face, I know not.—[*Enter a Servant.*]

Servant. The Baron's just arrived, and brought with him his niece Louisa.

Theodore. Arrived! then I'm undone. (*Aside.*) Was everything prepared for his reception?

Servant. Yes, everything.

Theodore. But I am not.—Distraction! (*Aside.*)

Servant. His first inquiry was for you; it seems he wishes much to—but he's here. (*Looking out.*)

Theodore. He'll certainly discover my agitation!—Deceit—hypocrisy! now smooth these tell-tale features!—[*Enter the Baron and Page.*]

Baron. What, boy, thou'rt quite fatigued.

Page. Yes, my good lord, as tired as anything. Pray a'n't you a little?

Baron. No, child; my robusster limbs are more inured to travel. But attend Louisa, know her wishes, and then thou may'st have rest.

Page. Thank you, my lord.

Servant (*To Page*). Here's a letter for you: it has been waiting your return these three days.

Page. From my dear, dear mother! (*Kisses it.*) But I must run and wait upon my lady before I can spare time to read it over. [*Exit with Serv.*]

Baron. Theodore!

Theodore. My lord!

Baron. From early infancy, as far as nature warranted, I've acted as a father to you; and since the unhappy absence of my son, you, in a measure, have supplied his loss, and found a fond father in me: e'en this very castle has been little less subject to your control than mine.

Theodore. I, my lord—What means he? (*Aside.*)

Baron. I have received convincing proofs of gratitude for this. Strict probity and rectitude have marked your conduct.

Theodore. Does he suspect me? I'm trembling on a precipice! (*Aside.*) My lord!

Baron. You seem confused. Worth ever shrinks from praise! Desert has often too much diffidence. But listen to me.

Theodore. Your goodness overpowers—I—

Baron. I know your heart; honour presides there; and merit, while I've power, shall never go unrewarded. 'Tis now some eight years since my son embarked from hence; since when, not the least intelligence concerning him has reached me; with many a bitter pang have I regretted him;—have fed on hope till my soul sickened with the flimsy diet; and now, must mourn him, swallowed by the merciless waves, or the victim of disease. I have long admired thy virtues; therefore, in preference to relatives, mean to adopt thee as my heir.

Theodore. Such unlooked-for generosity! My lord, my poor deserts—

Baron. Thou'rt rich in worth. No thanks; 'tis my firm determination:—nay, to convince you, the hand designed for my son (excuse a sigh for his loved memory!)—Louisa's fondness for my boy shall be transferred to thee. (*Going—returns.*) But hold. I requested your accounts might be all clear by my return: I doubt not that they are so. Thou seest my journey was to serve thee. When I've refreshed, we'll meet again. I'd have all clear, know the full value of my worldly goods, my trusty servants well provided for, and then—farewell, Theodore. Be punctual an hour hence. [*Exit.*]

Theodore. Punctual! Distraction!—torture!—Was ever so fair a prospect blasted in the bud! If I confess my crime—no hope, I fear, of pardon. Will not the shew of honesty, with which I've glossed my character, add the double guilt of du-

plicity to breach of trust? Did men but anticipate their mental torments in concealing it, no one would commence villain. My time is short. How to supply the deficiency! Friends I've none, save him I've injured. The ruined Duke of Sharpers, like the dying stag, is shunned by his own herd. I can't reflect, and desperation now must be my monitor! [Exit.]

SCENE II.—*A Wood, with a distant view of the castle.*

Enter EDMUND and WILL STEADY.

Will S. Yeo, oh! Your honour! here we are! within pistol shot of the port. Let me alone for a pilot; I'll steer you safe into the harbour of happiness, or may I never engage the esteem of a commander again.

Edmund. Thou hast it. Fidelity has linked thee to me by the bonds of friendship; our intimacy grew in the hour of misfortune, and prosperity shall never wither it. Have you fully learnt whether the Baron, my father, lives?

Will S. Lives! ay, to give me good cheer, and you a hearty welcome. No doubt but you'll hail your Louisa, too, ready to slip her cable on a matrimonial cruise, to reward you for all past perils.

Edmund. Perils, indeed! Little did I imagine, when I quitted England, my return would have been so cruelly retarded.

Will S. Nor I either; an eight years' voyage makes salt junk disrelishing, biscuits breed, and gives fresh water the scent of sour-crust.

Edmund. To be shipwrecked!—a captive!

Will S. Ay, down she went! Our messmates buried in a watery grave, left us puffing and swimming away like two Newfoundland whelps after a tar-barrel; to be taken up by a kind Castilian! Next morning, an Algerine hove in sight—

Edmund. And captivity was the consequence.

Will S. Ay, that was grievous! Cut me to the heart, d—e! A British sailor loves native freedom too well, ever willingly to let a foreigner interfere.

Edmund. True, William; and— [with it.]

Will S. Had but a few score of our countrymen been on board, she'd ne'er ha' yielded; for an Englishman never strikes his colours, while he's able to strike another stroke.

Edmund. But the Algerine force was superior.

Will S. What, then!—there's but little honour in dragging an equal! Gad! I shall never forget the day! they made a hot-bed of our main deck, our hammocks were all in a blaze; grape shot was poured in at our port-holes, and many a heart-battered fellow was carried to the cock-pit.

Edmund. Let us pursue our track. If my Louisa live, and be but true—

Will S. Ay, your honour, there's the charm on't. If my little Sal, my pretty pinnace, sail but in smooth water, my heart's timbers are as sound as ever; but if grief have shattered her bulk, or she be foundered in a hard squall of adversity, farewell to comfort; I'll hand the gold, good-luck has given me, to the first honest heart I meet, and away to sea again; for I can't enjoy comfort on shore, without Sal share it with me.

Edmund. How long have you been married?

Will S. Eight years and a handful of months. Dear girl! I left her just after we'd launched a pledge of our affection: we were poor, so I set sail in search of better fortune. I kissed her; my heart was too full to speak. Our infant stretched out its little arms, by way of good-bye. Sal shed an ocean of tears: I blabbered out—"Heavens bless ye!" and left her to the care of Providence and the wide world ever since.

Edmund. We both, William, entertain our hopes and fears. The life and constancy of Louisa, are my harbingers to happiness, while yours are the truth and existence of your Sally.

Will S. As for her truth, your honour, I should despise myself were I to doubt it. If she be gone to old Davy, I don't care how soon I follow her;

for, like the poor galley slave, who so oft raised our feelings to high-water mark, in captivity, I fear she died broken-hearted. [Exit.]

Edmund. Poor fellow! how much, at that period, his fate resembled ours! His melancholy ditty still vibrates on my ear!

AIR.—EDMUND.

Oh! think on my fate, once I freedom enjoy'd,

Was as happy as happy could be!—

But pleasure is fled; even hope is destroy'd;

A captive, alas! on the sea!

I was tu'en by the foe—'twas the fiat of fate

To tear me from her I adore!

When thought brings to mind my once happy state,

I sigh!—while I tug at the oar.

How fortune deceives! I had pleasure in town,

The port where she dwelt, we'd in view;

But the wish'd nuptial morn was o'erclouded with woe,

And, dear Anna! I was hurried from you!

Our shallop was boarded, and I borne away,

To behold my dear Anna no more!

But despair wastes my spirits, my form feels decay;

He sigh'd!—and expir'd at the oar! [Exit.]

SCENE III.—*A gothic Hall in the Baron's castle.*

Enter THEODORE, much agitated.

Theodore. Time strides with rapid step to the period that must discover me! So dreadful seems this summons to my trial, that I cannot even conjure up a phantom of defence! What, if I abandon the castle! My fortune is, then, for ever marred. Louisa, too! I must not lose her. Are there no means? [word.]

Page. (Without.) No. I can't, indeed, upon my

Theodore. Humph! the Page! He's a rival in the favours of my lord; and time may make him dangerous. He little dreams my arts drove hence his prudish mother, whom I will persecute till—

Enter Page.

Page. Ah! Theodore, you can't think how tired I be! We had not a single bait the whole way; I declare, now, if you'll believe me, my poor little nag is quite knocked up.

Theodore. I've often wished to ruin this pert boy. The means occur: an accusation strongly laid, 'tis hard for innocence to exculpate itself. [Aside.—Exit.]

Page. Humph! Mr. Gruff-cap, you're quite sulky to-day! 'Fegs! who cares? My poor mother told me he was no friend. Bless me! if I hadn't quite forgot her letter! How pleased I was when my lady gave me enough to send; though I never told her what it was for. (Reads the letter in dumb show, often kissing it.) Ah! now, mother, you're too kind; you always loved me, and gave me money, when you had it; and, sure, I ought to do the same. When I grow up, and am rich, I'll give you enough to buy a house of your own to live in; and, then, no surly fellow dare turn you out; and I hope that won't be long first, for I'm as big again as when I left home.

AIR.—PAGE.

When a little merry he,

My mother nurs'd me on her knee;

Smiles and kisses she gave, with joy,

And call'd me oft her darling boy.

School-boy's pranks, as big I grew,

I lik'd; but lik'd my lessons, too;

Frowns or whippings I seldom got,

And sometimes praises were my lot.

Soon my lord receiv'd me here,

Fine clothes he gave and dainty cheer;

Lords and ladies me much caress'd;

But still I love my mother best;

For when a little, &c.

I never do think of mother, but I wish myself with her again. Heigho! it's pity I'm so sleepy. No matter; I'll take my nap here, in this arm chair, ecod! for all the world like an alderman after dinner. Must have one more peep at my letter, though. Heigho! (Reading the letter, drops asleep.)

Enter WILL STEADY, with a bottle in his hand.

Will S. So, Steady! I've left my commander aback, to heave a-head whenever the fit take him; and shall crowd canvas, towards the cabin of my sweet Sally!—Heigho! (*Drinks, and sighs.*) Here's to our merry meeting. His honour and I were long buffeted about before we fell in with good luck; but this prize, on our return, has set all afloat again. A twin pair of pretty purses, well lined, have I secured to throw into Sal's lap when I salute her. Eh! (*seeing Page*) safe stowed, little one! Quite a calm, and snug in your hammock! (*Takes up the letter.*) His sailing orders, mayhap. Mayn't be able to drop down to safe moorings, if he lose this tide! Yeo, ho! No; I'll not pipe all hands neither, till I've overhauled his warrant. Here goes. (*Reads.*) "My dear child, your uncle, who is better at his pen than I, at my request, writes you this." Humph! "*Excuse the tears that have blotted the paper. Providence enabled you to assist me in the hour of adversity; heaven will reward you—accept a mother's blessing*"—I've read enough. Awa! Never felt such a kind of choking before; nor my eyes half so moist all the foul weather I've seen. Poor lad!—Sdeath! I've but a paltry kind of heart, when a child's charity makes it heave so! If he were mine, I'd give—Here'll be plenty for Sal and I; (*takes out a purse*) so, ecod! I'll make a good use of 't'other; (*picks the other in the Page's pocket*) and when you wake, and overhaul your lockers, think Providence will never let filial affection founder, or a good deed go unrewarded. Well, doing as one likes makes a body devilish good-humoured. I'm now so merry, I could jig it till the forecassle shook again. Let me but come alongside Sal; a few old messmates in our wake; and I'd enjoy this, as if it were my wedding-day.

AIR.—WILL STEADY.

When seated with Sal, all my messmates around!

Fal de ral, de ral, de ri do!

The glasses shall jingle, the jock shall go round;

With a bumper, then here's to ye, boy!

Come, lass, a buss, my cargo's joy,

Here Tom be merry, drink about,

If the sea were grey we'd see it out,

For we're met here to be jolly, jolly boys!

For we've met here to be jolly.

Strike up the fiddles, Dick; girl gi's your hand,

Fal de ral, &c.

Take partners, odzooks! ne'er shilly-shally stand,

Lead up, cast down, and hands across.

Now, lads, another noggin toss—

Here's the commander I love most,

Join messmates in my loyal toast,

*("The King.")—We have met, &c. (*Drinks.*)*

In glee, gig, and merriment, the moments fly,

Fal de ral, &c.

While Bacchus's bumpers brighten friendship's eye,

Oh! d—e, old one, tip's your hand;

Will's service ever pray command.

'Tis pastime, pleasure, joy, delight!

Another glass, and then good night.—

*("Wives and Sweethearts.") For we're, &c. (*Exit.*)*

SCENE IV.—A View near the castle.

Enter SALLY.

Sally. I'm ready to sink with walking so far; but my mind would not bide at ease till I see my poor boy. He has been my only comfort since his father left me; and Theodore's cruelty has driven me at a distance these three years. "I was on his account, I learn, my landlord distressed me so for my rent: all because I wouldn't listen to his wicked wishes. No, William; though I should never see you again, will I ever kearken to another: you were my first love, and I'll ne'er abide the thoughts of a second. How oft have we, in our days of courtship, met on this very spot; and when he was away, how I'd wander here, listening to the village roundelay.

AIR.—SALLY.

How sweet when the silver moon is blinking;

Through meads to wander, slow and mute;

And of some absent lover thinking,

Listen to the tender lute:

Or, at the jocund dawn of day,

When feather'd choirs are singing, O!

And sprightly sounds the sportive lay,

And village bells are ringing, O!

To merry, merry strain to dance and play,

And over the greensward to trip away.

While the love-lorn maid is fondly sighing,

Let music soft her ears assail!

In plaintive murmurs, breezes dying,

Listen to the tender tale:

Or, at the jocund, &c.

(Retires.)

Enter WILL STEADY.

Will S. Told de rollo! How cheerful acting right makes a body! My heart never was pulled onward to pleasure with so gratifying a gale since I left my own little cabin. Eh! a tight wench. I wish she'd tack about, and let's take a peep at her stem as well as her stern.

Sally. I tremble to be seen at the castle, for fear of that wicked Theodore! (*Crosses the stage.*)

Will S. What, tack and tack! Well, if the wind's in that quarter let's see if—(*She turns round, screams and faints.*) Zounds! this day's to start the timbers of my heart! it never thumped so hard against my ribs in its life before!—Sally!

Sally. William! It's surely a dream. I can't believe my senses.

Will S. And I'm quite out of mind with joy. Well, and how are you? Where's little—have I—eh! Sally? Stop my breath with kisses, and then pump fresh life into me, by saying the lad's like his father. Have I still a boy, Sal? Is he—eh?

Sally. You have. Oh! William, I'm too overjoyed to speak!

Will S. Then I'll e'en seal your lips till you're no longer tongue-tied. (*Kisses her.*) Well, and how have you done? Where is my little cock-boat?

Sally. Your child's at the castle. The Baron met him one evening near the old cottage, (*which lost all its comfort when you left it.*) and asked several questions, and was so pleased with the boy's answers, that he has been in his family ever since. But cruelty drove me from him; distress followed, and to his duty and affection I owe—

Will S. What!—Well was ever such a—We'll steer to the castle directly; I long to—Sal, here's a heavy purse to make your heart light. 'Gad! I'm so happy, I could—We'll be the envy of the whole hamlet; no neighbour shall want his whistle wetting! But did your thoughts ever lose sight of a body, all the time I was gone?

Sally. Did yours of me?

DUETT.—SALLY and WILL STEADY.

Will. Since we parted, dear girl, were you constant and true? [*adieu?*]

Sally. Did you ne'er forget Sal, since she bade you?

Will. No thought but of you, e'er could comfort impart; [*heart.*]

Sally. And your image has dwelt ever since in my Will. But happy once more in each other—fate smiling— [*guiling?*]

Sally. And peace, love, and plenty, the moments be—

Both. We'll dance, and sing fal de ral, la, la, la, la!

While the fiddles strike up and the village is gay.

Our love has been mutual, our suff'ring's the same;

We ask not for honours, for grandeur, or fame;

But our snug little cot,—for a friend's face it wears, [*years.*]

Where Providence kindly may bless us for

SCENE V.—An Apartment in the castle.

Enter the BARON and THEODORE.

Baron. How! guilty of theft! I am astonish'd!

Theodore. And so was I, my lord; but missing

considerable sums, and finding this letter from his mother—

Baron. His mother! (*Looks at the letter.*) To relieve a parent!—such an act might mitigate the crime.—Where is he?

Theodore. Here, my lord.—[*Enter the Page.*]

Page. My lord, I beg your pardon; but, indeed, I did not see you.

Baron. Pray, my generous youth, who furnishes you with means to make presents to your mother?

Page. Why, my lord, you know you are very kind to me; and my lady, she's so good—

Baron. A crime I detest to mention gives the means. Are you not—

Page. What, my lord? You frighten me.

Baron. False to your trust—a thief! a little purloining villain! whom I have cherished; till, serpent-like, it turns to sting its preserver! Instantly confess, if—

Page. What should I confess, my lord? I never touched any money, but what you and my lady gave me; and, surely, there was no harm—

Baron. Let him be searched: though I doubt he is too cunning a practitioner, to carry proof about him. Search him, Theodore. You tremble, villain!

Page. I do, indeed, my lord. You never were angry with me before; and I always tried hard not to deserve it. Your suspicions hurt me so—

Theodore. Those suspicions are confirmed. (*Shows the purse he has taken from the Page's pocket.*)—

Baron. Behold, my lord, this evidence! I am astonished! Sure, my lucky stars are now predominant! (*Aside*)

Baron. Ungrateful child! I now abandon you. Go with your wicked mother; wander till want compel you to repentance; or avenging justice become your punisher. This purse—your mother's letter—are such proofs—

Page. I did send my mother a little money, sir, else he'd ha' turned her out of doors. Pray, forgive me, if I were wrong; but, indeed, it was not yours.

Theodore. No whimpering, boy! your punishment's too lenient. Begone!

Page. I don't know who could have put it in my pocket, Theodore; nor how it came there; indeed, I don't: speak to my lord for me, pray do; don't turn me away, my lord; you ever called me a good boy, till now. I never, never did such a wicked thing in all my life. Oh, dear! don't, my lord—I—(*Bursts into tears.*)

Theodore. Begone! Turn this prating urchin into the street. (*To Servants who enter*) Away with him!

Page. Don't be so cruel, Theodore. Oh, dear! oh, dear! My lord, my lord!—(*Hurrying him off.*)

Enter WILL STEADY. [this?]

Will S. Avast! sheer off, you lubbers! What's all this? *Theodore.* Some ruffian friend to rescue him. Seize him and his associate instantly.

Will S. Seize him! lookye, my fair-weather spark, I've had too much rough treatment lately to take to it kindly, therefore, less of your jawing tacks; touch him if you dare; move a finger, and d—e! I'll snap your grappling irona short as a biscuit, and unship every head rail from larboard to starboard. What's amiss, my lad!

Theodore. He has committed a crime none but a villain would protect him in—theft! this purse, this evidence of guilt, was found upon him.

Will S. Yes, and that purse was mine; I popped it in his pocket: another word, and this oak sapling awads the decks of you. Your honour, I ax pardon, (*to the Baron*) but here's one astern can testify this purse belonged to me. (*Snatching it from Theodore, gives it to Page.*) There it is again, my lad, and much better disposed of than e'er a one ever passed through your fingers. (*To Theodore.*)

Enter EDMUND and SALLY. (*Sally runs to the Page, is going to embrace him, Will catches him in his arms.*)

Baron. Amazement! my son! (*Embraces Edm.*)

Will S. And my son! D—e, I'm as proud of my

progeny, as the first in the land (heaven bless 'em!) can be of theirs. And what have you got to say for yourself, Mr. Down-in-the-mouth?

Theodore. Shame overwhelms me. My lord, with grief and contrition, I confess my guilt; gaming, the seducing origin of various crimes, instigated me to appropriate vast sums, your property, to a use, has brought destruction on me; but, if a life of atonement—

Baron. Theodore, I tremble to reflect on thy deceit: plunder your patron! and expiate that crime by injuring the harmless and the innocent!—but peculation punishes itself; the widow's curse and the orphan's tear wound deep; even sincere repentance scarce can expiate his crime, which avarice, injustice, and ingratitude, serve but as vassals to: for ever quit my sight—

Will S. That's hearty, your honour. Clear the gangway—shoot a head; for, d—e! I hate villany too much, even to be present at its punishment.

Page. Though Theodore has been bad, my lord, if you'd forgive him, perhaps he'd mend, and love and thank you for it.

Will S. A true chip of the old block, d—e! can freely pardon an injury and clap resentment under hatches. Well, friend Down-in-the-mouth, you'll not be brought to a court-martial this boat; but take a tar's advice—use the rudder of honesty instead of deceit, and then you'll steer clear of the shoals of punishment, and quicksands of disgrace. (*To Edmund.*) I told you, your honour, I should pilot you into smooth water, at last.

Edmund. Thankye! Father, I entreat you'll take this worthy fellow under your protection; together we were captives, and together we obtained our liberty; he was my guardian in the hour of danger, and—

Will S. Avast! that's the only time to try what timber a vessel's made of, an't it? No compliments: I'd as lieve be set to tease oakum all my life as hear 'em.

Baron. Edmund, your return overpowers me with pleasure; the occurrences of these last few moments will never be obliterated. Louisa's presence soon shall crown our joys, and your humble friend ever find here a cheerful home.

Will S. Thank your honour; but you must find a home, too, for Sal. She and I don't mean to sleep in separate hammocks again till we launch another little—eh! Sal? (*Kisses her, then catches up the Page.*) Oh! you young dog! I never was so happy in my life.

Sally. Nor I either, I'm sure, William.

Baron. The happiness you boast, I trust, is here universal; and no one present disappointed but him whose vices, though they merit opprobrium and contempt, yet attended by contrition, may excite our pity, when justice dooms the punishment.

FINALE.

Edm. But danger's o'er,
Grief no more
Shall with frowns appear;
But mirth and glee,
Merrily,
Ever crown the year.

Chorus. Our danger's o'er, &c.

Edm. By the will of fate,
Joy and grief await
Mortal's varied state;

Now sunk with sorrow, now with mirth elate.

Chorus. But danger o'er, &c.

Will. A slave I'll troll
Round the sparkling bowl,
To my lovely Sal.

Sally. While fond affection glads thy honest soul.

Will. We'll hence be gay—

Sally. Each month be May.

Will. No storms annoy—

Sally. Our future joy.

Both. All danger's o'er, &c.

Chorus. All danger's o'er, &c.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE FARMER'S WIFE;

A COMIC OPERA, IN THREE ACTS.—BY CHARLES DIBDIN, JUN.



Act III.—Scene 5.

CHARACTERS.

SIR CHARLES COURTLY
CAPTAIN BELTON
DOCTOR POTHER
FARMER BARNARD

MR. WILLIAMS
CORNFLOWER
PETER
ROBIN

STUBBLE
WILLIAM
CHALK
MRS. CORNFLOWER

MISS COURTLY
JENNY
SUSAN
FANNY

ACT I.—SCENE I.—*A Farm-house.*
Enter WILLIAM, SUSAN, and FANNY.

TRIO.

Oh! how sweet the opening day!
Every sense delighting;
Charming ev'ry care away,
To labour while inviting.
Labour, source of joy and health;
Labour, all the peasant's wealth.

Oh! how blithe the bosom glows,
When the lark is singing!
While to Him who all bestows
Sweet gratitude is springing.
Grateful notes our song employ;
Grateful hearts alone enjoy.

Will. I wonder how long it will be before our good master Cornflower returns from London: and, when he does, what he'll say to the fine baronet, and his coxcomb servant, Peter, who are here. Our master's friend, farmer Barnard, seems to think 'em no better than they should be.

Enter STUBBLE.

Stub. Neither are you any better than you should be, William; folding your arms here, instead of unfolding your sheep yonder: and you, girls, never content with being idle yourselves, must always keep the lads from their labour, dangling after you.

Fanny. Well, I'm sure, none of us care for your dangling after us; and that makes you so snappish, Mr. Bailiff.

Stub. No, no; that puppy, Peter, is more to your Susan. No, Mr. Stubble; Peter's no more to our taste than you are: he's a monkey, and you are—
Stub. What!

Susan. A bear. [*Exit with Will. and Fanny.*
Stub. Ay, ay; snigger and laugh, if you please; but I'll make you all do your duty. They can none of them bear me since I discharged old Gerard; but he was a hypocrite, and ungrateful to his employer. Well, think what they will, they shall find rough Stubble comes from a good grain, and is no mere man of straw.

AIR.—STUBBLE.

My name's Reuben Stubble, no mere man of straw;
True grain, though, mayhap, mix'd wi' chaff;
I stickle for duty, make justice my law,
So they call me severe;
But let them jibe and jeer;
At their snigg'ring I whistle and laugh:
As I did when light-hearted I drove father's team,
While the bells at their collars were ringing;
For I found, to be one thing, another to seem,
Were vexation, and kept me from singing,
Fal, la, la, &c.

Plain upright and downright was ever my plan;
Your flattery's too pleasant by half;
Let me finish in age, as in youth I began,
For if now I should slip,
To catch me on the hip,
How your sniggerers would whistle and laugh!
If I did too, whenever I pass'd by a team,
While the bells at their collars were ringing,
'Twould remind me how different to be and to seem,
And spoil all my relish for singing,
Fal, la, la, &c.

Ifeys! here comes farmer Barnard; upon his daily inquiry, I suppose, about when we expect master Cornflower.

Sir C. I don't know that: as he is not very rich, I should suppose there must have been some very powerful motive for her marrying him; and I should like to find that out. I understand the village apothecary, Doctor Pother, who was absent when we came here, has returned, and that he is acquainted with the birth, parentage, and education of all the county; you may, probably, learn from him the history of this marriage, as the knowledge of that may facilitate my scheme.

Peter. Doctor Pother! Yes, I've heard of him; he's famous for telling a story in such a way that nobody can understand him.

Sir C. Make use of your senses; go about it directly, and your reward shall be proportioned to the intelligence you obtain.

[*Exit, Sir C.*]

Peter. I'll do my utmost, sir: ferret him out immediately; and—
Sir C. Who's coming? Oh! it's Fanny; you stay here, and, by virtue of this never-failing figure of rhetoric, (*giving some money*) retain her on our side, and then lose no time in feeling the pulse of the doctor.

[*Exit.*]
Peter. I have already tampered with Fanny, who I think would soon be made an apt scholar in love's arithmetic, especially when practised in this "golden rule."—[*Enter FANNY.*—Well, my little Fanny, you didn't forget to represent to your mistress, in all the glowing colours of your fertile imagination, my master's profound gratitude towards her?]

Fanny. No, Mr. Peter; but she said her ears were married, and not allowed to listen to the compliments of single gentlemen.

Peter. Why, she must be heartily tired of the copyhold compliments of old Aftergrass, your master; whose manners are on a par with those of his ploughmen, and whose conversation is almost as amusing as the bleating of his own sheep. Ha, ha!

Fanny. Monstrous witty, Mr. Peter; but if any of the farm men happen to hear you abuse old Aftergrass, as you are pleased to call him, they'll be apt to mistake you for a sheaf of corn, and give you a good threshing.

Peter. Then they should keep their harvest home in the round-house, Mrs. Fanny; but, to other business:—you must know, Sir Charles's sister will make this farm in her way to London shortly.

Fanny. And what have I to do with that?

Peter. Why, as you have not only beautiful eyes—

Fanny. La, Mr. Peter!

Peter. La, Mrs. Fanny! Oh! yes, you have; and a most persuasive tongue; and then you have the ear of your mistress; and if you could but manage to put a whim into her head, to accompany the honourable Miss Courtly to town—

Fanny. To London?

Peter. Yes; and you can go with her; and I am ordered to present you with this trifling consideration (*showing the purse*) to equip you for the journey.

Fanny. (*Taking the money.*) Dear me, Mr. Peter, your master is certainly a very kind gentleman; I will do my best; though my mistress has just received a letter, that her brother, the Captain, has returned from abroad, and will be shortly here; that may prevent it.

Peter. That we must try to counteract. (*Aside.*) However, you know you can execute your commission all the same; and when you are in London, perhaps I may exert my interest to get you a place among the right honourables, and you may soon become a lady.

Fanny. Me?

Peter. Oh! yes; it requires nothing but fine clothes, and fine airs. Cheap muslins and private dancing-shops have made half the servants in London fit for nothing else but fine ladies: that purse will procure you the one, and I'll teach you the other.

[*Exit, dancing.*]
Fanny. Dear me, that will be charming! I shall like to go to London and make my fortune, prodi-

giously; I'm tired of being buried alive among quizzes and quicksets; and this lucky opportunity may—Lud! who knows what it may not do! An oak springs from an acorn; and, they say, a little drop of water came to be a great pearl.

AJR.—FANNY.

A little drop of water fell

In the foaming ocean;

With sad emotion

It cried, "To ev'ry hope, farewell!

For I'm lost, alas!"

'Tis a silly tale, and, perhaps, may tease you;

But what came to pass

You shall know; oh! yes, you shall know, an't please you.

An oyster, that by chance was nigh,

Its fate arrested;

The drop digested;

Which grew a pearl of value high,

And the tale is told—

'Tis a silly tale, and, perhaps, may tease you—

For a power of gold

It was sold; oh! yes, it was sold, an't please you. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—A Farm-house, &c.

Enter CORNFLOWER, (as just off a journey,) followed by STUBBLE, with a Beggar.

Corn. Bestow my charity! (*The Beggar.*) You look able to work, and I'll employ you; to relieve idleness, is to rob industry, and encourage vice. Go, join you labourers, and be the author of your own relief; there's independence in that, the only soil for honesty. Set him to work, Stubble, and—

Stub. He'll be as lazy as the two last vagrants you employed.

Corn. When he is, turn him off; but what is become of old Gerard? I did not see him in the fields as I rode by.

Stub. No, sir; I discharged him.

Corn. Why, was he lazy, too?

[*him.*]
Stub. No; but I thought you could do without

Corn. Will any one else employ him?

Stub. No.

Corn. Then, though I can do without him, I see he can't do without me, and that's the very reason he should have staid. Let me see him in the fields when I go my rounds, or I may take it in my head to fancy I can do without you.

Stub. Why, I thought—

Corn. Thought! in matters of this sort think for yourself, don't think for me: I was a very poor man myself once, and know what the poor man suffers, when the unfeeling turn an eye of indifference upon his humble look for pity. Go; and it will be your own fault if I don't speak more kindly to you when we next meet. [*Exeunt Stubble and Beggar.*] Well, now to meet my dear Emma; she'll be surprised to see me so soon; and I know her joy will be doubled by that. Oh! I am a happy man! I have gained my law-suit; have the best farm on the manor; the most elegant, ay, and the most sensible wife in the county: here she is.—[*Enter MRS. CORNFLOWER.*—My dear Emma, how happy I am to behold her, who, in my eyes, possesses all the charms of the sex united!

Mrs. C. Your happiness, Henry, cannot exceed mine, at your unexpected return: the farm will now look itself again; for to me it is never cheerful, unless your presence gives it animation.

Corn. You are a flattering rogue, Emma.

Mrs. C. But tell me—you know a woman's curiosity is always on tip-toe—what has been the result of your journey?

Corn. Gained my law-suit, girl; and made up my mind, as I came along, to celebrate my victory by a merry-making, to which all our friends and neighbours shall be invited: the large barn shall be fitted up in the London style. I ordered every-

thing necessary at the county-town this morning. Our worthy friends, parson Williams and farmer Barnard, shall assist us in our plans; and we'll be as happy as mirth and friendship can make us.

Mrs. C. You delight me with the proposal; everything should wear the face of happiness at your return.

AIR.—MRS. CORNFLOWER.

*My Henry kiss'd, and cried "Adieu!
Ah! soon to Emma I'll return."*

I gaz'd till he was lost to view,

Then, pensive, turn'd again to mourn. o

No more the brightest scenes are gay,

When those we love are far away.

My love return'd, no more to part!

What transports in my bosom rise!

Tell words the welcome of the heart?

No; read it, Henry, in mine eyes.

The duldest scenes will now be gay,

My love no longer far away.

Corn. Though I was away, my heart was only here; but, by-the-by, what coxcomb was that I saw as I came in?

Mrs. C. The servant of Sir Charles Courtly.

Corn. And, pray, who is Sir Charles Courtly?

Mrs. C. Did you not receive my letter, informing you of his being here?

Corn. Being here! I received no such letter; but how came he here?

Mrs. C. By accident: one miserable rainy night, we were alarmed by the barking of the dogs, and violent cries: after mastering our fears, we went out, and found the servant you saw, with a post-boy at the gate, who requested shelter for a young gentleman who had been overturned, and seriously hurt.

Corn. A young gentleman! and you bade him welcome, and gave him all the assistance you could?

Mrs. C. I did: you are not offended?

Corn. Offended! If you hadn't I might have been offended. Let hospitality be shut out wherever else it will, it must be a sorry day for the nation when it isn't found in the house of an English farmer.

Mrs. C. I knew you would approve of what I did, and, therefore, I went further; I requested him to stay till he was perfectly recovered. And, as Doctor Pother was absent from the village, I—I attended him myself. *(With hesitation.)*

Corn. If he didn't recover under the hands of such a physician I should wonder; your very attention is an antidote to pain.

Mrs. C. Who flatters now, Henry? But, here comes Sir Charles. *[Enter SIR CHARLES COURTLY.]* Sir Charles Courtly, my dear, of whose accident I informed you.

Sir C. And whose pleasing task it must be to say, that nothing can ever erase from his mind the generous treatment he has experienced here. Allow me, good sir, to congratulate you on your return. You have come, sir, unexpectedly—and devilishly *mal-à-propos*, too. *(Aside.)*

Corn. Why, Sir Charles, my business over, I left London the moment I could; I'm never at ease there; I neither like their modes nor their mummery.

Sir C. Nay, my good sir, London is generally esteemed a terrestrial paradise.

Corn. In one respect I think it is, Sir Charles; for, like the garden of Eden, the knowledge obtained in it is too often at the expense of innocence.

Sir C. Rather severe, Mr. Cornflower; yet I must think London has its beauties, as well as the country; the contrast forms the *il penseroso* and *Fallegro* of nature; so I divide my time between them; for the *vive la bagatelle* of town, is a charming remedy for the *maladie imaginaire*, which is generally excited by too perpetual a recurrence of green trees, blue skies, white cows, black sheep, brown barns, and yellow haystacks.

Corn. But you don't mean to assert, Sir Charles,

that the follies of London are equal to the consistencies of a country life? For our green trees and blue skies, you have green-horns and blue devils; for our white cows and black sheep, you have white-washed bankrupts and black-legged adventurers; and for our brown barns and yellow haystacks, you have bronzed fronts and jaundiced features in plenty.

Sir C. I love the medium, sir. I ridicule as much *le petit maitre* of London, as *le rustre* of the Land's End: frivolity and fog are equally my aversion. What a crusty bear it is! *(Aside.)*

Re-enter STUBBLE.

Stub. May I speak a word, sir? *(Sulkily.)*

Corn. May you speak a word, sir! Yes, sir, you may: what now?

Stub. Here's the carrier from the county-town with a load of lamps and gingerbread gear. I told him they never could be for you; but he said you ordered 'em: however, I wouldn't let him unload till I knew the rights of it.

Corn. He's right enough.

Stub. Then I was wrong again, I suppose. *[Exit.]*

Corn. A rough fellow, though an honest one, sir; and I prefer a knotted oak to a pliant poplar: but I must see after this gingerbread gear, as he calls it; so, excuse me a short time, Sir Charles; we shall meet again at dinner, where I hope keen appetites and substantial fare will make us better acquainted. *[Exit.]*

Mrs. C. Mr. Cornflower, Sir Charles, has gained the law-suit I told you he went to London about; so means to give his friends a country gala.

Sir C. Oh, ho! then Mr. Cornflower has a little more taste for London fashions than he is willing to allow. Ah! madam, London is the true emporium of pleasure. Believe me, it has beauties innumerable; and would eclipse the world, if it added to its catalogue those of Mrs. Cornflower. *(Bowing.)*

Mrs. C. Come, come, Sir Charles, I have told you before, this is language I must not listen to.

Sir C. I am dumb, my dear madam; but though you may prohibit the exercise of the tongue, the eyes—the eyes, are such officious tell-tales, 'tis impossible to effect an embargo on them; and if I may presume on the faculty of reading eyes, I am sure you are not very, very angry with me.

Mrs. C. Why, really, Sir Charles, the circumstance is too ridiculous to excite any irritable emotion. "If it added to its catalogue those of Mrs. Cornflower!" Ha, ha, ha!

Sir C. Bravo! imitatively done! Spare me, spare me, my dear lady; you are too much for me, upon my soul you are; I stand no chance with you. *(Taking her hand, which she withdraws.)*

Mrs. C. Sir Charles, I must hear no more of this trifling. *(Gravely.)*

Sir C. Pardon my volatility; I'm sure your good sense, your good nature, your superior excellence—

Mrs. C. Hold, hold, sir; flattery will increase, not extenuate, your fault.

RECITATIVE.—Accompanied.

*Trifler, forbear; deceit in flattery lies;
We may endure it, but we must despise.*

POLACCA.

*Go, trifler, go; your flattery leave;
That lure which leads our sex astray;
Still smiling only to deceive,
And more securely to betray.*

*On Ætna's sides thus verdure bright
Beguiles the swain, and hope inspires;
While, with an overwhelming night,
The dread volcano pours its fires.* *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE IV.—A Landscape.

Enter PETER.

Peter. Now, then, to seek after this Doctor Pother; this walking story-book, parish-register, and county chronicle; but what with his unintelligible jargon,

confounding one story with another, and knocking his own meaning on the head, I fancy I shall belittle the wisest for his communication. I protest he's coming.—[Enter DOCTOR POTHER.]—I believe I have the honour to address Doctor Pother? (Bows.)

Doctor. (Chuckling as he speaks.) Doctor Pother, at your service; one, in the way of his profession, that, though I say it, that should not say it, who—that is—speaking professionally—for anatomy, chemistry, pharmacy, phlebotomy, oxygen, hydrogen, caloric, carbonic, atmospheric, galvanic—ha, ha, ha!—can tell you a prodigiously laughable story on that subject. Went, last summer, to a watering-place, all in the way of my profession—sent for in a hurry—lady of fashion—feel pulse—*sauz pas*—not the lady sick, but her lap-dog—double fee—look grave—talk Latin—hint at hydrophobia, and prescribe galvanism—apply battery—shock violent—window open—out springs Pompey, plump into a batter-pudding going to the bake-house, and lay like a toad in a hole. Ha, ha, ha!

Peter. Monstrous diverting! Ha, ha, ha!

Doctor. But, pray, may I inquire who it is I am addressing? [is at Cornflower's farm.]

Peter. The gentleman of Sir Charles Courtly, who

Doctor. Oh! I've heard of him—chaise overturned; I, unluckily, out of the way. I hope Sir Charles has quite recovered—that is—I shall be happy to attend him in the way of my profession.

Peter. I'll mention your name to him—I'll recommend you, Pother. (Consequently.)

Doctor. Eternally obliged. Man of rank for a patient: bravo! we'll divide the practice between us; I'll blister, and he shall bleed. (Aside.)

Peter. I'm told, Doctor Pother, you are a perfect annal of anecdote; and know the rise, progress, and establishment of the whole country.

Doctor. You may say that; pick up a thing here and there, all in the way of my profession; tell you a comical story of that—

Peter. I'll listen another time; for now I want to consult you, professionally, myself.

Doctor. Oh! professionally; then I'm the man for you—either anatomy, chemistry, pharmacy, phlebotomy— [my complaint is curiosity.]

Peter. Don't open your catalogue of hard names, *Doctor.* Curiosity! Species of the nervous; cause, irritability; symptom, restlessness; prognosia, alarming; cure, doubtful; fee, double.

Peter. None of your doubling, doctor; I'm poor, and so you must prescribe gratis, as a lure to better practice.

Doctor. Ha, ha! prescribe gratis! not in the way of my profession. Can tell you a monstrous good story about that, too.

Peter. Never mind that story; I want you to tell me another. You must know, I have often wondered how Mr. and Mrs. Cornflower came to make so unequal a match.

Doctor. Tell you all about it—secret, mum!—had it from Barnard—forgot part, though. Let me see: father, man of fashion—extravagance—lady a visiting—Cornflower—house all in flames—two pair of stairs window—ran up a ladder—taken by the bailiffs—maiden name Bagshaw or Wilkinson, or something like it—married—came down with the mopuses, and noped ever since.

Peter. Very clear, upon my word; the lady visiting—Cornflower all in flames, and a two pair of stairs window ran up a ladder—

Doctor. No, no; Cornflower ran up the ladder—

Peter. Oh! Cornflower ran up the ladder, and was taken by the bailiffs.

Doctor. Psha! lady in flames—Cornflower up the ladder—lucky escape—and Miss Bagshaw or Wilkinson, as I said before, out of pure gratitude and affection—her father arrested—

Peter. I have it. The lady and Cornflower ran up a ladder all in flames; and Miss Bagshaw or

Wilkinson, as you said before, out of pure gratitude and affection, arrested her father.

Doctor. Psha! you are a blockhead.

Peter. There's a pair of us. I shall lose my reward through the fellow's stupidity. I must make up a story of my own. (Aside.) You'd make an excellent parliamentary orator.

Doctor. Why parliamentary?

Peter. Because your explanation is more unintelligible than your speech. [Exit.]

Doctor. A pert fellow! I know a monstrous good story of that kind; but there's nobody here to tell it to. I declare here comes Robin, farmer Barnard's man. I'll tell it to him.—[Enter ROBIN.]—Robin, I was just thinking of a most excellent story. You fellow wouldn't stay to hear it, and so I'll tell it to you. You must know, Mrs. Mudge longed for a lobster—

Robin. Now, none of your long stories, Doctor; they be like your prescriptions, nobody do understand them, and they be good for nothing after all.

Doctor. This to my face! worse than the other. I wonder at your impertinence.

Robin. Do you! Now I wonder that anybody should wonder at that, it's so natural to me. Why, bless you, don't I know you, man? I can tell you a story about the blacksmith's wife, that you sent a horse-medicine to, and nearly threw her into a galloping consumption.

Doctor. He, he, he! I remember: my boy took tartar emetic for cream of tartar: and if the blacksmith's wife hadn't been as tough as the forge bellows, a hob-nail to a horse shoe but she'd have gone off the anvil—a monstrous good story! He, he, he! [Exit.]

Robin. That be a funny man, sure enough. Whew! yonder goes my Susan, but Shoo be a queer grained toad; and though I be a likely lad, and ha' gotten t' brass i' my service, Shoo grins at me like an' I were no' but a mouldiwarp. There's that Peter, I a'most think she's daft enou' to ha' a liking for that chap; but what Shoo can see in him I can't mak' out; it's but a chattering pie, at best; and yet, Shoo winks and she blinks at him, and cocks up her nose at me, as much as to say, "I ze meat for thy measter." Laws, laws! how blind some folks be! there now she's stopping—she sees me—dang me! if she ben't making mouths at me, and running away; and if that ben't as much as to say, "follow my leader," I know nothing of phisioignoy; that's all. [Exit.]

SCENE V.—A rural View.

Enter SUSAN.

Susan. I've given Robin a fine race, and have lost him at last. I tease him finely; pretending to have a liking for that coxcomb, Peter, whom I despise; but it's only to try his affection, and make myself sure of his truth, for I am determined to look well before I leap. A poor girl had need be circumspectious, when young men are grown so parjurious. Here he comes again. (Pretends to walk away.)

Enter ROBIN.

Robin. So, so, Mrs. Susan, a pretty wild-goose chase you ha' led me, after such a matter-o'-fact invitation as you gave me. But I tak' you; to be sure, I never tickled a trout, nor trolled for a salmon.

Susan. Indeed, I don't understand you, with your invitations to trout and salmon.

Robin. Why, didn't you grin at me a bit sin'? and what were that but saying, "tak' me i' the humour?"

Susan. And so you may, for I'm in a very ill humour, and the sight of a Yorkshireman won't make it better. [shire.]

Robin. Why, what have you to say against Yorkshire?

Susan. I hate Yorkshire.

Robin. Well, that's frank enough, however, and I can't say but I admire your sincerity; but, as for manners, you know, why, that says nothing. And, pray, now, where might Mr. Peter be born?

Susan. In delightful London.

Robin. What, Middlesex to wit? Cookneysshire? Now let me give you a piece of advice, out of true love and kindness: you may keekle and grin at a Yorkshireman, but don't you mak' a fond fool of your sen, and get bit by a Lannuner: York's deep, I own; but Lannuners are some at like hedgehogs, there's no getting at 'em; and when you do, they're not worth the trouble. You think Yorkshiremen knaves, and I know Lannuners to be fools; and a knave's better than a fool, ony day, you know. [you?]

Susan. Then you would really advise me to have

Robin. I'd scorn to give you ony advice, but for your own good. And why not have me? We should

Susan. Why so? [match very well.]

Robin. You are handsome.

Susan. Very.

Robin. I'ze likely.

Susan. Not very.

Robin. I want a wife.

Susan. May be.

Robin. You want a husband?

Susan. May be not.

Robin. I like you.

Susan. Perhaps so.

Robin. You 'may like me.

Susan. Perhaps not.

Robin. Now what objection can you have?

Susan. One.

Robin. What is it?

Enter PETER.

Peter. Me, to be sure. [indeed.]

Robin. Then I think it a very trifling objection.

Peter. But you'll find some trouble in getting rid of that trifle: what say you, my pretty Susan?

FINALE.—SUSAN, ROBIN, STUBBLE, PETER, and Labourers.

Susan. In speaking my mind, I but little can say,

Between you the odds are so small;

'Tis just like the difference, good sirs, by the way,

Between nothing and nothing at all.

Enter Labourers.

1 Lab. *Why, dang it now, Ralph, here's a pretty to do, Here's Susy with Peter and Robin—*

Susan. Well, well, Mr. Saucebox, pray, what's that to you?

Robin. Let's ha' none o' thy jeering and jobbing. (To Labourer.)

Enter STUBBLE.

Stub. *What, all here together, and idling again? But this time I forgive you; for why?*

Our master's return makes all labour in vain, And there'll be pretty sport by-and-by.

Chorus. *Our master's return, &c.*

Stub. *The big barn is order'd to be disen'd out*

With gear, and such gorgeous array,

And the neighbours are ask'd all to foot it about,

'Twill be just as good as a play.

2 Lab. *And mun we foot it, too?*

Robin. Nay, dang it, now, Ralph, To hear thee talk of dancing, I cannot but laugh.

Peter. You'll sure be my partner? (To Susan.)

Robin. She's mine, I trov.

Susan. Excuse me, I pray, if I answer both, no.

Stub. *Nay, the gentlefolk only will dance, ye queer elves;*

But we, in the meantime, so clever,

A jollification shall have to ourselves;

When left to regale

On roast beef and brown ale,

We'll drink, "Master Cornflower for ever!"

Yes, our toast it shall be,

With three times three,

Hussa! Master Cornflower for ever!

Chorus. *Yes, our toast, &c.* [Exit.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in Sir Charles Courtly's town house.

Jenny. Bless me, what a change has taken place in my mistress, Miss Courtly, lately! Before her brother, Sir Charles, left town, she was all placid and plaintive, as the new novel says; but from the moment that Captain Belton protected her in the park from the insults of one of the young bucks of fashion, she has become quite preposterous; and having danced with him last night at Lady Fanfly's ball, her head is certainly turned this morning. I think I hear her singing; yes, she's coming—I'll listen to her song, for that will let me into the state of her sentiments; and we ladies' maids should never manage our mistresses if we didn't dive into their secrets. [Exit.]

Enter MISS COURTLY.

AIR.

*Weave, oh! weave me garlands gay,
Where myrtles shall with roses twine,
There many a blooming flower display,
And many a perfum'd bud combine:
Then with 'em crown the smiling hours,
And let bright fancy lead the train;
And harmony, with charmed powers,
Inwile 'em with her dulcet strain.*

My thoughts are all dancing

To ecstasy's measure,

So pleasing.

Yet teasing,

Perplexing with pleasure.

Awile let the phantasy sweetly confound me; [me. Come, come, smiling hours, strew your roses around

I declare, this Captain has quite fascinated me. I have been danc'ing with him in my dreams all night, saw him at my feet, and was upon the point of confessing I loved him, when that officious Jenny drew my curtain, and the Captain and my conquest vanished together. Well, well, custom will bring him here this morning with the usual inquiries, and I'll appear volatile, to try his temper: if my levity displease him, and he have candour enough to confess it—ah, me! I'm afraid my eyes will betray my heart, in spite of all my caution. I wish my brother were here; it's very odd I hear nothing from him.—[Re-enter JENNY.]—Any letters to-day, Jenny?

Jenny. No, ma'am.

Miss C. It's astonishing that my brother should inform me he was coming to town, and he has neither arrived, nor written a reason for his change of mind.

Jenny. La! ma'am, it's the old reason, I dare say: Sir Charles, you know, is a real sportsman in every sense of the word; and depend on't, the object which detains him is either a partridge or a petticoat.

Miss C. Peace, girl; recollect it is of my brother you are speaking. [below.]

Jenny. I beg pardon, ma'am; Captain Belton's Miss C. Captain Belton below! shew him up directly.

Jenny. Yes, ma'am. What irresistible fellows these captains are! [Aside and exit.]

Miss C. I am almost afraid to meet him. Heigho! I feel a strange fluttering at his approach. I had better retire a moment, to compose myself. [Exit.]

Re-enter JENNY, introducing CAPTAIN BELTON.

Jenny. Miss Courtly will be here in a moment, sir. [Exit.]

Capt. So, I have escaped all the bullets of the enemy abroad to fall by the darts of a fair lady's eyes at home; and this fascination detains me from visiting my sister Cornflower so soon as I intended. Yet, do I know sufficient of the object who bewitches me, to justify my passion? or has the sentimental Charles Belton, after professing he would never surrender his heart but to mental charms, lost it to a pretty face? Surely not; the superiority of her mind is too evident—I cannot be mistaken. Love

is blind, they say; and the heathen mythology gave him wings, too. Yet, were I to personify the all-conquering passion, I would restore his eyes, and deprive him of his pinions.

AIR.—CAPTAIN BELTON.

Love's blind, they say,

Oh! never, nay;

Can words love's grace impart?

The fancy, weak,

The tongue may speak,

But eyes alone the heart:

In one soft look what language lies!

Oh! yes, believe me, love has eyes.

Love's wing'd, they cry—

Oh! never I—

No pinions love to soar;

Deceivers rove,

But never love,

Attach'd, he moves no more:

Can he have wings, who never flies?

And, yes, believe me, love has eyes.

Re-enter MISS COURTLY.

I have presumed, madam, on the privilege your condescension afforded me of attending you in the circle last night, to pay my respects.

Miss C. You do me honour, sir; I was never better in my life. An agreeable party last night, Captain Belton, with a few exceptions. Miss Bronze, for instance, the counsellor's daughter, by her vociferation and volubility, seemed to think herself in Westminster-hall. Mr. Chenille chattered and hopped about like a magpie in masquerade; while Sir Phillimore Flimsy actually gave me the idea of a gnat in an ecstasy.

Capt. In promiscuous parties of pleasure, Miss Courtly, whimsical portraits will naturally present themselves; but, serving as foils to set off the more brilliant and accomplished, I question whether we are just in holding them up to minute criticism.

Miss C. But you must be aware that the absurdities of some people are so intrusive, that good-nature is, positively, a most violent effort.

Capt. Then, madam, it is the more praiseworthy.

Miss C. Oh! you'll absolutely mope me if you moralize, Captain.

Capt. I should suppose Miss Courtly serious, if her eyes did not declare she was acting an assumed character; to try, perhaps, the complexion of mine.

Miss C. Bless me, Captain, your perceptions are amazingly singular.

Capt. Is it singular to perceive the beauties of Miss Courtly? or seeing, not to admire? [Rises.]

Miss C. Oh! I protest now you are shockingly serious.

Capt. Serious, I am, indeed; for on the object of my present hope depends the happiness of my future life.

Miss C. Why, really, you soldiers attack a female with as little ceremony as a foe, and fancy yourselves as resistless in the drawing-room as in the field.

Capt. Treat me not with levity, charming Rosabel; humanity is the brightest ornament of the beautiful as well as the brave; listen, then, to the ardent dictates of a passion that—

Miss C. Hold, Captain; was not all this addressed to the blooming Matilda Heartwell last night? Was there nothing in your assiduity beyond polite attention?

Capt. I protest, Miss Courtly, my conversation with Miss Heartwell was—

Miss C. Oh! I have no right to require an explanation. Only, sir, when a soldier embarks in an affair of honour, he should be clear of suspicion.

Capt. Could I as easily convince Miss Courtly, of the ardour and sincerity of my passion, as I can clear myself from suspicion, I should be happy, indeed. But, a plain soldier, I want language to do justice to the emotions of my heart, or the graces that occasion them.

AIR.—CAPTAIN BELTON.

To sing thy bright beauties, dear maid,
Asks language my tongue cannot frame;
In virtue's chaste graces array'd,

The purest of passion they claim.

Believe me, sincere is the tale I would tell,

And smile on thy lover, sweet Rosabel.

To tell how I love thee, sweet fair,

My mind can no image supply;

In secret I dwell on my care,

And approach thee alone with a sigh.

Believe that fond sigh for the tale I would tell,

And smile on thy lover, sweet Rosabel. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A rural View.

Enter SIR CHARLES COURTLY.

Sir C. Having made up my mind to secure this pretty field-flower, if she won't consent, I'll carry her off. Peter shall have a chaise ready, and I must bribe some of the clowns to assist him. Here comes one, to whom, I fancy, a few guineas will be an irresistible bait.—[Enter ROBIN.]—Harkye, my honest fellow.

Robin. To me, sir?

Sir C. Yes; what's your name?

Robin. Robin Rnt, at your service, sir.

Sir C. Well, Robin, is money plentiful here?

Robin. Why, among those who ha' plenty, there be no want, you see. [happy number?]

Sir C. Very sensibly observed; are you among that

Robin. Nay, man; I see no happiness in it; there's our squire has a power o' money, yet I don't find that he grumbles less than any other man; but rich folk have time to think, and that brings care, you know; while we poor labouring chaps work so hard all day, and sleep so sound all night, we ha' no time to think at all.

Sir C. True, Robin: but to business. By your accent, you should be a Yorkshireman; and I dare say you could manage a little stratagem for me: a few guineas shan't be wanting, and here's one, by way of binding the bargain.

Robin. Why, what country can be you, to talk of binding a bargain before it be made? beside, I be the servant of another, and I cannot let mysen out to hire without his leave; so, as he's coming youder, you'd better ax him.

Sir C. (Looking out.) Cornflower and Barnard! the last two men I wish to meet just now. (Aside.) I shall see you again, my honest fellow: at present, I am in a hurry; so—so—good day, Robin, good day. [Exit.]

Robin. Same to you, sir. He, he, he! I wonder what he were after wi' his guinea; no good, I warrant, or he wouldn't have offered me money, without telling me what it were for.

Enter CORNFLOWER and BARNARD.

Barn. So, Robin, Sir Charles has been honouring you with his conversation?

Robin. Why, master, I be but a poor lad, and as he were o' t' quality mak', and such like, I behaved mysen to him wi' all proper condescension.

Corn. Submission, you mean, Robin.

Robin. That may be the word, mayhap; we don't all read t' same way; but he were a little mysterious, and that don't smack like honesty; yet I listened to him wi' temper and moderation, and that I call condescension. [liked that sprig of quality.]

Barn. You're right, Robin. Cornflower, I never

Robin. Why, by gums! I think he be no great cracks mysen, measter; for, do you know, he were going to give me a guinea just now.

Corn. A guinea?

[magems.]

Robin. Ay, a right earnest one; none o' your Brum-Corn. For what purpose did he offer it?

Robin. Dang me, if I know any more than t' man i' the moon: he jabbered something about a strata-gem, and that like; but your coming spoiled all.

Barn. A stratagem! I thought as much: some poor girl to be deceived, I suppose. *(To Robin.)* But why didn't you keep the guinea, and bite him for his roguery!

Robin. Bite! that's a Yorkshire fashion, sure enough; but there be two sorts o' that kidney; deep York, and honest York; and they don't both bite the same way.

Corn. Well said, Doncaster; you shall lose nothing by refusing it; take that *(gives him money)* for your integrity. Independence is our birthright; and I love a fellow who stands up for it, to my heart's blood.

Robin. A couple of guineas! Now I've away to mother, and buy t' ould lass a pound o' tea, and a warm cardinal again' t' frost. Dang my buttons, but I've i' luck! *[Exit.]*

Barn. I think, friend Cornflower, you should look a little at home. Your spouse is a charming good soul; but these flashy fellows are always fluttering about a fine woman, like a moth round a candle.

Corn. Emma Cornflower is as handsome as any woman in the county, I know; and I am not a little proud of her. I know, too, that a face is no security for happiness; but if she have the face of an angel, she has the heart of one; and I have reason enough to teach me, that a married woman of principle is a character too elevated for a fool to obtain, and too secure for a wise man to attempt. But, in good troth, Barnard, though an honest fellow, thou art always croaking, like an ill-boding raven; and on every subject, from politics to poaching, it's nothing but kaw, kaw, kaw! to the end of the chapter.

Barn. And thou art a good-natured, easy fellow, who can't see ruin when it stares thee in the face. But, beware, though hasty suspicion is mean, blind security is madness; you have a prize, guard it well. Like you, I, too, had been blessed, had not death deprived me of the loveliest of her sex; but I summoned fortitude to my aid, nor suffered another attachment to threaten me with such another pang.

AIR.—BARNARD.

Love no more my heart possessing,

Shall delusive hope restore;

How I lov'd! beyond expressing—

But, alas! the maid's no more.

Oh! 'twas neither form nor feature,

That could triumph o'er my heart;

Truth it was, and heavenly nature—

Oh! how hard with these to part!

Yet, adieu to useless sorrow!

Man his fate must firmly bear;

Nor forbid of hope to borrow,

Meantly truckle to despair. *[Exit.]*

Corn. I hope there is no foundation for Barnard's surmises; there cannot be; I should be unjust to my Emma to doubt; however, I heartily wish my house cleared of this baronet and his saucy lacquey; they interrupt my comfort by destroying the regularity of my household; confound my servants by the freedom of their manner, and bid fair to corrupt them by their example. Why, here comes another proof of the folly I must put a stop to. *(Retires.)*

Enter SUSAN, followed by PETER.

Susan. I tell you, once for all, I'll have nothing to say to such a fright as you are.

Peter. A fright! Do I look like a fright? You wouldn't call me so if you saw the impression I make on the pretty girls in St. James's Park; you don't know St. James's Park, though: it's a *russel* *garden*, as we say in the classics; a rural plantation in London; all trees, soldiers, cows, cookneys, and sentry-boxes; and it would do your heart good to see the smart nursery-maids, with troops of little pets and poppets come to take the fresh air and new milk in a morning: and the moment I make my appearance among them, one nods, another winks; "Ah! Peter," cries a third; "Oh! you creature!"

says a fourth; then I say soft things to one, squeeze another by the hand, chuck a third under the chin—and, one morning, romping with a merry one, who had a dear little dumpty darling in her arms, unluckily, it fell into one of the pails of milk, and being in mourning, the sweet little moppet came out again as mottled as a magpie.

Susan. Don't talk to me of your moppets and magpies; you are but a milksop and a magpie yourself, and I won't stay to talk to you any longer. *(Going.)*

Peter. Leave me not in despair. I have written a copy of verses on you. I implore you to hear them. *(Pulls out a paper.)*

Susan. Laws! I should like to hear his poetry of all things. *(Aside.)* Well, make haste, then.

Peter. *(Reads conceitedly.)*

"Oh! snow-drop of purity! primrose of prettiness!

Moss-rose of modesty! wall-flower of wittiness!

Daffydowndilly of damsels so fair!

Oh! tulip of taste! carnation of comeliness!

Pink of perfection! and lily of loveliness!

Listen, oh! list, or I die, I declare."

Did you mind the beauty of the alliteration?

Susan. Ha, ha, ha! I don't know what you mean by illiteration, but I never heard such nonsense in my life; why, the boys make as good on the fifth of November:

"I see no reason

Why gunpowder treason

Should ever be forgot."

Peter. Can nothing move you? Here let me kneel, *(kneels)* and pour out the overflowings of a heart oppressed with ecstatic oppression, and expiring with aympathetic sighs.

Susan. Go along, you fool; I only listened to laugh at you; and if you follow me any more, I'll set Robin about you, and then you may make rhymes upon the beating you'll get: you're an ignorant, impudent, conceited monkey! we all despise you, and are so glad you're going.

Peter. But I won't go yet, if it's only to tease you. "Aid me, Venus, Loves, and Graces"—*(Catches, and is struggling to kiss her, when Cornflower comes forward and takes her from him.)*

Corn. Young man, how dare you interfere with a servant of mine?

Peter. Bless us! don't put yourself in a brulery, as we say in French. I am accountable, Mr. Cornflower, to no one but my master.

Corn. When you interrupt those whose time and services are mine, you shall account to me, sir.

Peter. A blistering brute! I've a great mind to blow him up. *(Aside.)*

Corn. Have you given any encouragement to this coxcomb? *(To Susan.)*

Susan. Me, sir! No, sir: encourage him, indeed! I must be mightily at a loss for a sweetheart, if it came to that; but he's always following me, and talking nonsense.

Peter. Talking nonsense! oh!

Corn. Look you, sir; if your ignorance prevents your having a proper sense of your own duty, and occasions your sacrificing that time which is your master's property to idleness, don't let me or my servants be trespassing upon your folly and profligacy; or I shall, perhaps, assume that authority your master seems so much to neglect, and bestow the correction you so richly deserve.

Peter. You correct me? Bounce! that's high, however. Let me tell you, Mr. Farmer, if you dare—

Corn. Scoundrel, begone! or you shall feel the weight of this horsewhip.

Enter SIR CHARLES COURTLY.

Sir C. Heyday! what's the meaning of this?

Peter. Meaning! Mr. Cornflower, because I merely talked a little soft nonsense to his favourite maid, is up in the stirrups, and was going to give me a horsewhipping.

Corn. And if ever I catch you interrupting this girl again, I'll put my threat in execution, depend on't.

Sir C. I wish Mr. Cornflower had horsewhipped you; you richly deserve it: out of my sight.

Peter. What a breeze! (*Aside.*) Well, I'm going. Susan, adieu! [*Exit, sauntering insolently.*]

Corn. You return home; and though I will not consider you in fault now, if ever I know you give that puppy encouragement you lose my protection. (*To Susan.*)

Sir C. My protection! Oh, ho! I see how it is. (*Aside.*) [higher than him, at any rate.]

Susan. I'm sure I never encouraged him; I look *Sir C.* Look higher than him! that's plain enough. (*Aside.*) [*said.*]

Corn. Go home, then, and remember what I have *Susan.* Bless me! it's very hard to be snubbed when one isn't in fault, so it is. [*Aside and exit.*]

Sir C. Mr. Cornflower, I am extremely sorry my servant should have behaved so improperly; but London servants, sir, are the devil.

Corn. The misconduct of servants originates, too often, in the example set them by their employers, sir.

Sir C. That's pretty sharp; I'll work him for it, however. (*Aside.*) I hope you don't estimate me by my servant; he is certainly, an incorrigible rascal. Come, I see the case; I should have been as indignant myself; but don't give yourself any further uneasiness on the score of the girl, I'll accommodate the matter, depend on it, and take care that he shall not interfere between you any more.

Corn. Accommodate, and interfere between us? What do you mean, Sir Charles?

Sir C. Come, come, I'm snug; I sha'n't disclose anything; these things will happen; and if Peter dares to interfere between you and—and—you take

Corn. No, sir, I do not take you. [*me?*]

Sir C. Pooh, pooh! why, friend Cornflower, we have all some of that "frailty which flesh is heir to."

Corn. Now, sir, you have spoken plainly; and hear my plain answer: I stand here, master of a family, and as far as depends upon my power, accountable for their conduct to society and to heaven. Shall I meanly consider my servants as mere instruments of my profit, and not grant them the protection of that independence they labour to procure me? Besides, sir, I am a husband; married to a woman I dote on, from whom I demand the most unqualified constancy; and shall I become that despicable brute who could insult a virtuous wife by a degrading intimacy with her servant? Fie, fie! Sir Charles.

Sir C. Mr. Cornflower, you—you misunderstand—

Corn. Sir, you have roused me, and I must speak as I feel. The innocent girl you have dared to defame by your surmises, is the virtuous offspring of parents who have no wealth but their integrity: no human prop for their age but that daughter whom I have taken—yes, sir, I have taken—not for the diabolical motive you have audaciously taxed me with: no, sir, but to be the protector of her youth; the promoter of her happiness; and the guardian—yes, fashionable sir—the guardian of her virtue. (*Turns indignantly up the stage.*)

Sir C. Rot me, if I believe him! but I must draw in my horns. (*Aside.*) My dear, dear sir, I beg ten thousand pardons; but, consider, I live in a world where these things are so common, that, really, we think nothing of them: but, as I have unfortunately erred, I trust your manly sense will readily excuse me.

Corn. Say no more, sir; I can only treat the accusation with the indifference it merits.

Sir C. A sly old fox! (*Aside.*) Thank you, my dear sir, thank you; but though you look over it so generously, I cannot easily forgive myself; but hope, when we next meet, I shall be able to make an apology with a better grace. Old guardian of virtue! [*Aside—exit.*]

Corn. Contemptible! but I shall soon get rid of him, and then the evil he has occasioned will cure itself. *Enter DOCTOR POTHER.*

Doctor. Who talks of curing without the doctor's assistance? that's against all rules of practice.

Corn. I should rather think curing with his assistance against all rules of practice.

Doctor. Very well for a farmer—stale joke, though I picked it up in London, I suppose; by-the-by, haven't had a single opportunity of congratulating you before on your return: business, business, my dear friend—always in a bustle; don't know which thing to turn to first. [*ling people, Doctor.*]

Corn. And so neglect all; the way with most bust—*Doctor.* Thankye, thankye! London has made you facetious; bought wit of the lawyers, perhaps: speaking of lawyers, did you ever hear the story of my suit in chancery? [*volve me in another.*]

Corn. I've just got rid of one suit, and don't in—*Doctor.* Tell you the story another time; but pray tell me, you have a baronet at your house who wants medical assistance. Unluckily, I was out of the way when he came; but better late than never. You shall introduce me; and let the case be ever so desperate, that I set all to rights, I'll stake my credit to a cabbage-stalk.

Corn. Lay odds, and I'll take you.

Doctor. My skill against your would-be-wit, and let the jockey-club decide.

Corn. Then it will be neck-and-neck business, I fancy; but, call at the farm, see the baronet, and introduce yourself; though unluckily, as you say, he has recovered; *Mrs. Cornflower* prescribed for him.

Doctor. Prescribed! Physician in petticoats—took her degrees at Queen's-college—studied Bachan, Culpepper, and Glass's Cookery—old women—old women—

Corn. Who often make the best doctors.

Doctor. Still facetious: your wit's like a bee; when it strikes, always loses its sting.

Corn. And yours, like a drone, possesses neither honey nor sting. [*Exit.*]

Doctor. Stupid fellow! but doctors, like lawyers, are considered fair game for quizzing. Talking of doctors, puts me in mind of a story of one who married an old maid, whose only perfection was her purse.

AIR.—DOCTOR POTHER. *

*There liv'd in a country town
A doctor nam'd Antony Brown;
Who, as he got nothing by trade,
Made love to a wealthy old maid,
So ugly she hadn't a charm,
But her purse was as long as my arm.*

What a bait for Doctor Brown!

*One day, with a grace debonair,
He ask'd for a lock of her hair;
Says she, "You embarrass me quite,
Doctor Brown, you're so very polite."
She gave it, and he was all gig,
But soon found 'twas a lock of her wig.*

What a dose for Doctor Brown!

*Her teeth all so white, he'd declare,
Made amends for the loss of her hair;
She fancied the tooth-ache, by way
Of seeing the doctor one day;*

*When her teeth were all false, he said,
But she'd got a colt's tooth in her head,
Which fasten'd on Doctor Brown.*

*Fine sonnets he wrote on her eyes,
And praised 'em up to the skies;
But the day he his passion declar'd,
A thing happen'd at which he star'd:
While she ogled the doctor, alas!
Out tumbled a peeper of glass.*

What a sparkler! quo' Doctor Brown.

*One hand fix'd on with a screw;
Her legs wa'n't a pair, though two;
But the doctor, who courted her purse,
He took her for better, for worse:
And their first child was born, or they lie,
With a wig, wooden hand, and glass eye.
But the image of Doctor Brown. [*Exit.*]*

SCENE III.—*A Parlour in the Farm.*

Enter MRS. CORNFLOWER, *dressed for the fête.*

Mrs. C. Well, I am dressed for this fête; yet, I don't know how it is, with a gay outside, all here is not at ease. (*Putting her hand to her heart.*)

Enter FANNY.

Fanny. Ma'am, here's his reverence the curate.

Mrs. C. Shew him in directly, Fanny. [*Exit Fanny.*] I am glad he's come; his conversation will restore my serenity.—[*Enter* MR. WILLIAMS.]—Mr. Williams, I am, indeed, happy to see you; our little festival will be doubly pleasant when sanctioned by your presence.

Mr. W. Innocent mirth, at proper seasons, madam, is the offspring of gratitude to the great Dispenser of joy. You will have to boast what few can; a large assembly of unaffected friends; and your guest, Sir Charles, may take a lesson to London with him, for the benefit of fashionable society.

Mrs. C. Sir Charles is going to leave us to-morrow, sir.

Mr. W. (*Aside.*) That tone had something like regret. I am not sorry to hear it; Sir Charles is a dangerous inmate for an humble village, madam.

Mrs. C. Is rank an object of dread, then?

Mr. W. No, madam; for respect, when dignity and rectitude accompany it.

Mrs. C. Do you know, Mr. Williams, that Sir Charles's sister is coming here, after his departure, to invite me to town: I have not mentioned it to Mr. Cornflower; it will be time enough for him to know it when the invitation comes.

Mr. W. Indeed! (*Aside.*)

Enter SIR CHARLES COURTLY.

Sir C. Most enchantingly dressed, Mrs. Cornflower—I beg pardon, sir; I did not see you. (*To Mr. W.*) Our sports are highly honoured, when gentlemen of your cloth unbend and join in them; I wish they would oftener mix in those of the *beau monde*.

Mr. W. Men of my cloth might be thought unpleasant intruders, Sir Charles; for the importance of their sacred charge compels them sometimes to speak disagreeable truths.

Sir C. I don't imagine you would ever flatter, sir.

Mr. W. It is not the province of my calling to flatter, sir; but a word apart, if Mrs. Cornflower will excuse it. (*Mrs. C. retires up the stage.*) You leave us to-morrow, I find; and it has been hinted to me, that your sister is to visit the farm, and invite Mrs. Cornflower to London.

Sir C. Why, a—a—it is probable.

Mr. W. I would act the part of an adviser, not a busy-body. I understand human nature, Sir Charles—do not attempt it.

Sir C. I protest, sir, your meaning is enigmatical.

Mr. W. You are a man of mode, and must understand me, sir; the temperature of your fashionable atmosphere is too feverish for our uncontaminated females.

Sir C. We are mightily indebted to your good opinion, sir; though folly is not more ridiculous than rudeness, nor the fever of fashion more fatal than the ague of fastidiousness.

Mr. W. You may put what construction you please on my words, sir; take 'em as they are meant, you will have reason to thank me: but, remember, your sister's visit here will be in vain. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. C. (*Coming forward.*) Mr. Williams seems warm, Sir Charles.

Sir C. Oh! only a few nonsensical words, madam.

Mrs. C. He is a worthy man, Sir Charles, and I'm sure, never offends against propriety.

Sir C. If he has the esteem of Mrs. Cornflower he must have mine. Well, I don't know how it is; black coats, like red coats, are generally favourites with the ladies. I certainly will get into orders; don't you think I should become canonicals, madam?

Mrs. C. You, Sir Charles? Why, you have not a serious lineament in your face.

Sir C. Why, certainly, gravity is no great ingredient in my composition. Egad! I believe I am better calculated for the scarlet; and, if it were possible, I would revive the age of chivalry, and, sallying forth as your knight, I think I could defy the world in arms.

Mrs. C. Not quite so enthusiastically, Sir Charles; you should recollect, that the ladies of knights-errant were all unmarried.

Sir C. A mistake, madam; they were all paragons of virtue as well as of beauty, and the ardour of platonic love sent their warriors forth; that ardour overpowers me; from this moment I am your knight, madam; the Cornflower, emblem of innocence, shall be my distinction; and my motto—respect and admiration. [*too romantic to listen to.*]

Mrs. C. Ha, ha, ha! Why, Sir Charles, you grow

Sir C. Romantic! say bewildered: am I not to leave this place to-morrow, and leave behind that which will occasion me regrets no time can ever remove?

Mrs. C. I protest, sir, I do not understand you.

Sir C. Not understand me! Ah! madam, forgive the heat of an imagination which has involuntarily betrayed the secret of a heart oppressed beyond description. [*to be.*]

Mrs. C. You forget, sir, what I am: what you ought

Sir C. I forget everything but the unhappy fatality which brought me here; the—

Mrs. C. No more, sir: has my conduct ever given you room to presume thus? Recollect yourself; in a few minutes we shall be summoned to the ball, and discomposure on either of our parts must be fatal to my peace for ever.

Sir C. Sooner would I die than be the occasion of anxiety to you. Blame your charms, your virtues, more than my ill-starred error. I shall soon leave you—never—never to see you more; but treat my memory with charity, I implore you.

[*Exit, with affected agitation.*]

Mrs. C. Unthinking man! I am all agitation: had we been surprised—the thought is agonizing; yet, oh! my Henry, could you ever believe me false?

AIR.—MRS. CORNFLOWER.

Ah! never believe

I so fickle could prove,

Your hope to deceive,

Or prove false to my love:

Though fancy may stray,

Through the ardour of youth,

Can affection decay,

Fix'd on virtue and truth?

Ah! never, ah! never,

Believe me, love.

To passion no slave,

In my bosom no art,

The hand that I gave

Fix'd for ever my heart.

The faith I profess'd

To sweet gratitude due,

Had not love charm'd my breast,

Must secure me to you.

For ever, for ever,

Believe me, love.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—*Cornflower's Barn, fitted up for the fête in a style of elegant simplicity; rural emblems, decorated with coloured lamps, wreaths of flowers, &c. tables with refreshments, seats, a band in an orchestra, &c. Company assembled.*

Enter MRS. CORNFLOWER, SIR CHARLES COURTLY, and MR. WILLIAMS; also CORNFLOWER, with a hazel-wand in his hand, decorated with oak-leaves and roses.

Corn. Come, neighbours, let us begin our merriment: a sprightly dance, by making good humour and exercise go hand-in-hand, will add both to our

health and happiness. We cannot vie with London routs for elegance or splendour; but what we want in magnificence shall be made up by mirth; and our deficiencies in taste shall be supplied by friendship. I'll be master of the ceremonies; and, by virtue of this hazel wand, decorated with emblems of rustic health and rural simplicity, invite you to pleasures that, I trust, will not fail to please on reflection,

Sir C. And Mrs. Cornflower will, I hope, do me the honour to open the ball with me.

CHORUS.

*Welcome are all to this scene of delight,
Where frolic and temperance hand-in-hand go;
The rejoicing of gratitude still must excite
Emotions the children of pleasure ne'er know.*

[A dance. Exeunt.

ACT III.—SCENE I.—A Landscape.

Enter BARNARD and DR. POTHER.

Barn. Poor Cornflower! he would listen to no advice; and now the consequence is even worse than I had feared. Scarcely was he gone to the county-meeting, after the baronet's chaise drove off, than she and her maid were both missing, and all search for them has been in vain.

Doctor. Monstrous melancholy! But I could tell you a droll story on that subject.

Barn. You have told a story too much on that subject already: that coxcomb, Peter, and you, have been overheard talking together about Cornflower and his wife; and it is suspected you know more than you will acknowledge.

Doctor. Me! I'm as innocent as my new gout medicine. But you astonish me, by supposing I had any hand in this business. I'll tell you all about it. One day I met Peter:—"I have the honour to address Dr. Pother, I believe," said he,—"Dr. Pother, at your service," said I; and, after a long harangue, (all in the way of my profession,) he asked me, merely out of curiosity, as he said, how Mr. and Mrs. Cornflower came to be married? I had the fact from you.

Barn. With an injunction of secrecy.

Doctor. Humph! that's true, to be sure. But, my dear sir, I was taken by surprise. By-the-by, I can tell you a most laughable story about that.

Barn. Stick to your own story.

Doctor. Well, then, as I said before, Peter came to consult me, all in the way of my profession; and he did ask me how the marriage was brought about, and I did happen to say,—"Peter," says I, "Mr. and Mrs. Cornflower—house on fire—ran up a ladder—saved her life—arrested her father."—"Out of pure love and affection," says Peter; says I, "You're a blockhead!"—Says he, "You're a parliamentary orator—cock and bull story—intelligible explanation;" and—(raising his voice) Am I to be catechised? I, Doctor Pother; who, for anatomy, chemistry, pharmacy, phlebotomy, oxygen, hydrogen, caloric, carbonic, atmospheric, galvanic,—Sdeath! sir, I'll follow them till I find em; and prove, sir, that Dr. Pother, sir, is not a man, sir, to part man and wife, sir, except in the way of his profession, sir; and if I had time, sir, I could tell you a story about that, sir, that would—Pooh, pah, broo! [Exit in a passion.

Barn. The fellow's honest, I know; but his folly has made him the dupe of that scoundrel, Peter. I have seen Mr. Williams, our worthy curate; and he has undertaken the task of breaking the dreadful tidings to poor Cornflower. Unhappy, misguided friend! I feel for your disappointment as if it were my own. Modern fashionable friends are warm in the hour of prosperity; but give me the man who is equally zealous in the moment of adversity.

AIR.—BARNARD.

*What fashion calls friendship dishonours the name,
The cloak of convenience, the child of caprice;
The phantom of folly, the compact of shame,
On prosperity rising, with peril to cease:*

*Such nerveless affections control not my will,
I glow with an ardour no check can suspend; [All,
And when friendship's the toast, being summon'd to
My heart's in the bumper I pledge to my friend.*

*Let worth be the basis, plain-dealing the mean,
Affection the impulse, and honour the guide:
In the compact I glory, nor shift with the scene,
In prosperity tender, adversity tried.*

*Let him share all my joys, mine his sorrows be still,
His interest and fame mine to watch and defend;
Thus, when friendship's the toast, being summon'd to
fill,*

My heart's in the bumper I pledge to my friend.

Enter ROBIN, dressed as for a journey.

Why, Robin, how's this? dressed for travelling?

Robin. Ay; and I's a favour to ax of thee.

Barn. What is it?

Robin. A few days' absence, unknown to anybody; mind, to find out the baronet and his poppy dog, Peter, who have veiged away madam Cornflower.

Barn. What, you'd turn knight-errant, and sally forth to the succour of distressed damsels?

Robin. Oh! you mean that Don Quixote fellow: I'll mak' a better out on't than he; I warrant: I won't mistake a windmill for a castle, though I may fancy baronet's back a corn-sheaf, and Peter's head a ten-penny nail; and this (his cudgel) shall serve for both flail and hammer.

Barn. Thou art an honest fellow. Go, and here's something for the journey. (Gives money.)

Robin. Thank ye.—Oh! I met Dr. Pother in a panic; and he be going wi' me to clear up his character, as he said. I never ax'd him how, for fear of setting him off wi' one of his long stories.—But I mun be off; for master Cornflower's a good fellow; he were a cordial to my poor heart, when my poor old mother had her goods seized for rent, and he paid it all down for her, wi' expenses; eleven pound sixteen and fourpence ha'penny; and shall I rest quietly in my bed, and see him clandestinely violated of his wife? No. So here I go; and if I catch the interlopers, if I don't peg Peter and bang t' baronet, to their hearts' delight, never trust me. [Exit.

Barn. As I live, here is Captain Belton. Would he had returned earlier, he might have prevented this.

Enter CAPTAIN BELTON.

Capt. What, my old friend?

Barn. Captain Belton? Welcome home.—Yet, you are not going to the farm?

Capt. Where else should I go?

Barn. Come with me; there is a misunderstanding at the farm.

Capt. Your look and manner declare something I almost dread to hear.

Barn. As a soldier, you can summon courage against a surprise.—Your sister—

Capt. What of her?

Barn. She is missing.—In short, we suspect, is gone off with a baronet; who, through an accident, became a guest at the farm during Cornflower's absence in London.

Capt. Impossible! Sir, my sister's character is not to be sported with.

Barn. Come, come; reserve your anger for the proper object. I don't say she is gone with him; but both disappeared this morning, and cannot be traced. A partiality between them has appeared to everybody but Cornflower.

Capt. Distraction!—And he—

Barn. Knows nothing of it. He is gone to the county-meeting. Our curate will, at his return, break it to him; and you had better not be seen till the surprise is over.

Capt. Who is the villain?

Barn. He is called Sir Charles Courtly.

Capt. Heavens! my Rosabel's brother! (Aside.) I know, by accident, this baronet has a sequestered

villa, some few miles from here; there they are probably gone, and we may intercept them.

Barn. In such a cause I am yours to the world's end. I'll step home, prepare myself for the journey, and meet you again directly. [Exit.]

Capt. Alas! who could have suspected this? Had I not better pause, ere I proceed further with Rosabel? Like her, my sister Emma was, in appearance, all beauty and truth: she has fallen, and may not—No; I cannot suppose it. I am too far gone in love and honour to retract; and must still sigh when she is absent.

AIR.—CAPTAIN BELTON.

*Fly swift, ye zephyrs,
Who waft the sighs of love;
Tell her how I languish,
What pain for her I prove.*

*Fly swift, ye zephyrs,
Ah! fleet as fancy move;
Tell her all my anguish—
No joy without my love!*

*Oh! tell her, o'er my mind
She bears the softest sway;
Oh! tell her all my ardour,
My fondness all display.*

Fly, &c.

[Exit.]

SCENE II.—An Apartment in Cornflower's house.

Enter CORNFLOWER (booted and spurred, with a parcel in his hand) and MR. WILLIAMS.

Corn. My reverend friend, you could not have called on me at a better time: this evening I devote to mirth; 'tis the birth-day of my Emma. See, I have brought her a present, and have delighted myself with anticipating the pleasure it will afford her.

Mr. W. The hopes of human life, good friend, are for ever chequered with disappointment.

Corn. Sir, I hope you have met with no disappointment to occasion the remark. We are old friends; and if it be in my power to remedy it, I trust I needn't say you may command me.

Mr. W. Command but yourself, and—

Corn. Command myself! I don't understand you.

Mr. W. You have promised yourself much pleasure from presenting this testimony of your affection to Mrs. Cornflower: is it not possible you may be disappointed?

Corn. I think it is not possible. But you shall witness what you seem so strangely to doubt.—*(Rings the bell.)*—[Enter SUSAN.]—Tell your mistress I wish to see her.

Susan. Sir? *(Embarrassed.)*

Corn. Tell your mistress I wish to see her.

Susan. My mistress, sir?

Corn. Yes, your mistress. Is the girl stupid?

Susan. My mistress is gone out, sir.

Corn. Gone out this evening? Well, we must wait her return. Why didn't you tell me so at first?

Susan. Yes, sir.

[Confused, and exit.]

Corn. The girl's a fool.

Mr. W. The absence of Mrs. Cornflower gives me an opportunity for a serious conversation, which an unlucky circumstance prevented yesterday.

Corn. On what subject, friend Williams?

Mr. W. The baronet, and—Mrs. Cornflower.

Corn. The baronet and Mrs. Cornflower?

Mr. W. Have you never observed the familiarity between them?

Corn. If I understand you, sir, you would insinuate something to the disadvantage of Emma; but beware how you touch on so tender a point. Barnard has troubled me on that subject; but from a man of your knowledge, one could hardly expect trifling.

Mr. W. Do me the justice to hear me. The bar-

Corn. Is gone; and I candidly confess, as I never liked him, I wish to hear no more about him. He

should not have staid so long, but as a guest thrown in my way by calamity, I could not violate the laws of hospitality, and drive him from my door.

Mr. W. The viper should ever be cast from our bosom.

Corn. Speak plainly, sir; you are probing me in the most sensitive part of my feelings.

Mr. W. I would wound only to comfort. The insidious attention paid by the baronet to Mrs. Cornflower I have long observed—

Corn. And have interpreted the politeness with which Mrs. Cornflower, considering him our guest, received it, to her disadvantage. This, sir, is not well done: you insult me, you hurt me, you—

Mr. W. Necessity imposes the task. Sir Charles's assiduities have made more impression on Mrs. Cornflower than you imagine: he was a man well calculated to seduce, and Mrs. Cornflower—

Corn. For heaven's sake, sir, do not trifle: declare all your suspicions, and I'll stake my existence on my poor Emma's innocence. Your cruelty, sir, brings tears into my eyes; and your character only bristles my anger. My Emma false!

Mr. W. Have you ever known me capable of a serious falsehood?

Corn. Never. Perhaps she has returned.—*(Goes to ring a bell; Mr. W. stops him.)*

Mr. W. Restrain your impatience a moment.

Corn. Then plainly speak all, and do not agonize my heart with phantoms you cannot—I hope you cannot realize.

Mr. W. Delicacy now were cruelty. Could I have spoken to you yesterday, all might have been prevented. [freeze me!]

Corn. All what? Speak! Unaccountable horrors

Mr. W. Compose yourself.

Corn. Compose myself on the rack! Speak, man, what you know. Emma Cornflower false! No, no, no! Yet, you would not destroy—But why not you as likely false as she?

Mr. W. The hour of temptation only exhibits our hearts.—Your wife is—

Corn. What?

Mr. W. Gone.

Corn. Where? when? how?

Mr. W. No one can tell: we have searched for her the whole day, but in vain. Fanny, her maid, is missing with her. You saw the baronet off, then went to the county-meeting; in an hour after, both were gone. *(Cornflower drops into the chair, and sobs audibly.)* Indulge awhile this natural excess of grief, then listen— [sex!]

Corn. Listen! to what but madness? Curse on the *Mr. W.* Hold! curse not all for one.

Corn. That one was all to me. Had I but died, and ignorant of this, I had been blessed!

Mr. W. To covet death is the common fault of disappointed confidence. Remember, resignation is our duty. [wife—nor I—]

Corn. You have no broken heart! you have no

Mr. W. I am a man, and must partake your sorrows. But can I be your friend, and let them crush you? No. Then let my friendship, blending with my duty, draw from the sacred source of healing hope, that consolation which may calm your breast.

Corn. Oh! you had need; for you have planted a dagger there, death, death only can withdraw!—Which way went they? I'll fly, pursue, and sacrifice 'em. *(Going off.)*

Mr. W. Hold! Recollect yourself, and then—*(Stopping him.)*

Corn. I will! The storm is past. Give me wine! I am sick at heart! Oh! man, man! Hug adders, vipers, scorpions; but trust not woman! *(Tears open the parcel, and produces two portraits in one frame.)* That was her present; she herself had begged it: her portrait and mine, united in one band as we were! Oh! how the wish delighted me! Look at that face: does that, sir, speak deceit?

See, see that angel-smile! that heavenly look! that—that—Confusion! (*Dashes it down.*) But it's over—I've conquered—I've torn her from my heart—Ha, ha, ha! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*A Heath. Sir Charles's house in the distance. A public house on one side. Rain heard.*

Enter PETER, running.

Peter. Bless my heart, how it rains! and that's not the worst of it: I saw Robin and Dr. Pother at a distance; they have smoked us, I suppose; and if they saw me, all's done up. I'll pop into Chalk's, for I shall never be able to reach our house across the heath, yonder, without being seen. Here, Chalk, Chalk! (*Knocks at the door.*)

Enter CHALK.

Chalk. Ah! master Peter, is it you?

Peter. Very much like me. Stand by, and let me get out of the rain.

Chalk. I don't mind rain, for my part.

Peter. Why, water is your best friend. Your grog's like an April-day,—a little sunshine with a deluge of water. [*proof.*]

Chalk. I'm sure, Mr. Peter, my spirits are all

Peter. Not water-proof; for you generally give them the dropsy. [*Exit.*]

Chalk. An impudent fellow! But I must be mum, for fear of his master; and if he wasn't my landlord and a magistrate, I'd tell him a piece of my mind. He ought to be ashamed of himself! two women at once, and—

Peter. (*Without.*) Chalk, Chalk!

Chalk. Coming, coming!—A puppy! calling about him, and never paying. [*Goes into the house.*]

Enter ROBIN and DOCTOR POTHER.

Robin. Dang it! how provoking it were to miss the rout, and that like, only at t' last town.

Doctor. Provoking, indeed: I'm afraid it's a a lost case, and scarcely know what to prescribe; but it will make a singular story.

Robin. Never mind stories now, mun; let's go in here till the hurricane be over, and consider, in the meantime, what to do. Herc, house! house!

Re-enter CHALK.

Chalk. Please to want, gentlemen?

Robin. To come in, to be sure. What a daft chap thou mun be to ax such a question! This is a house for travellers, I racken; that's enough for us; and we've brass in our pockets, and that's enough for thee.

Doctor. Speaking of brass, I know a monstrous good story about the widow Wad and a warming-pan.

Robin. Rot the widow Wad, and the warming-pan, too! Be I to stand in the pelting rain to listen to such gab? [*Goes in.*]

Doctor. Landlord, you never heard such a story in your life. Says the widow Wad—

Chalk. Coming, coming! [*Runs in.*]

Doctor. Insolent fellow! I'll go find the waiter; for I'm determined somebody shall hear it. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Room in the house. A chimney-board conceals the fire-place.*

PETER discovered.

Peter. I certainly manœuvred Mrs. Cornflower and Fanny neatly; but the women are both so squeamish, and squall so, I don't know what we shall do with 'em: entreaties are useless, and force is dangerous.

Robin. (*Without.*) Ony where, ony where; I've find my way.

Peter. There they are. Why didn't I caution Chalk? They're coming up here. Where shall I hide? (*Looks about.*) Oh! this chimney-board will conceal me. (*Gets behind the chimney-board.*)

Enter ROBIN and POTHER, preceded by the Waiter, who puts a glass of liquor on the table, and exits.

Robin. Doctor Pother, towards your good health. Why, this stuff be like your poticary stuff, dear and nasty. [*an apothecary.*]

Doctor. Ha, ha, ha! I could tell you a story about Robin. Could you? Why, as we must stay here till rain's over, we may as well mak' ourselves agreeable; so, give us a story, Doctor.

Doctor. With all my heart. You must know that—*Chalk.* (*Without.*) This way, sir; this way.

Doctor. I protest there's always something occurs to interrupt my stories.

Enter CHALK and STUBBLE.

Robin. What, measter Stubble! what brought you here? [*Robin.*]

Stub. Why, I may put the same question to you.

Doctor. I fancy, Stubble, we are all on a scent. Tell you the story of our journey: set out, post haste, over gate, stile, hedge, and ditch; stuck in a bog; and, says Robin— [*story.*]

Robin. Stop! the bog abut, while we hear Stubble's *Stub.* We're after the lost sheep, Mrs. Cornflower. I left master at the last town, stopping to have the horse shod; and trudged on before, to inquire for Courtly-hall, which parson Williams found in a road-book. [*men.*]

Chalk. Courtly-hall is across the heath, gentle-

Robin. Then I shall catch that rascal Peter, at last.

Chalk. You mean Sir Charles's man. He was here just before you came in; and which way he went out, I can't tell. But shall I bring you anything, gentlemen?

Stub. Ay, landlord; and, as it's but a raw day, and we may wait some time for the rain, suppose you light the fire.

Chalk. Directly, gentlemen. [*Exit.*]

Doctor. Like your notion of the fire vastly. Looking at the chimney-board puts me in mind of a story: calling one day on a gouty patient—chimney-sweeper was sweeping parlour chimney, which came into the flue of patient's chamber. "How's gout?" said I.—"Wish the devil had it," said he; lump came something against the chimney-board, and out rolls the little soot-scraper into the room. "The Devil!" cries the patient, and jumped out of the window into the fish-pond below it. Cured gout; and, out of gratitude, he gives the chimney-sweepers, every May-day, a public breakfast in the afternoon.—*Re-enter CHALK, with a red hot poker.*

Robin. That's right, landlord; I've remove t' board, and we'll be in a blaze in no time. (*Robin removes the board; Chalk applies the poker, and the fire becomes lighted. Peter drops down the chimney, and jumps out with terror.*)

Chalk. A thief, a thief!

Robin. Oh! it's thee, is it? I've got thee at last. (*To Peter.*)

Chalk. What, Peter?

Peter. Yes, it's Peter!—"Dead for a ducat!"— (*Aside.*)

Stub. Villain! Where is she?

Peter. She! Who? [*three over t' coals.*]

Robin. None of thy tricks: speak, or I've haul

Peter. Why, I have been hauled over the coals.—What shall I do? I'll sham faint, to gain time for recollection. (*Aside.*)—Oh! I'm very much hurt. Oh! oh! (*Pretends to faint.*)

Robin. Oh! that's all sham—Abraham.

Doctor. I'll soon find out that; I'll bleed him. (*Feels for a lancet.*) Bless me! I haven't a lancet.

Robin. Here's an excellent fleam, mun; and I'll hold him. (*Peter tries to escape, but is secured by Robin.*) Now, down on thy marrow-bones, and tell me where Mrs. Cornflower be, or I've brak' every bone i' thy skin.

Peter. I know nothing about her.

Chalk. Why, you told me that was the name of a

lady old Dick drove to your master's. Old Dick, gentlemen, belongs to the Ram-inn, at the last town.
Stub. Then I'll find him out, while you make that fellow confess.

[*Exit.*]
Doctor. Confess; take my advice. (*To Peter.*)
Peter. Take anything but your physic.

Robin. None of your nonsense. Did Mrs. Cornflower go off with thy master in a voluntary manner?

Peter. No; in a post-chaise. I'll tell you how it was: my master stood there, as you may do; (*places Robin by the door;*) the lady stood there, as you may do; (*places Chalk by him;*) and I stood there, as you may do; (*places the Doctor by Chalk;*) up drove the chaise—Now suppose me old Dick—

Doctor. Old Nick, you mean.

Peter. Very well for you, Doctor. I ran to the chaise-door, and opened it thus; (*opens the window;*) and now catch me who can.

[*Jumps out, followed by Robin and Chalk.*]

Doctor. I'll follow, the moment I have digested all this. Make a capital story. Farmer and wife—rural affection—husband abroad—wife at home—intriguing baronet—elopement—pursuit—red-hot poker—old Nick in the chimney—down he comes—fat in the fire—and the devil hauled over the coals. (*Looks out at the window.*) There they go! Now, Peter—now, Robin. Peter puffs—Robin, at his heels—Peter at the pond—can't cross in time to go round—Robin seizes him—struggle—pull-haul—wrestle—and there they go plump into the pond together. Huzza! it will make as good a story as my history of a debating-society. I wish there were anybody here to tell it to.

AIR.—DOCTOR POTHER.

*The forum for fun and variety
 Is a debating society;
 Such gabbling,
 And squabbling,
 And humming and ha'ing;
 Such thumping,
 And jumping,
 Air-beating, and saving;
 Mouths like cannons open,
 Charg'd with figure and trope.*

*Splitting logical straws in "no meanings" digestion,
 With indefinite answer to quibbling question.*

(SPOKEN.) "Gentlemen of the Philological Forum, the question for this evening's agitation is 'Which is most essential to the physical faculties of moral economy, and the intellectual energies of reciprocal ratiocination, waltzes or Welsh wigs?'"—(IN SEVERAL VOICES.) "Oh! bravo, bravo, bravo!"—*Mr. President and gentlemen—hem!*—the question propounded for—hem!—this evening's—hem!—discussion, is of the utmost importance to the—hem!"—"Mr. President, that gentleman's hem is but a so-so business; and if he draw the thread of his argument so slowly, he'll not get through a stitch to-night!"—"Mr. President, I rise to the question; and I shall produce an unanswerable argument, to which I expect a categorical answer."—"Mr. President, how can any man, that is not an Irishman, expect an answer to an unanswerable argument?"—"Mr. President, if that gentleman is after making national reflections, I've a national answer to his question, called a shewlady, that will be after knocking down him and his argument together."—"Sir, it is first necessary to inquire what moral economy and the intellectual energies are; and, to be brief, I shall divide the subject into no more than twenty-one heads."—"What are you pulling out your night-cap for while the gentleman's speaking?"—"Silence! Mr. Lestranger is on his legs."—"Sir, I will speak; it's my turn."—"Then turn him out."

*Order, order! question, question! chair, chair!
 All talkers and no hearers, till the forum's like a fair.*

*Order gain'd through the chairman's authority,
 Seconded by the majority,
 Gives reason
 For reason,
 And quaint speculation;
 With ranting,
 And panting,
 And dull declamation;
 With fury and fuss,
 The case to discuss;
 To twist and to twine,
 Perplex and define;*

*With paradox, punning, bad grace, and worse grammar,
 While some squeak, and some bellow, some storm, and some stammer.*

(SPOKEN IN SEVERAL VOICES.) "Mr. President, of this question much may be said on both sides, though I am decidedly on one side; and notwithstanding what any gentleman can say on the other side, I shall back my argument with such breast-work, that I shall have him on the hip, and not leave him a leg to stand upon."—"Mr. President, I am clearly in favour of waltzes. Waltzes come from Germany with whiskers, sausages, melodrams, and many other drama equally efficacious. A waltz is a dance, an innocent recreation, conducive both to health and cheerfulness. And what can be more favourable to reason and morality? A Welsh wig is—what is it? A mean covering for the head; bestowing not wisdom like a lawyer's wig, bronze like a Brutus, gravity like a tie, weight like a full bottom, or smartness like a scratch; but is, as it were, a mere night-cap, fit only for quizzers, quidnuncs, watchmen, and, what's all the same, old women."—"Personal, personal!"—"Beg pardon, sir; I didn't know any old woman was present."—"Mr. President, I maintain that waltzes are immoral."—"No, no!"—"Sir, the morality of the subject in question depends upon one question; and I question if that question is at all questionable. Is morality an active or inactive principle? If active, we are more in favour of waltzes; and, if inactive, for Welsh wigs; and I have no doubt but that every gentleman who is of my mind, will be of the same opinion."—"Sir, a learned author, whose name I have forgotten, and whose words I don't recollect, asserts what I shall not take up your time by repeating. But, on the subject of debate, the enlighten'd Dr. Dunsfizzle, in his Dissertation on Dunderheads, has, in the most elegant Latin, these emphatic words:
*Comparabundus humi, wigcum cum waltzo,
 Describusque, tumfusque, waltzium cum wiggo.*"—"Knock down Dr. Dunsfizzle."

*Order, order! question, question! chair, chair!
 All talkers and no hearers, till the forum's like a fair.*

*The hubbub, at length, being paralysed,
 The question is further on analyzed:*

*"I move, sir,
 To prone, sir,
 That, spite of all quarrel,
 Welsh wigs, sir,
 Are gigs, sir,
 And waltzes are moral.
 Let those who can't dance,
 From envy advance
 An argument on,"—
 And thus he goes on;*

*Till above all the voices another exalts his,
 To prove that Welsh wigs are more moral than waltzes.*

(SPOKEN IN SEVERAL VOICES.) "Mr. President, I aver that waltzes being more expensive than Welsh wigs, the latter are most agreeable to moral economy; though waltzes, by overheating people, and giving them cold, are more conducive to the physical faculty; who are often obliged to prescribe Welsh wigs to restore the intellectual energies, for the purposes of reciprocal ratiocination."—"Sir, as to the morality of waltzes, I shall prove that Welsh wigs, that is, that Welsh wigs, compared with waltzes, being comparatively by comparison, the superior to waltzes, compared with Welsh wigs, allowing for the morality of the one, and the ratiocination of the other."—"Nonsense, nonsense!"—"Silence! no interruption. The president speaks."—"Gentlemen, to stop all this heterogeneous hurlyburly, the clerk shall read some of the fundamental rules of the society."—"It is not required that any gentleman shall be obliged either to understand himself or make anybody else understand him; for as every gentleman has his opinion, if he be satisfied with it, that is enough; as no man, who is a man, ought to give up his opinion to any man, for no man.—Any gentleman may go to sleep during a debate, provided he wake time enough for hearing the question put; and then he is recommended to vote with the strongest party.—Gentlemen who learn their speeches by heart are required to come perfect; and, for the benefit of discussion, incontrovertible arguments, on both sides of the question, may be had of the secretary, at a reasonable rate, ready made.—Any gentleman wishing to speak the whole evening, may, by paying all the expenses, be accommodated with the room to himself."

*Order, order! question, question! chair, chair!
 All talkers and no hearers, till the forum's like a fair.*

SCENE V.—An Apartment in Sir Charles Courtly's House. A door to another Apartment.

Enter MRS. CORNFLOWER and FANNY.

Mrs. C. What misery has indiscretion cost me! And though guilty only of mental error, and brought here by stratagem and force, how odious must I appear in the eyes of my husband! to whom I cannot fly, and from whom I am, perhaps, separated for ever.

Fanny. My dear madam, a thought has just struck me: as we are confined here, and can make no one hear, suppose you were to write a note, and throw it out of the window, over the wall; saying how we

were deluded from the farm by that wretch Peter, forced into a chaise, and brought here; and desiring whoever finds it, to carry it directly to my master. There is pen, ink, and paper, in the next room.

Mrs. C. The suggestion is good; I will execute it, and heaven prosper our hope.

Fanny. I'll get everything ready, ma'am. [*Exit.*]
Mrs. C. Alas! Henry, what must be your sufferings! Yet they cannot equal mine. So long with him, in your absence, his art and accomplishments dazzled my imagination, and led me to excuse, instead of resenting, his first approaches; and this, the extent of my guilt, has placed me in his power.

AIR.—MRS. CORNFLOWER.

*Ills surround me,
Fears confound me,
Ev'ry moment cares increase;
Ever sighing,
Hope denying
Balm, to give my bosom peace.
Like the fawn, by the lion pursu'd
To some precipice, panting for breath,
Who looks down on the fierce raging flood,
And plunges, despairing, to death.* [*Exit.*]

Enter a Servant, with MISS COURTLY and JENNY in travelling dresses.

Miss C. Tell my brother I am here. [*Exit Serv.*]
I am glad I came as you advised, Jenny; there is some mystery in my brother's being here, which I must unravel.

Jenny. Short time as I have been in the house, ma'am, I have seen significant looks enough to tell me all is not right.

Miss C. Then my coming may prevent mischief. Go, and prepare my room. [*Exit Jenny.*] Now to consult my guardian brother about this formidable captain, from whom I have endeavoured to conceal the interest he has in my affections, till I am sure of his; or I am afraid I shall stand as little chance of resisting his persuasions of matrimony, as simple Lisette did those of her lover, Lubin.

AIR.—MISS COURTLY.

*Young Lubin lov'd the fair Lisette,
And tapping at her window came;
The sun had barely risen yet—
She peep'd and cried—"Oh! fie for shame!"
"Sweet maid," says he, "'tis smiling May,
Come, let us rove!"—"Indeed," said she,
"So soon? What will the neighbours say?
Fi donc, fi donc! ah! mon ami."*

*Still Lubin soft persuasion tried;
And fair Lisette, at last, content,
Forgot the neighbours, ceas'd to chide,
Stole out, and with him Maying went.
And oft a stolen kiss he caught;
Lisette, no doubt, pleas'd it would be;
Yet only said, whate'er she thought,
"Fi donc, fi donc! ah! mon ami."*

*He talk'd of love: "Come, let's away."
She cried, yet loiter'd—Silly thing!
He press'd her, too, to fix the day,
And on her finger plac'd a ring.
She started, blush'd, and hung her head,
Yet very angry tried to be;
But only sigh'd, and softly said,
"Fi donc, fi donc! ah! mon ami."*

Enter SIR CHARLES COURTLY.

Sir C. Why, sister Roxabel, what in the name of astonishment brought you down here?

Miss C. Neither seeing nor hearing from you, brother Charles, I concluded some accident had happened; but I am happy my fears were ground-

less. And now, brother, I want some serious conversation with you.

Sir C. You know I hate serious conversation.

Miss C. But it is of consequence to my happiness; and as you are left my guardian, who else should I consult? [*Laughing.*]

Sir C. What can she be aiming at? [*Aside.*]—Well, go on; I'm all attention.

Miss C. I have had an adventure. An insult I received in St. James's Park, brought a young officer to my protection, whom I afterwards met at Lady Fanny's, danced with, and—

Sir C. Lost your heart.

Miss C. Even so, brother.

Sir C. And what may his name be?

Miss C. Captain Belton. And now, my dear brother, as my peace is concerned, I must request that you will ascertain for me all that relates to this formidable fellow, before my heart gets too far engaged to retreat. [*Enter a Servant.*]

Serv. A gentleman, sir, who says his name is Captain Belton.

Sir C. [*Looking significantly at Miss C., who is confused and astonished.*] By appointment, sister? [*Apart to Miss C.*]—Shew the gentleman up.

[*To the Servant, who goes out.*]

Miss C. Brother, I scorn your suspicion. How, or why, he should come here, is to me astonishing. On my honour, I knew not of it. [*Exit.*]

Sir C. It is easily accounted for: he has discovered for where she left London, and followed her.

Re-enter Servant, introducing CAPTAIN BELTON.

Sir, your servant.

[*Exit Servant.*]

Capt. Your servant, Sir Charles. I have introduced myself, though unknown to you; but the business which brought me here is of too much consequence for ceremony.

Sir C. I hate ceremony, sir, as much as any man; but as I have some idea of your business, I think a little delicacy might be requisite.

Capt. If you have an idea of it, delicacy, sir, is a consideration you can have little claim to.

Sir C. Well, this is the most impudent introduction to a love-story I ever met with. [*Aside.*]

Capt. Concern for the happiness of a sister, is—

Sir C. I must, of course, be well acquainted with; and, as you put delicacy out of the question, I shall follow your example, and declare that I shall take care to keep that sister out of your reach.

Capt. [*Producing pistols.*] Either instantly deliver her to me, or take the alternative. [*Offering him a pistol.*]

Sir C. [*Aside, and taking the pistol.*] Well, this is the first time I ever knew that the way to make an impression upon a sister's heart was by a bullet through her brother's. [*They take places and present.*]

Re-enter MISS COURTLY, screaming; she stands between them.

Miss C. For heaven's sake, brother—Captain Belton!

Capt. Miss Courtly! this must appear strange, madam; but insulted honour demands it.

Sir C. Insulted honour! Zounds! sir, I don't comprehend you: here's a man introduces himself to me without the least ceremony, disclaims delicacy while talking of the happiness of a sister, and demands her of me, as a highwayman would my purse, by a pistol: then talks of insulted honour.

Corn. [*Without.*] Resist my entrance, and I'll knock you down.

Capt. The voice of my brother! [*Exit Miss C.*]

Sir C. His brother! so, so! now his madness is accounted for; I foresee a pretty end to this business; but I must brazen it out. [*Aside.*]

Enter CORNFLOWER.

Corn. Belton! astonishment!

Capt. Barnard has told me all that has happened, the rest shall be explained hereafter.

Sir C. Upon my word, gentlemen, you puzzle me: breaking into my house like ruffians—

Corn. Shall we stand upon ceremony with a robber, the violator of innocence, the destroyer of the ties of humanity?

Sir C. You honour me, sir, prodigiously; but when you have ceased to be facetious, do me the favour to unriddle all this.

Corn. Mrs. Cornflower is in this house, sir; return her to me innocent as you found her—that you cannot do—Oh! it was inhuman! your life was preserved; in return, you take away the support of mine.

Capt. Come, sir, no longer parley. (*To Sir C.*)

Sir C. I shall account regularly with you, gentlemen; but, before I deign to answer to all this insolence, you will, no doubt, in your nice calculations of honour, produce some proof of—

The door in the back part of the scene opens, and MISS COURTLY appears with MRS. CORNFLOWER, who flies to her husband.

Miss C. Brother, brother, I have discovered this secret; and I owe the exposure of it to my own honour, and the hope of your reformation.

Sir C. Confusion!

Mrs. C. Henry, is it a dream; or am I safe? My brother here, too?

Corn. (*Putting her gently from him.*) Emma, this is not a dream; would it were! From here you go for ever; but my arms must now be widowed. (*Mrs. C. fainting, is held by the Captain.*) Look, look at that beauteous ruin, and say, murderer! fiend! what atonement you can make for such a wreck. Oh! she was an angel of light; now she is—(*To Sir C.*)

Sir C. Not quite so vehement, sir; for I must say, in my own defence, as well as the lady's, that she is innocent.

Corn. Innocent! speak it again: innocent!

Mrs. C. Yes, Henry, indeed, innocent.

Corn. Yet you fled my house.

Sir C. Involuntarily, sir.

Corn. A husband's honour bears a sacred character. I must be satisfied beyond a doubt. I never compromised my love; I cannot, will not, compromise my honour.

Mrs. C. Too cruel! (*Weeping.*)

Sir C. What proof do you want? If being dragged here against her will; if agony for you, and contempt for me, constitute innocence, I repeat she is innocent.

Mrs. C. Indeed, it is truth.

Re-enter Servant.

Serv. A gentleman named Barnard, sir. (*To Sir C.*)
Sir C. Shew him up; all the neighbourhood, if they come. [*Exit Serv.*]

Re-enter Servant with BARNARD, STUBBLE, and DICK.

Corn. Barnard, my friend, your unexpected presence—

Barn. Will, I hope, set all right. I accompanied your brother here: we settled that he should make his appearance alone. While waiting at an adjacent house, Stubble found me, and brought me this man, who drove the chaise, in which Peter and a gang of rascals, by force, brought Mrs. Cornflower here.

Stub. Yes; and one of the gang was old Gerard.

Barn. Here is a note, too, I picked up under the window of this house, that will, I trust, remove all scruple.

Corn. (*Takes it tremblingly.*) 'Tis Emma's hand. (*Reads.*) "Whoever you are, if you can pity persecuted innocence, inform—Cornflower—at—farm—near—that his wife—treacherously forced away—now a prisoner in the house of Sir Charles Courtly—on this head—amply rewarded—EMMA CORNFLOWER." This could be no trick; she could never expect me here. (*Aside.*)

Enter ROBIN, wet and dirty.

Robin. I gotten all t' fact out of him.

Corn. Who?

Robin. Peter: he veigled away your wife under clandestine pretences, and forced her into a shay. I've had a pretty tussle wi' him, to mak' him confess; and away we went, cheek-by-jowl, into the horse-pond. I gave him such a ducking, it cooled his courage, and he confessed all. Your wife's innocent; and I wouldn't tell you a flim, that you know well enough.

Corn. Emma—I can scarcely speak—joy, confusion, o'ercome me. If I have appeared cruel, our mutual honour, our future happiness, demanded I should clear your character beyond the possibility of doubt. Can you now forgive me?

Mrs. C. I have nothing to forgive: appearances were against me, and the severity of my trial has been amply overpaid by the further proofs it has given me of your integrity and affection.

Capt. You have still to account to me, sir. (*To Sir C.*)

Sir C. When you please, sir.

Miss C. Brother, do not attempt to defend one crime by the commission of another. To Captain Belton I can only remark, that the point of honour being established in the innocence of his sister, he will not consult the feelings of all here by persisting in his present purpose.

Sir C. Here let me interfere: I have done wrong, and would make reparation. To you, madam, (*to Mrs. C.*) I can make no amends: perhaps not to you, sir; (*to Corn.*) but I hope I can make my peace with Captain Belton, by bestowing on him, as her guardian, the hand of this lady. He may impute this concession to cowardice: if so, I am still ready to meet him; I feel no cowardice but that of guilt.

Capt. But how will Miss Courtly decide?

Miss C. I must consent, I suppose, to make some sacrifice for a general peace; and, therefore, as plenipotentiary extraordinary, I hereby ratify it. (*Gives her hand.*)

Corn. My Emma restored to me in all the triumph of innocence! I have no further resentment. And now, from the lesson before us, may all learn never to boast of security till the hour of trial be past. As frail beings, let humility be our monitor, and charity our motto: and from this feeling may we hope our friends will advocate the cause of the Farmer's Wife.

FINALE

Mrs. C. My trial past, retriev'd my fame,
Should wits my story handle,
Protect me, sisters kind, from blame,
Against the shafts of scandal.

Chorus. Her faults forgiving and forgetting,
Ease her bosom's anxious strife;
Her hope supporting, cause abetting,
Kindly aid the Farmer's Wife.

Corn. Ye married men of honour stern,
Appearance was deceiving;
But from her curious story learn,
All seeing i'n't believing.

Chorus. Her faults, &c.

Miss C. Unmarried belles, unmarried beaux,
Whene'er detail'd her story,
Since from the trial pure she rose,
Defend her, I implore ye.

Chorus. Her faults, &c.

Capt. Here indiscretion's folly read,
Then judge with charity through life;

Barn. And, as support her mind must need,
Protect, kind friends, the Farmer's Wife.

Chorus. Her faults, &c.

[*Exeunt.*]

MY SPOUSE AND I;

AN OPERATICAL FARCE, IN TWO ACTS.—BY CHARLES DIBDIN, JUN.



Act I—Scene 2

CHARACTERS

WILTON
FRISK
DICK

PADDOCK
SCOREM
FROGS

LA WYLR'S CLERK
NED
HODGE

DAME PADDOCK
HARRIET
JANIE

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Paddock's Farm house on one side, with a pig sty, opposite side, an Alehouse, sign The Barley Mow, written under it 'Pay to day trust to morrow,' in the distance, fields, and a windmill going.*

Enter Peasants, from different entrances, going to labour.

CHORUS

*Well met, well met good neighbours all,
To our daily toil away,
Ever ready at the call
Of those for toil who pay*

*The sun now smiles o'er dale and hill,
And labour rouses rustic life,
Click clack goes old Hopper's mill,
And click clack goes old Hopper's wife.*

TRIO

*Merrily whirls the sounding flail,
Till pleas'd we see departing day,
And then we quaff old Scorem's ale,
And then—*

SCOREM (*entering from the Alehouse.*)

—Why, then, I make you pay.

Cho. *The sun now smiles o'er dale and hill,
And labour rouses rustic life,
Click clack goes old Hopper's mill,
And click clack goes old Hopper's wife.*

DAME PADDOCK (*entering from the Farm-house.*)

*And Hopper's wife be it the right,
If lazy hands like you appear,
The corn will ne'er be cut to-night—*

PADDOCK (*entering from the Field*)

*Not if you keep 'em tostering here.
The sun has beam'd an hour or more
To work, and prate when labour's o'er.*

Cho. *Master and Dame, we'll haste away,
And labour kindly all the day,
And when our toil is o'er, regale,
And drink your health in Scorem's ale.*

[*Exeunt all but Paddock and Scorem*

SCO Are you for a drop of my best home brewed, this morning Master Paddock?

PAD They who drink in a morning, neighbour Scorem get generally get the head ache by noon, and the headache by night, and they be two troublesome companions. A clear head be the next thing to a clear conscience

SCO And you have both, they say (*Ironically*)

PAD Why, as to that, my conscience, thank heaven! be like my crop, pretty fairish, and "though my head be thick, as I say to my spouse, "there be nothing in that," as my spouse do say to I.

SCO Your spouse is a very sensible woman; but, by the by, the whole village is curious to know who that stripling is you have lately hired, who, with his pretty looks and smart clothes, has turned the heads of half the girls in the place.

PAD Poor lad, he do seem to have known better days. He came to us a child of misfortune, and he be no Christian who do refuse to receive the wandering stranger.

SCO True, Master Paddock, and though I keep an alehouse, and some people are wicked enough to say I chalk double, my door is open to every stranger.

Enter FRISK, shabbily dressed.

Frisk. I'm glad to hear it. I am a stranger, and want to walk in.

Scs. Welcome, sir, to the Barley Mow. That's the house; there's the sign, and under it, "Pay to-day—trust to-morrow."—(*Aside.*) A broad hint; he seems as poor as Job.

Frisk. Trust to-morrow! Couldn't you make it to-day? There's an inconvenience in waiting.—(*Shewing his empty pockets, aside.*)

Scs. That's my reason for not trusting.

Frisk. Didn't you say your door was open to the stranger?

Scs. Ay, that could pay his reckoning. Coming, coming! [*Runs in, and closes the door in Frisk's face.*]

Frisk. A pretty fellow, to insult a gentleman in distress. I'll expose him in the County Chronicle, as a warning to hungry travellers, whose stomachs and purses are in unison. I'll give him his true character.—(*To Paddock.*) You can give me a hint, and I'll make bad worse by improving on it.

Pad. Why, as to that, I must beg to be excused. He who do pick a hole in his neighbour's coat, deserves to live in a house without a neighbourhood.

Frisk. Give me your hand; I should like to be better acquainted with you. Feeling in a flail, and sentiment in a smock frock! Your haystack is no relation to the Barley Mow. Why, you'd make a famous character in a novel.

Pad. A novel! What may that be, sir?

Frisk. Don't you know what a novel is? One village in the kingdom without a circulating library! then there are hopes. A novel is a book, whose title is new, and its contents generally old. the hero, a queer, good-for-nothing, well-meaning, comical fellow, though tolerably engaging, like me; the heroine, a pretty, languishing, silly girl, like most of her female readers; her guardian, a crusty, hard-hearted, pay to day and trust to-morrow, like that fellow; (*pointing to the Alehouse;*) her aunt, an antiquated, teasing, obstinate quiz, like that—(*Pointing to DAME PADDOCK, who enters.*)

Dame. Quiz! What dost mean? and why dost stand talking with that Jack-a-dandy, Paddock, when there be so much to do in the field?

Pad. Dame, dame; doantee be cantankerous. This gentleman—

Dame. Gentleman, quotha? Ha, ha, ha! If thee want't at a hand in the field, I dare say the gentleman will be very glad to make himself useful.

Pad. Nay, nay; how canst thou expect a gentleman to make himself useful?

Dame. Well, well; I can't stay talking nonsense. Thee ought to make haste to the reapers; and if thee hast anything to say to the gentleman, bid him call another time. (*Going.*)

Frisk. The nearer dinner-time the better.

Pad. That be just the time I were thinking.—(*Aside to Dame Paddock.*) Wife, wife! he do want a dinner.

Dame. (*Returning.*) What! want a dinner? Pray, sir, walk in; and do'ee take a luncheon to stay thee till dinner be ready; and, Paddock, do'ee draw a jug o' the best, that the gentleman may give his opinion of my brewing. Luncheon shall be ready directly, sir. Make haste, Paddock, make haste.

[*Goes into the house.*]

Pad. I wool, dame; and it shall be a jug o' the best.—(*Aside.*) I wish neighbour Scoresn knew what pleasure there be in sometimes drawing ale for nothing. [*Goes in.*]

Frisk. Here's primitive hospitality! A novel writer would describe it somehow thus: "Arrived, half famished, with a full heart and empty pocket, at a picturesque farm-house, beautifully overspread with woodbines." (*Looking at it.*) I see nothing but stinging-nettles. And how shall I get over that pigstye? Turn it into a dog-kennel, and introduce a beautiful apostrophe to the virtues of honest Tray.

"Honest Tray, partaking of the character of his master, the very picture of patriarchal hospitality, welcomed by his caresses the hapless wanderer. When the farmer's wife, a pretty, modest looking woman, with half a dozen curly-pated cherubs about her, came out; and addressing him in the soft accents of unsophisticated humanity, said"—

Enter ROGER.

Roger. What d'ye do here, you vagabond! After the pigs and poultry, I suppose.

Frisk. My dear fellow, you mistake your man.

Roger. No, I doan't. It's easy to see what you be, mon,—a common vagram; but if you don't go off my measter's premises, I'll make you.

Frisk. My good sir, I give you credit—

Roger. That's more than you'll get yourself.

Frisk. A word with you. You belong to that house?

Roger. What if I do?

Frisk. I dine there to-day.

Roger. Hadn't you better stay till you're axed?

Frisk. That ceremony's past. Jug of the best—fine luncheon. Don't you hear the eggs and bacon s'fying, you rogue you? I am off; and let me give you a little parting advice: if you wish to support the character of an Englishman, whenever you meet a hungry stranger, always address him with—

Re-enter PADDOCK.

Pad. The luncheon be ready, sir.
Frisk. (*To Roger.*) Didn't I tell you so?—(*To Paddock.*) Thankye, thankye; I'll do it justice; and as eating heartily is the best way of returning a hearty welcome, you shall find me as grateful as appetite can make me. [*Goes in.*]

Pad. Why, Roger, have you been saying anything rude to that young man? He be a gentleman in distress, I dare say; though a queer, plain spoken chap as I ever seed. But, "Plain and above board be best," as I say to my spouse; and "Rough and ugly munnat be despised," as my spouse do say to I.

Roger. I were protecting your property. I thought un a poacher; however, as matters have turned out, I'll go ax an pardon: for when a man finds he's wrong, let un own it like a man, I say.

[*Goes into the house.*]

Pad. Well, I be happy I chanced to light upon that poor hungry gentleman; it do make one eat one's dinner so heartily when the cheerful face of a poor guest be the sauce to it. There be many sweet and cheering enjoyments; but while they please for a time only, the smile of gratitude gives to him who raises it, pleasure for ever. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A Room in Paddock's house.

Enter DAME PADDOCK and JANET.

Dame. I declare, Janet, you are always idle, and mind nothing but singing nonsensical love ballads.

Janet. It is no use, mistress, scolding and scolding till a poor girl doesn't know what hur is about.

Dame. Heyday! Since this lad Harry came, your poor Welsh head runs so upon him that you have proved false-hearted to poor Ned, our shepherd. Fie, fie, Janet!

Janet. Oh! yes; it is fery proper, fie, fying, indeed; but hur can't help having affections and partialities for Harry, any more than Ned can help loving hurself; and so they may pripple and may prapple about false-heartedness; but, after all, as the ballad goes, till prudence says yes, a poor girl should always say no.

AIR.—JANET.

*Love, little blind urchin, went strolling one day,
And madrigals chanted so prettily;
While ballads he sold as he went on his way,
With Valentine verses so witty:*

Love's burden was "Maids, ne'er away your hearts throw;

Till prudence prompts yes, always answer, oh! no."

*Love, little false urchin, advice didn't spare,
Yet his arrows at random he shot 'em;
And a dart aim'd at Prudence, who chanc'd to be there.*

*But thus wounded, their hearts she forgot 'em.
Left by Prudence, the maids turn'd out silly, and so
They often said yes, when they should have said no.*

[Exit.]

Enter HARRIET, (in boy's clothes,) with a basket on her shoulder, which she throws on the table, and seems out of breath.

Dame. Back already! Thee must have flown.

Har. On the wings of gratitude, then. It would be wonderful if my heels were heavy when your kindness has made my heart so light.

Dame. Well, well; sit thee down, and rest a bit: thy limbs were not made for labour, I warrant.— But come, now here are no listeners; tell me what is it that makes thee go moping about so, and then so merry by turns?

Har. Why, really I am unhappy. (Carelessly.)

Dame. Then you have always a very pleasant way of shewing it.

Har. Why, dear me! would you have me make everybody miserable because I am so? I always put the best side outwards; and, when I am sad, rattle away to conceal the fullness of my heart through the emptiness of my head.—(Aside.) I'll tell her I'm a woman at once, that I may have somebody to put confidence in.—Ah! my dear, dear Mrs. Paddock, I have such a story to tell you: I may trust you; I think you won't betray me.

Dame. Betray thee? Me betray thee?

Har. Don't look grave, now, as if you were angry; and you know I love you too well to make you angry. (Chuckling her coaxingly under the chin.)

Dame. Bless me! what's the matter with the boy?

Har. Now I'll fasten the door that no one may intrude. (Runs to the door.)

Dame. (Alarmed.) Heyday! what does he mean? Why, why—

Har. You are not afraid of me, are you? Ha, ha!

Dame. I protest I don't know what to make of you. But, unlock the door, or I won't listen to a word. Suppose my good man—suppose—bless me, I'm all in a flurry.

Har. A flurry! Há, ha, ha! (Unlocks the door.) There, now your alarm's over, I hope! and now for my story. Do you know, for all my swaggering, I'm afraid of everybody; and though you think me all simplicity, I—I deceived you.

Dame. Deceived me!—(Aside.) The little villain! that was the very thing I was afraid of.

Har. Now do look grave again. But truth must out now, and you won't be angry when you know the cause. I am not what I seem.

Dame. That's plain enough. Thee art too well spoken for a common body.

Har. You misconceive me. I am—I am—

Dame. What the geminis art thee? Art a va-grant?

Har. No.

Dame. A deserter?

Har. No, no.

Dame. Art thee good for anything?

Har. Oh! no, no!

Dame. In short, art thee an honest man?

Har. No.

Dame. No?

Har. I am—a woman!

Dame. A woman! Mercy on us! thee hasn't been telling thy story to my husband, hast thee?

Har. No, no; and if I had, you wouldn't fear a poor, silly girl.

Dame. Ha, ha, ha! But come, tell thy story.

Har. Left a poor orphan, and persecuted by the dishonourable addresses of a rich guardian, I left London in this dress; and when the little money I had was expended, reached this spot—you know the rest—your generosity—

Dame. (Wipes her eyes.) Psha! Generosity! say no more about it. But—ha, ha, ha! I can't help laughing how thee wilt disappoint all the village lasses, who be light-headed and heavy-hearted about thee.

Pad. (Without.) Dame!

Dame. My good man do call. I'll come to thee again. But I were all in a twitteration; for the door locked by a smart lad were enough to alarm a likely body as I am. Ha, ha, ha! [Exit.]

Har. Now, in case of discovery, I am certain of protection here. Perhaps my persecutor may follow me no longer. What happiness can he hope for? I never will be his; and should he again get me in his power, the breaking my heart would foil all his hopes. Pleasure is his pursuit; a phantom for ever eluding its follower, and which, when secured, ceases to exist.

AIR.—HARRIET.

• *A little boy espied*

A butterfly one day;

To catch the prize he tried;

The insect got away.

From flower to flower it flew

The hunter to elude;

• *He more impatient grew*

The longer he pursu'd.

Pursuing pleasure, if you try,

'Tis to chase the butterfly.

The little eager boy

The trifer follow'd up;

Who buried, to his joy,

Within a tulip's cup.

The boy, with all his power,

To seize the tulip flew,

His ardour crush'd the flower,

And kill'd the insect, too.

Securing pleasure, if you try,

'Tis to kill the butterfly.

[Exit.]

SCENE III.—Another Room.

FRISK and PADDOCK discovered eating.

Frisk. Your health, master Paddock. You see I'm quite free and easy.

Pad. Well, that be what I like.—(Looks towards the window.) I declare there's my landlord, 'squire Wilton, from Lannan. Well, we mun be civil to un; though he be trying to break my lease, and turn me out of doors, 'cause I don't let his hares and pheasants eat all my corn. The cause be to be tried to-day, and no doubt he be come on purpose about it. However, "never shew your teeth till you can bite," as I say to my spouse; "and one mun sometimes hold a candle to the devil," as my spouse do say to I. [Exit.]

Frisk. Your health in your absence, my honest fellow. (Drinks.) Never was better ale, nor warmer welcome. But, didn't he say 'squire Wilton? Ho, ho! I'd rather not meet him; though he don't know me; and, in fact, I only know him by name.

*Re-enter PADDOCK, bowing, ushering in WILTON.
DAME PADDOCK enters at another door.*

Wil. Well, Paddock—

Pad. The rent be ready, sir; I'll fetch un directly.

Wil. No such haste; my steward will settle that: I merely called with a bow d'ye do, having come down on a shooting excursion.

Frisk. Good opportunity, sir—fine weather—harvest nearly in—plenty of game, and—

Wil. Sir!

Frisk. (Aside.) Booby in buckskin—must quiz him.

Dame. Will your honour please to take a snack this morning?

Frisk. Good incentive to appetite here, sir. Charming chops, capital outlets, beautiful bacon, and admirable ale.

Wil. Sir, as I have no knowledge of you—

Frisk. That impediment shall be removed immediately, sir: I am Frank Frisk, at your service; a rattle-brained, runaway fellow; not quite so forlorn as I look, nor so empty as you may suppose.

Pad. (Aside to Frisk.) Dang it now, sir, don't make so free with his honour; he may think it not pretty behaved, under favour.

Frisk. My good Paddock, you have entertained me too nobly for me to affront your friends.—*(To Wilton.)* Beg pardon, sir; hope my nonsense will make no difference between you and your worthy tenant. I'm a good shot, and shall be proud to accommodate you, in capacity of a trudge, if most agreeable. Start covey, pop! partridge, hamper hare, beat bush, bag game, shoot flying, or any other possible accommodation in my power.

Wil. I have my people to attend me, sir.—*(Apart to Pad.)* Shew that man the door, Paddock.

Pad. Why I be main proud to see your honour, to be sure, because it be a bit of condescension; and I hope the gentleman will beg pardon, or so; but as I have axed un to my house, it be not good manners to turn un out.

Wil. Very well, sir. His friendship is probably of more consequence than mine.

Dame. (Aside to Pad.) Friendship! Eh! 'What? Pay rent—ask no favour. If thee turst out a poor man to please a rich one, thee hast none of the blood of the Paddocks in thee, that's all. *[Exit.]*

Wil. Good day, Mr. Paddock. The goodness of your lease is to be tried to-day, and I shall remember this. *[Exit.]*

Pad. (Calls after him.) Your servant, sir. Rent be ready when steward do call, sir. Master Frisk, thee be at a comical gentleman; but I do think thee an honest one; and while thee stayest in this village, Paddock's door be always open to thee. But it ben't wise to affront 'squire; for it be "dangerous meddling wi' edge tools," as I say to my spouse; and "there's no making honey from a crab apple," as my spouse do say to I.

Frisk. My dear friend, I have made a breach here, which may operate to your disadvantage. I'll follow; and, when I've made it up, I'll look in again.

Pad. At dinner-time, and welcome.

Frisk. Thank ye, thank ye. *[Exit.]*

Pad. 'Squire may be angry; but my lease be firm and good for all his law, and I do pay my rent to the day; so, while I do treat un with proper civility, that for his anger. *(Snaps his fingers.)* He be, I know, but a half-witted one; and "empty vessels make the greatest sound," as I say to my spouse; and, "a fool's bolt be soon shot," as my spouse do say to I. *[Exit.]*

SCENE IV.—Fields.

Enter WILTON, with a gun, and DICK in a livery, but with something in his dress denoting the sailor.

Wil. Well, Dick, did you see any birds?

Dick. Not a sail, your worship.

Wil. Leave off your salt water slang, sir.

Dick. Won't ship another sea, your worship.

Wil. Paha! Look out, look out!

Dick. Crowd sail directly, your worship. *[Exit.]*

Wil. I'm heartily tired of this fellow. I wish I hadn't taken him; but 'tis only till his brother recovers. Hey! Dido, Dido! *(Whistles.)* Where has the dog got to? I missed her in the last field. I hope she'll not be snapped up. I wouldn't lose her for a hundred.

AIR.—WILTON.

*When the grey morning breaks
O'er the dew-powder'd soil;*

*When his way the hind takes,
Light of heart, to his toil;*

I rise, ere the sun

Darts his beams, health to court;

Call my dog, load my gun,

And away to the sport.

*Creep slow through the stubble, the covey are met;
Soho! Dido—good dog—she has 'em—they're set.
I mark 'em—they rise—bang! one's fated to die—
I bag it, and onward trot Dido and I.*

Thus, brace after brace,

For my aim's pretty true,

I bag in a space

That few sportsmen can do.

With appetite keen,

To my box, then, I go;

While the charms of the scene

Set my heart in a glow.

*But hold—in the stubble—hey—Dido stops short—
Soho! Dido—good dog—she points to the sport—
I mark 'em—they rise—bang! another must die—
I bag it, and homeward trot Dido and I.*

Re-enter DICK.

Dick. Not a sail in the offing, your worship.

Enter HARRIET, looking another way.

Wil. (To Har.) Harkye! my lad, have you seen any birds?

Har. Yes, sir, I saw—*(Aside.)* Heavens! my persecutor! *[Runs off.]*

Wil. Dick, did you see that face?

Dick. Tacked too soon, your honour.

Wil. Paha! Run after that lad directly, and find out where he lives. Run!

Dick. Ten knots an hour, your honour. *[Exit.]*

Wil. I am egregiously deceived, or that is Harriet Greville in disguise. I cannot mistake a face that has made such an impression on my heart; and running away the moment I spoke confirms my suspicion. But how got she here?

Enter SCOREM. FRISK enters behind, and listens.

Scm. Happy to see your honour in these parts.

Wil. Thank ye. Pray, who is that lad that passed you just now?

Scm. A wanderer who came to the village, and was taken in by Paddock; and I dare say, he'll take him in return. For my part, I don't know what use he can be to him; he seems more like a girl than a boy. But Paddock is but a poor, foolish fellow.

Wil. Yes, he insulted me this morning; but he shall repent it before I leave the country.

Frisk. (Aside.) Indeed!

Scm. (Aside.) Ho, ho! The wind sets in that quarter, does it? I'm sure he ought to pay every respect to your honour, when his farm is so much underlet, and a long lease, too.

Wil. His lease, I hope, will be set aside to-day; however, if not, I will never give him another.

Scm. (Aside.) A lucky moment! now for a clincher.

Frisk. (Aside.) If you don't get a clincher some day, somebody won't get his due, that's all.

Scm. 'Tis no business of mine, to be sure; but I would give one-third more rent for the farm; and if I could assist your honour in gaining your cause, and getting rid of the lease—

Wil. If you can, you shall have the new one.

Scm. A bargain. I've seen his lease: he engages to keep on the farm never less than one hundred sheep at a time.

Wil. Well?

Scm. Now, to my knowledge, for the last twelve months, there haven't been more than fifty on it.

Wil. Indeed! that will make the lease void, and

gain the cause. Prove it, and the new lease shall be yours. Meet me at the Manor-house this evening.

Scø. I will, your honour. I'll prove it. I'll take my own oath.

Wil. Will you, my honest fellow?

Scø. Yes, to anything.

Frisk. (*Aside.*) I don't doubt it.

Scø. I won't fail, your honour.—(*Aside.*) I've nail'd it. [Exit.]

Frisk. (*Aside.*) Yes; but the clincher's to come yet, and I must have a hand in that.

Re-enter DICK.

Dick. Couldn't get the weather-gage of him, your honour; so hauled in, tacked about, and—

Wil. Follow me. [Exit.]

Dick. Another squall. He grows so cranky and yawish, there's no bearing him; however, I'm rated for the present cruise; but when we return to port, I'll strike the yellow admiral's flag here, (*pointing to the cuffs of his coat, which are yellow,*) and sail under the true blue again.

Frisk. (*Comes forward.*) Why, Dick?

Dick. Bless me! your honour, how glad I am to hail you once more. Only cruise here a few glasses, and I'll leave in your wake again. But boatswain has piped, and I must obey orders. [Exit.]

Frisk. Meeting Dick's apropos. He must assist me to foil this publican: so, as he is to return, I'll sit down here, and ruminate like a half-starved peripatetic. (*Sits down half concealed by a bush.*) •

Enter JANET.

Janet. Oh! dearest me! it is great criefs and distresses, look you, that this Harry was ever come to the place: he has made sad work with hur poor heart.

Enter NED, whistling, and twirling a stick, and appearing not to see Janet.

Janet. (*Aside.*) Well, I'm sure! what disdains and indifferences! But though hur doesn't care for him, hur will make him feel for his want of manners, look you!—Ned!

Ned. (*Sulkily, and only half turning.*) Well?

Janet. Hur is going to the fair next week.

Ned. May be so.

Janet. And who d'ye think is going with hur?

Ned. I don't care.

Janet. Harry.

Ned. What's it to I? what dost tease I for? (*As Ned is going, he meets HARRIET, who has a cane, and pushes against him rudely.*)

Har. Very civil, Mr. Ned; the road's wide enough.

Ned. I shall walk upon what part of it I please, Mr. Harry.

Har. And so shall I, Mr. Ned.

Ned. Broo!

Har. And broo again, if you go to that.

Janet. You're a good-for-nothing, ill-manneredly fellow! Look ye! (*To Ned.*)

Ned. And you are a good-for-nothing girl, look you! I care as little for thee, as for he; and if he give me any of his airs, I'll—(*Flourishes his stick.*)

Janet. Do touch him; and hur will claw your knave's scone well, so hur will.

Har. Pray, good folks, don't quarrel on my account. You may sounce, sir, and look bluff, and fancy I'm not as much of a man as yourself, sir; but I'd have you to know, sir, that I've vanquished a better man than you, before now, sir.

Janet. Ned, why don't hur go to hur work, and not affront her betters, look you?

Ned. My betters, indeed! A poor vagrant, for aught I know—I've a great mind to—(*Going towards Harriet.*)

Janet. Ay, touch him if you dare! (*Getting between them.*)

Har. (*Aside.*) Let her keep to that, and I may bluster in safety. I'm half afraid, already.—You'd better be quiet, sir.

Ned. Ay, you may swagger; but you don't rob me of my sweetheart so easily.

Har. Me rob you of your sweetheart! Bless the boy! I've no inclination to rob you of your sweetheart; and indeed if I had, I could hardly suppose that she, who had been false to another, would be true to me.

Janet. It is very fitting and proper, look you, hur should be affronted, and set at nought, for putting hurself in the power of nobody knows who, and nobody cares who, neither; and if hur was Ned, hur would break her coxcomb's head, so hur would!

Ned. And if you tell me, I'll do it in a minute. (*Advances angrily towards Harriet.*)

Janet. (*Alarmed for Harriet.*) If you lay a finger on him, hur will never forgive you. Look you!

TRIO.—HARRIET, NED, and JANET.

Har. Pray, don't quarrel for me.

Ned. Give up all thinking of she,
Or worse for you it shall be,
And I'll do it, though Janet it lose me.

Janet. Keep hur distance from Harry.

Ned. His point he sha'n't carry.

Har. Good day— (*Going.*)

Janet. Pray, now, tarry

• To spite him.

Har. Nay, pr'ythee, excuse me.

Janet. You are a coxcomb, a knave! (*To Ned.*)

Ned. None of your airs I'll have: (*To Janet.*)

I don't care for you that. (*Snaps his fingers*)

Har. What are you both at?

I'll ne'er reward you, though you abuse me.

Ned. I don't care if you do.

And, pray, who are you?

If you cross me again—

Janet. If he do, sir, what then?

Ned. Let him stay, and you'll see.

Janet. Oh! never mind he. (*To Harriet.*)

Stay, and brave him.

Har. Nay, pr'ythee, excuse me.

Now, Janet, consider; with Ned you are
joking;

To play at cross-purposes thus is provoking.

Ned. A false hearted girl! But I won't stand his
joking;

To play at cross-purposes thus is provoking.

[Exeunt all but Frisk.]

Frisk. (*Coming forward.*) A pretty picture of rural simplicity!—[Enter DICK.]—So, Dick, you're returned.

• Dick. Yes, I've slipped cable. And so your honour is cruising under false colours.

Frisk. Don't you blab, Dick; but you seem under false colours, too.

Dick. After a long voyage, I'd a mind to have a bit of a land cruise, by way of change; so, my brother Jack, who was the squire's foremast-man, being on the doctor's service, I volunteered into the service for him; and here I am cox'en of the Cockatoo cruiser.

Frisk. Commanded by Captain Strutt. Now, Dick, you can do me a service.

Dick. Can I? Wasn't I your honour's foster brother? and wopn't I go through fire, wind, and water, for you?

Frisk. You're an honest fellow, Dick: and now for the service I want performed. Soorem, of the Barley Mow, an empty, hollow-hearted tap-tub, is going to rob a worthy farmer here of his lease: your master is his landlord, and you must manage—

Dick. To rake Soorem, and bring the farmer out of the enemy's wake.

Frisk. But here they come, and with them a lad: no, he has turned down the other path.

Dick. (*Looking out.*) That's the lad whose latitude my master ordered me to find. The squire thinks he's a girl that he is in chase of; and so,

mayhap, you can lend me a hand to put 'squire abast the binnacle, too.

Frisk. A girl! So! an adventure! (*They retire.*)

Enter SCOREM and PADDOCK.

Sc. Why, really, friend Paddock, the 'squire's a queer fellow; and I wouldn't give into his vagaries. What have you to fear?

Frisk. (*Coming forward.*) A snake in the grass.

Sc. What do you mean?

Frisk. To scotch the snake.

Pad. (*To Frisk.*) Why, you be rather too hasty and interfering like. It don't become thee, under favour.

Frisk. It's a way I have, whenever I meet either a *Sc.* One of which I suppose I am?

Frisk. No, not one—both.

Sc. You are an impertinent fellow! Come along, neighbour Paddock.

Frisk. Friend Paddock, he's a black sheep: you haven't one like him among all the fifty you keep on your farm.

Sc. (*Aside.*) Fifty! He knows more than he should. I'll go to the Manor House directly.—Well, Paddock, if you mean to stop, I must go.

[*As Scorem goes off, Paddock is following, but is stopped by Frisk.*]

Frisk. Beware of that fellow; he's as false as his own measure. He's after mischief.

Pad. You be an odd kind of gentleman!—Neighbour Scorem—

Frisk. Is like his chalk, double. But where's the *Dick.* He pushed off the moment he saw you.

Pad. Ay, that be a fine lad; and have gone through a power of misfortunes. and she told my *Frisk.* She!

Pad. (*Confused.*) Odd rot'un! did I say she?

Frisk. Come, come; it is a girl, and a plan is on foot to do both you and her mischief. Old Barley Mow is at the bottom; but he shall have his score properly paid off.—[*Enter NED.*]

Ned. Dinner be ready, master.

Pad. Well, I'll just tell the reapers to strike, and then join you.

Frisk. Then we'll digest our business and the beefsteaks, at the same time.

Enter several Reapers, who join in the Finale.

FINALE.

*We'll hold a cabinet council
O'er a beef-steak and brown ale;
And that's a foundation for argument
Too substantial to fail.*

*A bumper we'll fill to the honest man,
We'll toast him again and again;
And confusion we'll drink to ev'ry rogue's
And pledge it like able men.* [*plan,*]

*With a hob-nob, and a merry go round,
And we'll pull in ere reason fail;
For the stoutest man in the kingdom found
Must knock under to humming ale.*

ACT II.—SCENE I.—Paddock's Parlour.

PADDOCK, DAME PADDOCK, FRISK, and HARRIET, discovered.

Pad. (*To Frisk.*) But art sure thee art right? It be bad to take away a man's good name.

Dame. Good name, quotha? Scorem's good name be like his good ale—bad is the best of t.

Frisk. That he said so, I have two good witnesses, my ears; that he'll do so, I've a certain proof in his heart; and that he'll be foiled, I've a pretty good presentiment in my own. So, cast off care, get in your corn, and I promise you the jolliest harvest-home you have had since you was a farmer.

Pad. Thou speak'st as thee wishest. "Thy heart be good," as I say to my spouse; "but thy

head goes a wool-gathering," as my spouse do say to I.

Frisk. It will produce a golden fleece, then.

Pad. I wish it may prove so: however, t' cause ben't tried yet; law's unsartin; and I always think the two tails of a counsellor's wig be like plaintiff and defendant, their only dependance be t' lawyer's head.

Dame. He do seem rather narvousome; and if his kind heart do sink, mine will be too sorrowful to keep it up.

Frisk. (*Aside.*) This Wilton little dreams of the rod I have in pickle for him. I wonder I haven't heard from lawyer Provs; sure, he never received the letter I sent him.—(*Seeing Harriet disconsolate.*) Why, Harry!

Har. Ah! Mr. Frisk, they have been my support, my preservers, and are the only friends I have.

Frisk. Come, come; don't be so unjust as to leave me out of the number. But I know all about it: don't blush, now.

Har. Sir!

Frisk. Madam!

Har. What do you mean?

Frisk. Mean! as if you couldn't guess. I wouldn't be thought impertinent; but do you think your disguise could deceive me?

Har. (*Affecting pique.*) Disguise, sir! I don't understand you. Though you may look upon me as a mere boy, I may convince you I am as much of a man as many—

Frisk. Who wear a woman's heart under a man's habit. It is useless to trifle; Wilton suspects you, and has laid a plan to get you into his power.

Har. Heaven shield me from that power! But, but—(*Conceals her face with agitation.*)

Frisk. Come, come, why in tears! you see I was in the secret, and—

Har. 'Twas unmanly, sir, to take me by surprise.

Frisk. By surprise, my dear girl! I know your sex; I honour all your sex; and I'll fight for you all: so, don't fear to put confidence in me, I will protect me.

Frisk. By my head and my hands; plan with one, and fight with the other. But is this same buckram 'squire the man who occasioned your flight and disguise?

Har. He is, and on whose account I must again

Frisk. Not while Frank Frisk stays in the village; I shall leave it myself soon, and then we will go together.

Har. Sir! upon my word you don't want for confidence; but I hope you will do me the honour to consult me upon the occasion.

Frisk. Oh! my dear, we'll have the parson's permission; for the moment I knew you, I determined to offer you my heart.

Har. Inscribed like a Tunbridge toy: "a trifle

Frisk. Pretty encouragement! Yet might I but presume—

Har. Might you but presume! What have you been doing all this time? But were I inclined to return this extraordinary compliment to my understanding, there is an insurmountable objection,—you forget, sir, I am poor.

Frisk. So am I; and we shall match the better. Love and poverty, they say, don't agree; but the love that flies out of the window at the sight of poverty, deserves to have the door shut in his face. So, if you can accept the heart of a poor, eccentric fellow, who is, I hope, more fool than knave, there is my hand; if you reject it, there's a pond in the yard, and a pear-tree in the garden, and if I am fished for in the one, or plucked like a burgamy from the other, whose fault will it be?

Har. If your case be so desperate, it will require some consideration; and, perhaps, it is fortunate I am poor; or, really, rather than break your heart, I might, perhaps, be induced to pay—what am I

saying? Good b'ye: I must leave the place; and if we should never meet again—

Frisk. Remember, if you leave this place without me you'll break my heart, and (to an Attorney's Clerk who enters as Harriet goes off) I've a great mind to break your head.

Clerk. Then I should lay you by the heels. Is your name Paddock?

Enter PADDOCK.

Pad. That be my name.

Clerk. (Giving a paper.) There.

Pad. Well, sir, what be this?

Clerk. A common subpoena, *duces tecum*.

Pad. Dence take 'em! common enough, mayhap; but it be all Greek gibberish to I.

Clerk. 'Tis a notice to you to produce your lease in court at the trial of the action of Thrastout on the demise of Wilton, *versus* Holdfast; unless you wisely prefer letting judgment go by default. The deed won't hold water.

Pad. Hold water! Won't it hold the land for I?

Clerk. 'Tis good for nothing.

Pad. Why, it be a shameful thing, then; and what be I to do about it, sir?

Clerk. We are plaintiff's attorney, and can't advise.

Frisk. Now I can.

Clerk. Well, then, what would you advise?

Frisk. You to get out of this place, or I'll serve a writ of ejectment on you. (Lifts up his foot.)

Clerk. Sir, I'll clear the court without executing any further writ of inquiry. [Exit.]

Pad. Why, now you will be hasty, sir: the young man were but doing his duty, and he couldn't help it.

Frisk. No more could I; my spleen rose, and my foot often rises with it; but let us take a turn round the field together, and consider what is to be done; I'm a bit of a lawyer myself, and you'll have my advice without a fee; and if it mislead you, it's no more than the advice you pay for often does. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—A retired Landscape.

Enter WILTON and DICK.

Wil. Now, Dick, you must get in conversation with this Harry, and decoy him to the back of the manor-house, where Scorem will be waiting, disguised like a black—

Dick. And your honour would make a black of me, too.

Wil. What, sir?

Dick. Why, lookye, sir, I a'n't used to the smuggling service; in all proper duty, till the cruise be over, I'll obey, but I'll never disgrace the blue jacket I once wore by piracy.

Wil. You shall repent this.

Dick. I should repent t'other, I believe; and if we can't mess together without squalls, I'm ready to strike the flag, unrig, and take my discharge.

Wil. Go back to the manor-house and wait my pleasure.

Dick. With all hearts; steady in the rigging, staunch at my gun; but always steer clear of a lee-shore, your honour. [Exit.]

Wil. This rascal will betray me, so I'll ship him off, to use his own phrase: the girl I'll have, and I am doubly determined to punish Paddock for protecting her. The cause relative to Paddock's lease comes on to-day. Scorem's evidence ensures me success; then I'll turn Paddock out directly, and give the lease to him, because he's just such a convenient fellow as I want; and, 'faith! I must lose no time while the power is in my hands; for young Worthy, whom I never saw, prosecutes his cause against me so vigorously, to recover this ample estate, which has been so many years in our family, that such is the uncertainty of the law, I may not long be master of it. Yet Quibble's last letter assures me I'm safe, and—do my eyes deceive me? No—here comes Harriet—lucky opportunity! (Retires.)

Enter HARRIET, thoughtfully, with a bundle.

Har. Yes; I'm resolved, this night it shall be done: I must bid Frank adieu for ever; for an hour in this place is an age of terror, lest Wilton should seduce me.

Wilton. (Seizing her.) Wilton has secured you; and now, madam, with me you return.

Har. For heaven's sake, sir, persecute me no longer; I never will be your's.

Enter FRISK.

Wil. You know me too well to suppose this nonsense will avail.

Frisk. Then, perhaps, this will. (Shewing his cane. To Harriet.) Return to Paddock's, and leave him to me. [Exit Har.]

Wil. Rascal! what do you mean?

Frisk. Excuse my rudeness; but I've a strange complaint in this arm; a kind of something that always puts it in motion whenever I see a scoundrel ill treat a woman.

Wil. This shall cost you dear. (Going off the way Harriet went.)

Frisk. (Stopping him, and pointing to the other side.) No, your road lies that way; the air of that field isn't good for your health.

Wil. Let me pass.

Frisk. Now, be advised.

Wil. Death and fury, sir! if you were a gentleman, I should know how to talk to you.

Frisk. No, you wouldn't, it would require a gentleman to do that. In one word, go that way, or—I feel it coming. (Shaking his cane.)

Wil. You shall answer for this, sir. [Exit.]

Frisk. (Calling after him.) I shall always be ready. This was a lucky rencontre; but I must watch him, that he may not go round and meet her again. [Exit.]

Enter NED.

Ned. Heyday! I met my rival Harry, running as if he were bewitched, he seemed unhappy: I'm sorry for that, though he have stolen Janet's heart from me; for now I ha' recovered my own, and he may take her and welcome. I ha' done with the sex; for since she be false-hearted, I don't think there be a true one amongst 'em. I shall never forget when I brought her a riband from the fair.

SONG.—NED.

*I went to the fair with a heart all so merry,
Sing hey down, ho down, derry down dee!
And I bought a gay riband, as red as a cherry,
For the girl I lov'd best, and who vow'd to love me.
I return'd from the fair, gaily whistling and singing,
My true lover's knot I in triumph was bringing;
Oh! it wasn't for me that I heard the bells ringing;
Sing hey down, ho down, derry down dee!*

*I found she was false, though she promis'd me fairly,
Sing hey down, ho down, derry down dee;
And women, I trow, are like weathercocks; rarely
They're fix'd to one point, so coquettish they be.
My true lover's knot I away were now flinging,
I've done with the sex, will live single, and singing,
Oh! it wasn't for me, &c. [Exit.]*

SCENE III.—Paddock's Parlour.

Enter DAME PADDOCK.

Dams. Oh! dear heart! my poor man be gone to the 'sizes about the lease; if he lose the cause it will go nigh to break his heart.—[Enter JANET.]—Janet, girl, why, what brings thee?

Janet. To ask and entreat, look you, that you will speak a good word for hur to Harry; and tell him it is great shames and scandals to plague a poor girl, who has partialities and affections for him, look you.

SONG.—JANET.

*Ah! well-a-day!
Now may hur say,*

*Hur for a husband must tarry;
Hur's young, and thought pretty,
Oh! 'tis a pity
That Ned hur e'er promis'd to marry.
In vain he comes after hur wooing,
In vain hurself Harry pusuwing,
'Tis wailing and woe;
Hur must sigh, heigho!
And love, spite of Ned, cruel Harry.
Why did he come?
Sweet was hur home;
Care hur had never to purry:
Now all's melancholy,
Grieving and folly,
Ah! sure, to the grave 'twill hur carry.
Of her cruelty Ned is complaining,
Hurself suffers Harry's disdainng;
'Tis wailing and woe,
Hur must sigh, heigho!
And love, spite of Ned, cruel Harry.*

Enter NED.

Ned. Love Harry! Then more shame for you, after all the promises you made to me; but I've done with you.

Dame. Two fools! (*To Janet.*) But if thee be'st so changeable, he'll have no bargain of thee; I warrant. (*Janet and Ned go up the stage.*)

HARRIET runs in with a bundle, and drops on a chair.

Har. Oh! dame, I have had such an escape! Wilton, notwithstanding my disguise, has discovered that I am the woman he persecutes.

Janet. Oh! bless hur conscience! hur is a woman.

Dame. There; now the secret be out; but if either of you blab, I'll never forgive you.

Ned. Never fear me, mistress. Now I shall be even with Miss Janet. (*Aside.*)

Har. Disguise is in vain now; all, all will be known. Save me from Wilton: exposed, as I have been, I shall, in this form, become a laughing-stock; in that bundle is the last female dress I ever wore; I will resume it, and wait the event with resignation.

Dame. Come, come, keep up thy spirits; never mind him; bless'ee, at thy age, if the best he that ever wore a head had been troublesome to me, he'd have met with his match, I warrant me.

[*Exit with Har.*]

Janet. Well, it is full of wonders and marvels, look you. (*To Ned, who is going off.*)

Ned. Oh! you want to follow me now?

DUETT.—NED AND JANET.

Ned. *My heart is as free
As a bird on a tree,
Your days of vagary you've had 'em:
A nice thing you've made
Of your parjury trade;
Pack off to some other, good madam,
Pray, do.*

Janet. *'Tis fitting to jeer,
And to flounce and to sneer,
But hur sex were all cruel from Adam:
But hur won't take it so,
And I'd have hur to know,
Mister Sir, hur was never a madam,
No, no.*

Ned. *You know it was base,
But I pity your case;
How the folks will be all of them joking!
And, then, by the way,
Such spiteful things say—
Poor Janet! it's very provoking!
Poor girl!*

Janet. *Hur's monstrous wise,
But hur'll tear out hur eyes:
Hur's come to a pass very pretty!
Pray, go, and who cares?
Hur an't at her last pray'rs.*

Ned. Poor Janet, your trouble I pity,
I do.

Janet. Ay, insult her now, do, with your pity,
Pray, do.

SCENE IV.—A Village.

Enter FRISK, reading a letter.

Frisk. Brave news! and lawyer Pross will be here this day; what between law and love, I'm prettily perplexed; the terms are almost synonymous, and in either case, when it comes to an attachment, there's an end to the liberty of the subject.

Enter Constable.

Con. In the king's name, stand.

Frisk. I prefer walking.

Con. You mun walk wi' I, then; you are my prisoner, for salt and batter on the squire's honour.

Frisk. Now don't be importunate, or I may be troublesome.

Con. But you shall go. (*Collars him.*)

Enter DICK, dressed as a sailor, with a stick.

Dick. Belay; haul off your grappling irons, and heave a head.

Con. What, do you bring a rescate?

Dick. No; I bring a stick.

Con. Do you know that I represent the king?

Frisk. Then he's as ill represented as some of his people.

Enter PROSS, booted and spurred. Frisk puts his finger on his mouth, to indicate secrecy.

Pross. Ah! my worthy friend, glad to meet with you; have scoured the whole place for you; in a great hurry to be off again; so, come along.

Con. No; he mun go along.

Pross. Why, what's the matter?

Frisk. A trifle: a gentleman was impertinent, and I was impatient; he wanted a congé, and I offered him a cane; that's all. (*Dick whispers to Frisk.*)

Pross. I'll undertake for him.

Con. Why, what be an undertaker to do in this business?

Pross. An undertaker, fellow? I'm Peter Pross, attorney at law, and I'll answer for his appearance.

Con. No; he mun appear to answer for himself.

Frisk. You astonish me, Dick; then there's no time to lose. (*To Constable.*) My good fellow, I'll go where you please; but first go with me. You, Dick, keep aloof a bit, you'll know your cue.

[*Exeunt all but Dick.*]

Dick. Ay, ay, your honour! never miss signal. (*Looking at his dress.*) Now I feel as I used to do: I've parted company with the squire; and this rigging makes me look something like again: why, in his livery, I was like a British bottom with French colours. He thought to frighten me, by talking of a discharge; but he'd got hold of the wrong man. A true seaman is never frightened at a squall; and if he be set adrift, why he works his way as well as as he can.

AIR.—DICK.

*We tars have a maxim, your honours, d'ye see,
To live in the same way we fight;
We never give in, and when running a lee,
We pipe hands the vessel to right.
It may do for a lubber to snivel and shail,
If by chance on a shoal he be cast;
But a tar among breakers, or thrown on a flat,
Pulls away, tug and tug, to the last.
With a yeo, yeo, yeo, fol de rol.*

*This life, as we're told, is a kind of a cruise,
In which storms and calms take their turn;
If 'tis storm, why we bustle; if calm, then we booz;
All taught from the stem to the stern;
Our captain, who in our own lingo would speak,
Would say, to the cable stick fast;
And whether the anchor be cast, or a-peak,
Pull away, tug and tug, to the last.*

With a yeo, yeo, yeo, fol de rol. [Exit.]

SCENE V.—*Paddock's Parlour.*

PADDOCK and DAME PADDOCK discovered.

Pad. Yes, dame, it be all over, sure enough: 'squire ha' gotten the day; and Scorem, for his villany, will get the lease.

Dame. Well, well, keep up thy spirits; we have a little left, and we can still work. I feel most for the poor girl, who is up stairs, crying; and do look like an angel in her own clothes. (*Knock at the door.*)

Pad. Come in. [*Enter the Attorney's Clerk.*] O, you be here already, be you? but "ill weeds comé quick," as I say to my spouse; and "there be no shaking off troublesome companions," as my spouse do say to I.

Clerk. You must all turn out; the landlord and the new tenant are coming.

Dame. Hey! what, Scorem? If a comes near me—

Pad. Nay, nay, dame; don't lose thy temper, and be a fool, because he be a knave: we mun turn out, what then? John Paddock may hold up his head where they will be ashamed to shew their faces. Come, wife, come; why do'ee be foolish and cry for? have a good heart, and bear it like I; (*half crying*) heigho! If I did but keep fifty sheep, t'farm be as good again as when I took it: but this be law.

Clerk. Yes; the very letter of the law

Pad. Then it be black letter, and justice couldn't read it.

Enter WILTON.

Wil. Mr. Paddock, you guess the nature of my visit here?

Pad. Yes, yes! you ha' done your worst, and I am ready to turn out as soon as the law requires. For "the weakest goes to the wall," as I say to my spouse; and "needs must, when the devil drives," as my spouse says to I.

Enter HARRIET, in female dress.

Wil. (*Aside, seeing her.*) She's here! and no longer in disguise. (*Attempts to seize Harriet; Paddock catches up his whip, and stands between them.*)

Pad. Stand off! stand off! She be under my protection. (*Scorem disarms Paddock.*)

Dame. (*To Scorem, and catching up the poker.*) Ah! do'ee touch him, do'ee. (*Wilton seizes Harriet*)

Har. Will nothing but my destruction, and that of these worthy people, to whom I owe my life, content you?

Wil. I seek your happiness, and to give you an opportunity of returning their kindness; there is a new lease, with blanks for the tenant's name; consent to return to town with me, and I will insert Paddock's, and leave him in possession of the farm.

Pad. Doan'tee consider us—pray doan'tee, miss; we should never thrive in the farm.

Dame. Doan'tee, miss, pray; I'll go down on my knees to thee—

Har. I will never insult my protectors, by supposing they would profit by my dishonour. I am of age, sir; your power over me ceases, and I defy it.

Wil. Then you have decided their fate. Give me the lease. (*Signs it.*) Now insert Scorem's name. (*To the Clerk, who writes.*) And now, sir, (*to Paddock*) you quit the premises.

Pad. Mun we be thrust out like vagabonds?

Enter FRISK.

Frisk. Never, while Frank Frisk is near to protect you.

Pad. What canst thee do, foolish man? our cup of affliction be full.

Frisk. Then we'll make his honour drink it. Harriet in tears? Harkye! sir, (*to Wilton,*) how have you dared to insult that incomparable girl?

Wil. I expected you was in custody, sir.

Frisk. Yes, and here's my bail.

Enter PROSS.

Wil. Pross, the attorney!

Pross. Yes, Peter Pross; old Quibble, as I told you he would, deceived you: 'tis all up—decees pronounced against you.

Wil. What, sir?

Pross. (*Takes out a newspaper, and reads.*) *Worthy versus Wilton.* The long depending cause relative to the valuable estate of Golden Acres is at last decided in favour of the plaintiff, *Worthy*; and all the leases given by the defendant, *Wilton*, are void; who has, likewise, to pay up a long list of arrears, &c. &c. &c.

Pross. Here, sir, is the legal instrument, (*shews a parchment*) by virtue of which we act.

Wil. Confound you all!

[Exit.

Pad. (*To Scorem, who has the lease in his hand.*) Your lease, Master Scorem, be not a long one.

Dame. Mayhap, he'd like to have it renewed. Ha! ha! ha!

Enter DICK.

Dick. So his honour has bilged at last. (*Frisk and Harriet talk apart.*)

Pad. (*To Pross.*) And, pray, who be landlord now, sir?

Pross. Francis Worthy, Esquire, and there be is. (*Points to Frisk.* All amazed but Dick.)

Dick. Yes, yes; the false colours are hauled down, and the true blue hoisted.

Pad. Be that Mr. Worthy? I do humbly beg your honour's pardon for all the freedoms we have taken with one another; but we were all in the dark; and "ignorance be excusable," as I say to my spouse; and "a fool's tongue do run before his wit," as my spouse do say to I.

Frisk. Freedoms! Why you made me free of the dining parlour, when old Trust-to-morrow shut the door in my face.

Sco. I'm sure if I'd known who your honour was—

Frisk. You would have told me of the clause in the lease; you're a black sheep, and I mean to shear *Sco.* Your honour won't turn me out? [*you.*]

Frisk. But my honour will, I assure you.

Sco. Then that (*snapping his fingers*) for your honour; stand out of the way. (*Pushes against the Clerk, who follows him out.*)

Frisk. Now, friend Paddock, rest happy under your old roof; your rent shall be reduced; Ned and Janet shall have the Barley Mow; and Dick shall be brought into safe moorings in town. And now, Harriet, may I hope?

Dame. Do'ee, miss, bless'ee, do'ee.

Har. (*To Frisk.*) As you certainly are entitled to some consideration—(*Starts and looks behind her, affecting fright.*) Bless me! I thought Wilton was there! So, to make myself secure, and (*to Frisk*) to save you from the pond or the pear-tree, I fancy I must e'en consent—(*Gives her hand.*)

Frisk. Say you so? then all shall be jubilees.

Pad. And I wish you may be as happy as My Spouse and I.

FINALE.

Frisk. Guilt detected, worth rewarded,

Still a care obscures our view.

May approval be accorded?

Sovereign lords, we bow to you.

(*To the Audience.*)

Har. What fears annoy
The farmer's boy!

Ah! kindly smile them all away.

Pad. Your smiles, when won,
Shall be our sun,

And we'll, while sun shines, make our hay.

Dick. A sailor rough, on ocean bred,

Would favour ax, but knows not how.

Ned. And pray, your worships, honour Ned,
With favours at the Barley Mow.

Cho. Guilt detected, &c.

[Exeunt.

PAUL AND VIRGINIA;

A MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT, IN TWO ACTS.—BY JAMES COBB.



Act I.—Scene I.

CHARACTERS.

CAPTAIN TROPIC
PAUL
DIEGO

ANTONIO
DOMINIQUE
ALAMBRA

VIRGINIA
JACINTHA
MARY

ACT I.—SCENE I.—A Wood and Cottage.

Enter PAUL.

AIR.

*See, from the ocean rising,
Bright flames the orb of day;
Yon grove's gay songs shall slumbers
From Virginia chase away.*

VIRGINIA appears at the cottage window.

DUETT

Vir. *Though from the ocean rising,
Bright flames the orb of day,
Alas! the hour of meeting
Awhile we must delay.*

Yet awhile retiring—hence, away!

Paul. *My absence if desiring, I obey.*

[Virginia disappears.]

Paul. *When will the tedious hour arrive, destined
to explain my doom!*

Enter JACINTHA from the cottage.

Jac. Paul, Paul!

Paul. Well, Jacintha, what tidings?

Jac. Virginia requests you to depart for the present. Dominique will be punctual to the appointed hour; but it is not yet arrived. Pray, retire. See, the young women and the children of the island approach, to offer congratulations to Virginia on her birth-day. [Exit Paul.]

Enter MARY, and several young women with garlands of flowers.

CHORUS.

*Haste, my companions, here to pay
Our debt of gratitude to worth,
With song and dance to hail the day,
That gave the fair Virginia birth.*

*Sweet flow'rets, while you shed perfume,
And while each wreath her goodness tells;
Here, like her cheeks, where roses bloom,
Shall beauty mark where virtue dwells.*

Enter DIEGO.

Diego. Heyday! what mumming is here? What fool's holiday is this?

Mary. Fool's holiday, indeed! it ought to be a holyday throughout the island. It is the birth-day of Virginia; the amiable, the excellent Virginia! Every heart acknowledges her goodness, every tongue proclaims it.

Diego. Ay, I have heard of her, though I have never seen her.

Women. Then you must have heard that deeds of charity are her delight.

Diego. Charity, indeed! Ha, ha, ha! An orphan, poor and friendless, to boast of charity.

Women. You may deem her poor, because she subsists on the gain of her modesty: but friendless she can never be while gratitude lives in the hearts of all around her.

Diego. But if the girl have no money, whence comes her charity?

Mary. From a rich treasury—her own beneficent heart. Her kindness smooths the brow of age, and lightens the burthen of calamity; her example encourages every one to be content with their own lot.

Diego. Well, I shall soon be better acquainted with her; for I must search her dwelling.

Mary. Search the cottage of Virginia!

Diego. Yes; for a runaway slave, named Alambra; a young rogue who belonged to my master, the English planter, Captain Tropic.

Mary. Oh! do not let a rude footstep intrude on the abode of innocence.

Diego. And so, you repay your obligation with a few trumpety flowers: a cheap way of shewing your gratitude. Ha, ha, ha! I will go in.

TRIO and CHORUS.

Women. *Bold intruder, hence away,
Let no rude act profane this day:
'Tis Virginia's natal day.*

Diego. *Hence, ye idle pack, away!
Instead of hard and healthy labour,
Jigging to the pipe and tabor,
Serenading—masquerading—
Go home, go home, and work, I say.*

Women. *Against decorum—'tis a sin—*

Diego. *Let me pass—I will go in.*

Women. *With these flowery wreaths to-day
Our debts of gratitude we pay;
Your flinty heart can nothing feel—*

Diego. *You pay your debts with what you steal.*

Enter DOMINIQUE from the house.

Dom. Ah! my pretty lasses, here ye are: come, according to annual custom, to congratulate my dear young mistress on her birth-day. You all look remarkably handsome this morning: but I don't wonder at it. Beauty shines with redoubled lustre when lighted up by a kind and benevolent heart. I must salute you all round: I promised to do so last year: it is our duty to perform a promise, and I always endeavour to do my duty. (*Salutes the women.*) And see, Virginia appears at the window to invite her kind visitors.

VIRGINIA opens a window, and makes signs to the Women to enter the cottage; they go in, and Diego is following them, when Dominique stops him.

Whither are you going, friend?

Diego. Into that house.

Dom. Upon whose invitation?

Diego. I am in search of a slave, who has run away from my master, and who may, perhaps, be concealed there.

Dom. That cottage belongs to Virginia; her character should silence your suspicions. Be assured the slave you seek is not there.

Diego. Stand aside, and let me pass.

Dom. Lookye, friend, I always do my duty; I am naturally a merry fellow, and tolerably good-natured, but if you persist, I must knock you down, I must, indeed; I must do my duty.

Diego. Your duty!

Dom. Yes; Virginia has no parents, no relations to protect her. I lived as a servant with Virginia's father when she was born. He died when she was an infant: her mother, when she was on her death-bed, bequeathed this her only daughter to my protection; and I will protect her while this arm can do its duty.

Diego. Do you mean to strike me?

Dom. Not I, indeed, except you oblige me to do so. My hand, at any time, would rather greet a friend than conquer an enemy. As I told you before, I am naturally a merry fellow: a song or dance will make me skip as if my nerves were fiddle-strings. My heels are light, for my heart is light, 'tis not encumbered with a bad conscience; and when I lay my hand on it, and say I have always endeavoured to do my duty, it won't contradict me.

Diego. Ha, ha, ha! Virginia is fortunate in having such a slave.

Dom. A slave! No, no; I am, indeed, her servant; nay, I will be bold enough to say, her friend; but I am no slave, for I have British blood in my veins. *[veins.]*

Dom. Yes; I am told my father was an English sailor, who, being above vulgar prejudices, admired a black beauty. I was born in this island, and the sun gave a gentle tinge to my complexion to mark me as a favourite; so good morning to you. [*Exit Diego.*] The whole island, blacks and whites, will

rejoice in the happiness of the lovers: every negro, as he passes them, will shew his white teeth, and nod in salutation, Ackee O! Ackee O! ay, and the negroes will remember them in their songs when they dance by moonlight, like so many black fairies.

SONG.—DOMINIQUE.

*When the moon shines o'er the deep,
Ackee O! Ackee O!
And whisker'd dons are fast asleep,
Snoring, fast asleep,
From their huts the negroes run,
Ackee O! Ackee O!
Full of frolic, full of fun,
Holiday to keep.
Till morn they dance the merry round,
To the fife and cymbal.
See, so brisk,
How they frisk,
Airy, gay, and nimble!
With gestures antic,
Joyous, frantic,
They dance the merry round,
Ackee O! Ackee O!
To the cymbal's sound.
Black lad whispers to black lass,
Ackee O! Ackee O!
Glances sly between them pass,
Of beating hearts to tell.
Tho' no blush can paint her cheek,
Ackee O! Ackee O!
Still her eyes the language speak
Of passion quite as well.
Till morn, &c.*

Enter PAUL.

Paul. Well, Dominique, here I am, all curiosity, all expectation. You know I am yet ignorant of Virginia's history and my own. You have promised to satisfy my curiosity.

Dom. Now it becomes my duty. Know, then, that Virginia's mother was of a noble family in Spain.

Enter MARY from the cottage.

Mary. Dominique!

Dom. Unlucky! there is my wife; she knows the story by this time, and envies me the pleasure of telling it. (*To Mary.*) Leave us to ourselves but one minute, I entreat you.

Paul. Oh! Dominique, my anxiety—

Dom. Shall be gratified. Virginia's mother was, as I told you, of a noble family in Spain, who cast her from their protection on her marrying my mother, a young merchant of inferior birth. Deserted by their friends, he retired to a small plantation in this island; but one misfortune succeeded another, and he soon died of a broken heart, leaving his wife and infant in poverty and distress.

Paul. Without a protector, without a friend!

Dom. Without a friend! No, young man, I hope I knew my duty better.

Paul. Forgive my impatience, I was in the wrong.

Mary. (*Coming forward.*) Not at all in the wrong; who can keep their patience to hear him talk so slow?

Dom. That is a reproach, Mary, which I cannot retort upon you. Paul, hitherto you have believed Virginia to be your sister; but she is not your sister.

Paul. Indeed! were not Virginia's parents mine?

Dom. And Mary. No.

Paul. To whom, then, do I owe my birth?

Mary. To poor Margaret.

Dom. Who was a faithful domestic to my mistress. And passed for your nurse.

Dom. (*To Mary.*) Now your story is at an end; you know no more.

Paul. And my father?

Dom. Really I cannot tell who he was, for I

never heard myself; but console yourself; if your ignorance in that respect is a misfortune, you are not single in it.

Mary. (To *Dom.*) And now your story is at an end. Not yet.

Paul. Virginia no longer my sister! A thousand emotions rise in my bosom—but, why was the secret of my birth kept for fifteen years, and why disclosed on this day?

Dom. (To *Mary.*) You can't answer that—I can. You must know that my poor mistress, on her death-bed, conjured me to sanction the deceit until Virginia should attain her fifteenth year.

Mary. Well, and she's fifteen this day.

Dom. If, at that period, no news from her family in Spain should arrive—

Mary. And no news from Spain has arrived.

Dom. I was at liberty to explain the secret of your birth, and to add the blessings of Virginia's mother to your union.

Paul. Kind Dominique! invaluable friend! let me fly to Virginia.

Dom. I have already acquainted her with the whole story.

Enter, from the cottage, the young women with VIRGINIA; all go off except Paul and Virginia.

Paul. Why that averted look, my dear Virginia? do you not share in my joy, my transport, at this discovery?

Vir. Indeed I do: my affection for you commenced with my life, and can only end with it. The first word my infant lips pronounced was your beloved name; and when my eyes opened to the light of heaven, my heart opened to love.

Paul. Oh! Virginia, my happiness seems too great to be real.

SONG.—PAUL.

*Vast is the swelling tide of joy,
Too mighty bliss abounding;
Do not, ye powers, with sweets destroy—
Each yielding sense confounding.
A hush, from the dungeon's gloom restor'd,
The captive courts the sudden light;
Shrinks from the blessing he ador'd,
And hides in shades his dazzled sight.*

Enter ALAMBRA from behind the cottage.

Alam. Pity, pity the miserable Alambra! Oh! compassionate a wretched creature forced by ill usage to escape from a neighbouring plantation.

Paul. How! a runaway negro!

Alam. For several days the neighbouring forest has sheltered me from my pursuers, but, alas! I dared not venture from my hiding-place to implore charity, till famine rendered me desperate—I faint with hunger.

Paul. Poor wretch! thou hast, indeed, suffered for thy errors,

Vir. We must forget his errors in his misery. Let us thank heaven, my dear Paul, for having again afforded us the satisfaction of relieving a fellow-creature in distress.

Paul. Unfortunate victim of avarice! Alas! you know the strict laws of this island will not allow us to afford you shelter in our abode. What misfortune tempted you to the rashness of deserting your master's service!

Alam. Oppression, cruel oppression; not exerted on my own person, but on my helpless sister. Our parents died on board the ship which tore us from our native country; we were left helpless and deserted orphans.

Vir. Paul, do you mark this? We are orphans, and know how to pity.

Alam. I thought myself too happy that our lot was to serve the same master. We were purchased for a planter named Tropic.

Paul. His principal servant, Diego, was in search of you this morning.

Alam. It is of his cruel servant I complain. For some time my strength and activity enabled me not only to perform my own task with cheerfulness, but to assist in that portion of labour allotted to my sister. This was discovered by Diego, and he chastised me with stripes.

Vir. How wretched must be the reflections of that bad man!

Alam. I bore my punishment with fortitude; but the next hour, alas!—hearts like your's will scarcely give credit to the tale—the next hour, I saw my gentle sister sink under the lash of my tormentor. Madness seized my brain. I struck the cruel Diego to the ground.

Paul. Heaven stamped that energy in your heart, which raised your avenging arm.

Vir. (To *Paul.*) Cannot we intercede with this poor slave's master to forgive him! What, though he may be a man of high rank, and we cannot speak to him eloquently, surely no eloquence is required to plead the cause of nature.

Paul. Virginia, we feel the impulse of a guardian power: let us obey it.

Alam. (Falling on his knees.) He who implanted mercy in your breasts will thank you for me.

Paul. Take some refreshment in this cottage, and then lead the way to your plantation.

Alam. Across that mountain lies our path; it is rugged and difficult.

Vir. Fear not for me. Sure, endeavours to relieve this poor slave will be our best acknowledgment of the debt we owe to heaven.

[*Exeunt into the cottage all but Jacintha.*]

Jac. Innocent and happy pair! love reigns in their hearts, and prepares them to enjoy every blessing around them.

SONG.—JACINTHA.

*Glorious the ray glancing over the ocean,
That bids hill and valley display each gay hue;
Graceful the orange-grove waves in slow motion,
With joy, as it hails the fresh morning in view.*

*Yet vainly her beauties shall nature impart,
But for love's cheering sunshine that reigns in the heart,
All is delight if kind love lend his aid;
And all is despair, if fond hopes be betray'd.*

*Sweet is the breeze that awakens the morning,
Or murmurs at eve with the nightingale's song;
Bright is the moon-beam, the streamlet adorning,
While o'er the smooth pebbles it wanders along.*

Yet vainly her beauties, &c.

SCENE II.—A Room in Tropic's house.

Enter TROPIC and DIEGO.

Diego. Well, sir, you are master, to be sure, and must be obeyed; but still I say you are wrong, very wrong.

Tropic. What, haven't I authority over my own plantation? Haven't I absolute power over my slaves? Yes, I have; and I choose to shew that power by rendering them as happy as I can. It is a fancy of mine, and no one shall control me in it.

Diego. And so, they are to have another holiday?

Tropic. Yes, and a proper allowance of grog to make them happy; I love grog myself, it often makes me happy.

Diego. Ah! sir, the plantation was differently managed before you had it. But, really, I am sorry to say, you Englishmen do not understand how to deal with slaves; your own country affords you no practice that way.

Tropic. No, Diego, it is the boast of Britons, that from the moment a slave imprints his footstep on our shore,—the moment he breathes the air of the land of freedom,—he becomes free.

Diego. Ay, there's the pity; so that makes you spoil your slaves here in the West Indies.

Tropic. No, I do not spoil them.

Diego. You consider them—

Tropic. As men. And I will say, for the credit of mankind, whether black or white, I have seldom found a heart so perverse as to be insensible of the treatment of humanity and kindness; but your discipline is so rigid, Diego, I am not satisfied as to the story of Alambra. [rogue.]

Diego. Alambra is an impudent, good-for-nothing

Tropic. Well, well, but—

Diego. And a runaway, a deserter, eloped from your service. [he punished.]

Tropic. A deserter! true, so he is; he ought to

Diego. And shall, if I catch him; he ran away because he would not work.

Tropic. That's bad; every one who eats his allowance ought to work for it. I am an old seaman, and I hate a skulker. Mankind are brother sailors through the voyage of life, 'tis our duty to assist each other: 'tis true, we have different stations; some on the quarter-deck, and others before the mast; or else how could the vessel sail? But the cause of society is a common cause, and he that won't lend a hand to keep the vessel in a sailing trim, heave him overboard to the sharks, I say.

Diego. You are a true sailor, i' faith!

Tropic. Yes, my native country is my ship, and I am proud to call her Great Britain. Long may she ride like a peerless first-rate, the queen of the ocean, with a gallant crew and a beloved commander.

SONG.—TROPIC.

Our country is our ship, d'ye see,

A gallant vessel, too;

And of his fortune proud is he,

Who's of the Albion's crew.

Each man, whate'er his station be,

When duty's call commands,

Should take his stand,

And lend a hand,

As the common cause demands.

Among ourselves, in peace, 'tis true,

We quarrel—make a rout;

And having nothing else to do,

We fairly scold it out.

But once the enemy in view,

Shake hands, we soon are friends;

On the deck,

Till a wreck,

Each the common cause defends. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—*The outside of Tropic's house, with a view of a sugar plantation. Some Slaves appear to have just left work.*

Enter PAUL, VIRGINIA, and ALAMBRA.

Alam. At length we are arrived at my master Tropic's plantation; and see, my young friends, there he is at a distance. Now, kind Virginia, plead for me.

Vir. I will, if—if I can find spirits to perform the task; but my courage fails me just when I most want it.

Alam. Oh! do not forsake me in this extremity. Retire a moment and collect yourself. (*They retire. Paul likewise retires and converses with some of the slaves.*)—[Enter TROPIC and DIEGO.]

Diego. There, sir, I told you so; now your own eyes will convince you. There is Alambra; who has the assurance to come into your presence with some vagabond companions.

Tropic. Bring him hither, (*Diego going to seize Alambra.*)

Alam. Oh! spare me. (*Paul rushes forward and draws his sword to defend Alambra against Diego, who desists.*)

Tropic. Bold youth, what means this presumption?

AIR.—PAUL.

Boldly I come, to plead the cause

Of nature and of truth;

Oh! let your heart own nature's laws:

Redress this injur'd youth.

Diego. Don't credit what they say. Don't listen to that girl; she'll make you believe anything she pleases.

Tropic. I am resolute.

Diego. I wish you would turn your eyes this way. You should not trust yourself even to look upon Virginia.

Tropic. Is this Virginia?

AIR.—VIRGINIA.

*Ah! could my falt'ring tongue impart
The tale of woe that pains my heart,
Then in vain I should not crave
Your pity for a wretched slave.*

*The injur'd ne'er in vain address'd,
In plaints of woe, a Briton's breast:
Compassion ever marks the brave:
Oh! pity, then, your wretched slave.*

Ah! could, &c.

(*During the air, Tropic converses with Paul; Diego watches his countenance anxiously; Tropic looks fiercely at Diego: when Virginia has finished her song, she goes to Alambra, who is kneeling, and takes him by the hand.*)

Tropic. Alambra, you have been wronged; but you shall have ample justice. Diego!

Paul. (*To Tropic.*) Mark his countenance: how timid is guilt! [Diego sneaks off.]

Tropic. The knave shall answer for this. What do I owe to you, children of truth? Simple nature spoke forcibly to your hearts. Distress of a fellow-creature was a claim too powerful to be resisted. Regardless of every personal danger, you boldly preferred a complaint against a wretch, at whose power of revenge you might have trembled. And I—I, who had been made an innocent accomplice of this man's guilt, might have still wandered in the paths of oppression and injustice, had I not been rescued by the courageous virtue of these poor children.

CHORUS OF NEGROES.

*Oh! bless'd for ever be this day,
When charity asserts her sway:
When beauty, generous as fair,
Deems not the slave beneath her care;
And bids the beams of mercy smile
Upon the suffering sons of toil!*

[*The Slaves, who, from the moment Alambra was pardoned, have testified their joy and gratitude, have now prepared a chair composed of bamboos and branches of trees, in which they seat Virginia, and carry her on their shoulders.* Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in Virginia's cottage.

Enter DOMINIQUE and ALAMBRA.

Alam. Paul and Virginia bade me say, that in a few hours you will see them. My master, the English planter, overwhelms them with kindness, and insists upon escorting them part of the way home.

Dom. Hark! what noise is that? (*Firing of guns heard. He goes out and returns.*) A ship is arrived, and from Spain. (*Looking out.*) A sailor comes on shore with letters. We may have some news.

Enter a Sailor.

Welcome on shore, my lad; any letter for Virginia?

Sailor. Virginia? No.

Dom. Well, they are not much to be expected. As for Paul, I imagine there can be none for him.

Sailor. No.

Dom. He is as much unknown in Europe as I

Sailor. But here's a letter for one Dom—Dom—

Dom. For whom?

Alam. Dominique?

Sailor. Ay, Dominique. Perhaps you are the man.

Dom. I am the man. [*Takes the letter. Exit Sailor.*] But, a letter for me! Who would write to me? I am unknown in Europe. I know nobody: nobody knows me. (*Reads the superscription.*) Addressed to the faithful Dominique. (*Opens the letter.*) From Donna Leonora de Guzman, Virginia's aunt. (*Reads.*) "*Faithful Dominique, your character for honesty and fidelity are not unknown to me. Tell Virginia that I now acknowledge her as my niece; that the errors of her family are forgotten, and that she is sole heiress of my wealth.*"

Alam. Virginia rich! How many people she will make happy!

Dom. Do I dream? Do I really read this under the hand of Donna Leonora?

Alam. Oh! don't talk, but read the letter.

Dom. Ay, here is a postscript, sure enough. (*Reads.*) "*Prepare Virginia to receive this sudden good news, and to receive Don Antonio de Guardes, my particular friend, who comes a passenger in this ship. He will deliver my letters to my niece, and explain the whole of my favourable intentions towards her.*"

Alam. Oh, joy! Oh, delight! Happy will Paul and Virginia be.

Dom. See, they are bringing presents for her. I suppose the Don will be here himself soon.

Alam. I'll run back to Virginia immediately, and tell her—

Dom. What will you tell her?

Alam. Why, that there is fine news arrived; and a fine gentleman is arrived; and has brought fine presents; and—

Dom. Take care you don't blunder in the business. In the first place, you give Virginia this letter—now mind my instructions, and tell her—

DUETT.—DOMINIQUE and ALAMBRA.

Dom. Don Antonio's come,

Just arriv'd from Spain;

And soon, in a devil of a hurry, it should seem,
Will he go home again.

Alam. What pleasure, what delight,
To see this charming sight!

Fal, fal, de ral!

Such gold and jewels bright!

Dom. Why, the plague won't you learn your lesson?
Now attend to what I say—

Alam. All the rest leave me to guess on;
Give me the letter, pray.

Dom. Listen to me, pray—

Alam. No more you need to say.

Dom. Hear but what I say—

Alam. Adieu! I must away.

Alam. Come, good Dominique,

I'll now Virginia seek,

The letter give, and your commands I will re-
I'm all attention—speak.

Dom. I know my time to talk,

That's over—you may walk;

And so, with your fal, de ral!

You now may go your way.

Alam. Will you, then, withhold the letter?

Come, now—good now—don't refuse.

Dom. On second thoughts, I think I'd better

Tell her myself the news.

Alam. Listen to me, pray—

Dom. You now may go your way,

With your fal, fal!

Alam. Adieu! I must away.

Dom. Hear but what I say.

[In the course of the duett Alambra snatches the letter and exit.]

Enter DON ANTONIO and SEBASTIAN.

Dom. This must be Don Antonio.

Ant. Sebastian, send my message to the governor. I must pay my respects to him immediately, or not at all. I shall be on board to-morrow morning.

Dom. (*Aside.*) On board to-morrow morning!

Ant. On my arrival here to-day, I find a ship bound for Spain to-morrow; and, as I hate to lose time, I shall take the opportunity of returning. Virginia can have no objection. She will be overjoyed at going to Spain!

Dom. My lord, did I hear you aright? Virginia to go to Spain?

Ant. Yes, to be sure. Virginia returns to Spain with me, who am her lover to-day, and her husband to-morrow, as her aunt's letter will explain to her.

Dom. Don Antonio, what you propose is impossible.

Ant. Ay, ay; why so?

[*other.*]

Dom. Virginia's affections are engaged to an-

Ant. Another! Ha, ha, ha! You are a person of interest in this family, and I must purchase your friendship.

[*your*]

Dom. It is not to be bought in such a cause as

Ant. Insolent slave!

Dom. You will permit me to withdraw?

Ant. No.

Dom. You insult an inferior. I am sorry you do not remember what is due to your station. Were I equally forgetful of mine,—

Ant. And this impertinence you mistake for independence of mind!

Dom. I hope I do not mistake it. He who is idle or dissipated must ever be dependent; for his folly renders him the slave of others. Independence is not confined to any situation; it is the reward granted by heaven to industry and fragility.

Ant. 'Sdeath! am I to be braved thus? (*Offers to strike him.*)

Dom. Hold, my lord; beware of a blow. All distinctions of rank and stations sink before a blow. Remember, it is an appeal to manhood, that would at once proclaim us to be equals. My sinews are strengthened by toil; and although I wish to decline the contest, believe me, I do not fear it.

[*Exit.*]

Seb. My lord, your impatience will ruin everything. Dominique will apprise the lovers of your intentions, and you will have to dare all the fury of a jealous rival.

Ant. Be it so. I cannot stoop to dissemble.

Seb. Nor is it necessary. You shall dissemble by deputy. I will take that task upon myself, and will persuade Dominique that all you have said was to prove his fidelity; and that your errand to this island is to unite Paul and Virginia, with the consent of her aunt, Donna Leonora.

Ant. But to what purpose lose all this time?

Seb. To lull suspicion to sleep, and to enable you to carry off Virginia this night.

Ant. My dear Sebastian!

Seb. The governor has sent an answer to your message, and is now expecting you.

Ant. Well?

Seb. Let the governor see the letters written to Virginia by her aunt, they will shew your authority for carrying her to Spain.

Ant. I have the letters here.

Seb. And request assistance from the governor; guards to convey her on board of ship, and to secure Paul from obstructing our scheme.

Ant. Admirably planned!

[*snique.*]

Seb. Then leave me to manage our friend Domi-

Ant. While I obtain an audience of the governor.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A pleasant Country, with Tropic's plantation.

Enter PAUL, JACINTHA, ALAMBRA, and VIRGINIA, who is supported in a seat on the shoulders of the Negroes as before. The Negroes place the seat on the ground, while Alambra, in dumb show, seems to explain to Paul and Virginia the news, &c. of Antonio's arrival. A dance of Negroes.

Paul. Thanks to my generous friends.

[*Exit Negroes.*]

Vir. Return to my cottage, Alambra, and let the best of our simple fare be prepared to greet the noble stranger. [*Exit Alambra.*]

Paul. And is the wealthy Virginia still resolved to unite herself with a lover so poor, so humble?

Vir. Can Paul venture to offend Virginia with such a question?

Jac. Reserve your love speeches for some other situation. The echoes hereabouts are very communicative, and may, perhaps, tell more than you intend shall be known.

TRIO.—PAUL, VIRGINIA, and JACINTHA.

When tell-tale echoes whisper around,

The lover with prudence arming,

Then timid love retires from the sound,

Each whisper his caution alarming:

But when a lover echoes your sigh,

That's not amiss, if no stranger is nigh.

The sweet response of love—the sigh!

Oh! that is the echo most charming!

The sweet response I love, &c. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—A Room in Virginia's cottage

DOMINIQUE and SEBASTIAN discovered.

Dom. Why, you don't say so?

Seb. I assure you of the fact. My master, Don Antonio, was resolved to try whether you merited the character given you by Donna Leonora.

Dom. And he did try me pretty effectually, to be sure.

Seb. He admires your strength of mind.

Dom. I! faith! he had very nearly experienced my strength of body; for never in my life did I find my hands so inclined to mutiny. Oh! my dear Paul,

Enter PAUL.

let me never hear that fortune is blind; if she were so formerly, she has recovered her sight at last, and rewarded virtue.

Paul. My faithful Dominique!

SONG.—PAUL.

A blessing unknown to ambition and pride,

That fortune can never abate;

To wealth and to splendour tho' often denied,

Yet on poverty deigns to await.

That blessing, ye powers, still be it my lot,

The choicest of gifts from above;

Deep fix'd in my heart, it shall ne'er be forgot,

That the wealth of the cottage is love.

Whate'er my condition why should I repine?

By poverty never distress'd;

Exulting I feel what a treasure is mine:

A treasure enshrin'd in my breast.

That blessing, &c.

Enter DON ANTONIO. Paul brings in VIRGINIA and JACINTHA.

Vir. My lord, I do not apologise for this humble abode; peace and virtue have dwelt here; and, by superior minds, like your's, honoured will be the roof that has given shelter to such guests.

Ant. Charming Virginia! how would Donna Leonora be delighted in beholding you add grace to the ornaments which her fondness presents to you.

Vir. Ah! my lord, how shall I express my gratitude for her affection! In this cottage, fifteen years ago, my exiled mother gave me birth. In this cottage, to-day, you announce to me the parental fondness, the cherished blessings, of a second mother.

Ant. This girl is an angel. (*Aside to Seb.*)

Seb. (*Aside to Ant.*) Granted: but it may be not quite so convenient to inform Paul that you think her so.

Ant. (*Aside to Seb.*) I have seen the governor, and shewn him Donna Leonora's letters; he consents to my plan, and I expect a guard presently to enforce his orders in consequence.

Vir. Aid me, my dear Paul, to express all the thanks we ought to offer.

Ant. Virginia, you have not yet told me the whole of your history.

Vir. Ah! my lord, our history is soon told; happiness in humble life offers but few circumstances to claim attention.

TRIO.—PAUL, VIRGINIA, and ALAMBRA.

Paul. } *Lowly; humble was our lot,*

& Vir. } *Fortune's frowns seem'd endless,*

• *Yet, by kind heaven are never forgot*

Orphans poor and friendless.

Hope, from the skies descending,

Still her bless'd influence lending,

Labour o'er, we dance and play;

Hearts free from guile are ever gay.

Chorus. *Hearts free, &c.*

Alam. *Lowly, humble though your lot,*

Goodness in you was endless;

Ne'er shall that goodness be forgot;

I, too, was poor and friendless.

Oh! may, from heav'n descending,

Hope, her bless'd influence lending,

Crown with joy each happy day!

Hearts free from guile are ever gay.

Chorus. *Hearts free, &c.*

Paul. } *Blissful though our future lot,*

& Vir. } *Fortune's smiles, though endless,*

Amidst our joys shall ne'er be forgot

We once were poor and friendless.

Humble content most prizing,

• *Our joys though the proud are despising,*

Still this truth we may display,

Hearts free from guile are ever gay.

Chorus. *Hearts free from guile, &c.*

Enter an Officer.

Off. Don Antonio de Guardas?

Ant. The same, good signor.

Off. An order from the governor. (*Gives a paper.*)

Ant. The governor's order shall be obeyed. We are all ready. [*Exit Officer.*] Virginia, thus far I have listened to your story; now, in your turn, attend: it is reserved for me to complete your eventful drama.

Paul. What means Antonio?

Ant. Hark! my actors approach. (*March heard.*)

QUARTETTO and CHORUS.

Paul. *What sounds strike my ear?*

Jac. *The guards are passing by.*

Dom. *But why approach so near?*

Alam. *The truth let me descry.* [*Exit.*]

(*The march still continues to be heard, Alambra*

re-enters in consternation. The governor's

guards then enter, commanded by an Officer,

who speaks apart to Don Antonio.)

Ant. *Come, sir, despatch; your order see obey'd.*

Off. *'Tis from the governor.*

Paul. *Thus meanly betray'd!*

His name by this order you degrade:

• *Stand forth, base deceiver, and say,*

Of what are we accus'd, our crime display.

Antonio, Officer, and Chorus of Guards.

Be silent; the order you must obey.

Paul, Virginia, and the rest.

Our

Their } *crime display.*

Cho. *The order of the governor you must obey.*

[*The guards carry off Virginia and Paul on op-*

posite sides. The march is heard as they retire.]

SCENE IV.—Another Room in the cottage.

Enter MARY, meeting DOMINIQUE.

Mary. Oh! Dominique, this is a miserable hour.

Dom. (*Agitated.*) Yes, it isn't an hour of the happiest sort, to be sure.

Mary. That wicked Don Antonio!

Dom. Antonio! Curses on his name! but children vent their complaints in soolding; it is for men to bear misfortunes.

Mary. Where is Virginia?

Dom. Carried on board a ship.

Mary. And where is Paul?

Dom. By this time he is no longer a prisoner.

Mary. Who obtained his release?

Dom. Why, the gallant Englishman, whom Paul visited to-day; that man has, indeed, a heart in his bosom.

Mary. See, Dominique, here he is.

Enter TROPIC.

Oh! sir, you surely bring us good news.

Tropic. I wish it were so.

Dom. Why, then, for bad news. Let us hear it, sir. I can bear it.

Tropic. I had explained to the governor the injustice which he had been betrayed into by the artifice of Don Antonio—

Dom. And the governor ordered Paul to be released.

Tropic. Yes; and indignant at Don Antonio's conduct, he directed the ship to be detained, and Virginia to be brought before him.

Dom. Then Virginia is on shore?

Tropic. No: before the governor's order could reach the port, the ship was under sail, and Virginia a prisoner on board.

Mary. Then Virginia is lost to us for ever. *(Weeps.)*

Dom. Be silent, be silent; tears do no good. *(Turns aside and weeps.)*

Tropic. Already had we made signals from the lighthouse for the vessel to put back—

Dom. Ay, and—

Tropic. And the signals were obeyed. With joy I saw the ship returning towards the harbour, when—

Dom. What, sir?—what? Speak out—never mind, sir—we'll bear misfortune; 'tis our duty.

Tropic. The elements fight against us. Suddenly there arose one of those hurricanes which are the scourge of our climate. Hark! how the tempest howls!

Dom. But the ship has gained the harbour?

Tropic. Alas! no. I fear she is in a perilous situation. I immediately despatched Alambra to the shore: he knows the coast perfectly. His long stay forebodes no good news.

Dom. Here is Alambra.

Enter ALAMBRA.

What news of the ship?

Alam. In the greatest danger: firing guns and making signals of distress, which are answered from the shore, but, I fear, to little purpose.

Tropic. Has she weathered the reef of rocks?

Alam. No, there will be her ruin.

Mary. Can no assistance be rendered to them?

Alam. The swell of the sea is tremendous. No boat can venture to leave the shore.

Tropic. Indeed! We'll have one trial, however. I think I know two or three good fellows who will take their chance to sink or swim in the cause of humanity; and, to the extent of my purse, they shall claim their reward. *[Exit.]*

Alam. Come, Dominique, let us endeavour to render assistance, although I have but little hope.

Dom. Don't despair; the weather is improving.

Alam. Improving! Why, the wind is louder.

Dom. Ay, just at this moment; but it will be lower presently; and see, the sky is lighter.

Alam. Yes, because the flashes of lightning are incessant.

Dom. Well, but I hear no thunder.

Alam. That is because the wind is so high.

Dom. Not merely so. I am confident the weather

is growing better. I have not heard the thunder these five minutes. *[Thunder. Exit.]*

SCENE V.—A rocky coast; the sea violently agitated. Thunder and lightning at intervals.

Enter TROPIC, MARY, a number of Soldiers, Sailors, and Negroes, some of whom hold lights from the ends of long poles, while others seem preparing a boat to be put to sea.

Cho. Hour of terror! scene of woe!

Lost Virginia! hapless maid!

Fate, avert th' impending blow!

Powers of mercy, lend your aid!

(The ship comes in sight, and runs on a rock stern foremost.)

Tro. From yonder cliff let signal fires ascend;
Once more, my gallant hearts, your efforts lend.
(Some Sailors get into the boat and shove her off.)

Cho. Save the helpless maid!

(The ship appears on fire.)

Jac. Behold, who is yonder,

How wild is his air!

If hither he wander,

Ah! soothe his despair.

Cho. How wild his despair!

Enter PAUL.

Paul. Then is she lost? 'tis madness all!

Amid the gloom,

Virginia! on thee I call:

Thee I come to save, or share thy doom.

(Paul breaks from the Women, who endeavour to detain him, runs up the cliff, and disappears.)

Alam. Of winds and waves I'll brave the strife:

'Tis honour calls, fearless I go.

What, though I risk my ransom'd life,

The debt I to Virginia owe.

Cho. Haste, generous youth, Virginia save.

(Alambra jumps into a boat with two Negroes, and shoves off.)

Tro. Unhappy lovers! all is vain:

See, breathless he is cast on shore.

(The boat returns to shore with Paul apparently breathless.)

Offi. Yet shall a spark of hope remain,

Virginia may be ours once more.

While sinking in the foaming wave,

Alambra, generous as brave,

Rescu'd the fav'rite of the skies.

To shore he brings his lovely prize.

ALAMBRA brings VIRGINIA on shore. Paul recovers by degrees, and after embracing each other, they fall on their knees, and stretch their arms to heaven in token of gratitude.

Cho. From the cruel waves,
Fate, the fair Virginia saves.

Paul and Virginia come forward and receive the congratulations of all present.

FINALE.

PAUL, VIRGINIA, MARY, JACINTHA, &c.

Strains of joy

We'll now employ,

And dance a mirthful measure;

From above,

Fate smiles on love,

Of life, the choicest treasure.

Fal, la, la.

Let's dance a mirthful measure.

Alam. Sing away,

In strains so gay,

The praise of love and beauty;

Like Dominique,

No praise I seek,

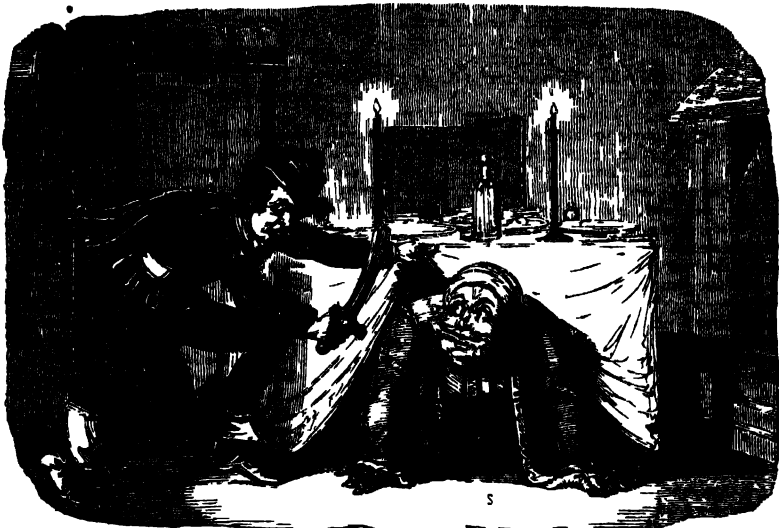
I only did my duty.

Chorus. Strains of joy, &c.

[Exit.]

THE SIEGE OF BELGRADE;

A COMIC OPERA, IN THREE ACTS—BY JAMES COBB.



Act II—Scene 4

CHARACTERS

THE SERASKIER
COLONEL COHENBERG
LEOPOLD
PLTFR

USEPH
ANSI M
ISMAEL
MICHAEL

CATHERINE
LILLA
GHITA
FATIMA

ACT I

SCENE I—*The Village of Servia, with the Dumbé, on one side, the Turkish camp, on the other, the Austrian, which appears at a distance*

Enter several Turkish Soldiers, who range themselves on each side the stage, then enter Turkish Peasants of both sexes, who dance, after the dance,

CHORUS—TURKISH SOLDIERS.

*Wave our prophet's fam'd standard of glory on high,
Till the envious moon die away in the sky,
And, like the pale Christians, leave Danube's fair stream,*

To reflect our victorious crescent's bright beam.

Enter USEPH.

Useph. Be silent, you soldiers his highness the Seraskier is coming, he has just arrived with the Turkish army under his command to relieve Belgrade. I have been conversing with him, I told him of your loyalty to the sublime Porte. "Sir—your highness—my dear highness," says I, for we talked it very familiarly "I am the chief magistrate of this village, I know the Ottoman Porte has not more loyal subjects in all the province of Servia, and as for your highness—always talking of your highness—your highness's name is never out of our mouths." By-the-by, remember his name is Mohamed Aboubeker Ben Abdallah Ben Ali, I dare say you never heard it before. So, says the Seraskier to me, "My dear Useph Ben Yacomb Ben Mustapha"—at the same time graciously laughing at me with great condescension—(Flourish) Oh! here he comes now you shall see how his highness is pleased to honour me, I shall certainly be created a pacha of three tails.

Enter SERASKIER, ISMAEL, and Attendants.

Seras. Useph, come hither.

Useph. Yes, your highness (Apast to the Peasants) Now he is going to consult me on some great military operation.

Seras. Are there many pretty girls in this neighbourhood?

Useph. Ha, ha, ha! That's a good joke. Ah! your highness will conquer every way I see. Ha, ha, ha! Your highness is pleased to make me laugh. Ha, ha, ha!

Seras. You are too familiar.

Useph. My lord!

Seras. Begone [Exeunt Useph and Peasants]

Enter LILLA, who kneels to the Seraskier.

AIR—LILLA

*Lost mistress thus driven from home,
Whither shall poor Lilla go?*

*Whoso'er my steps may roam,
I grant power will prove my foe.*

Seras. Who is this beautiful girl? Rise, lovely fair one.

Lilla. I humbly beg your highness' pardon for my boldness, I am not used to talk to great folks.

Seras. Speak, charming angel! bless me with the voice of nature, who are you?

TRIO—SERASKIER, LILLA, and ISMAEL.

Seras. Speak, I command thee, tell thy grief.

*Say, can my power afford relief,
For my trembling heart must yield belief* (Aside)

Lilla. Ah! may I dare to tell my grief,
And, humbly, thus, implore relief,
To my salt my tongue, oh! you'd believe.

Ismael. *Beauty may boldly tell her grief;
Such fine eyes command relief;
And his trembling heart must yield belief.*

Lilla. I am but a poor country girl, sir; my name is Lilla; but I love Leopold, and Leopold loves me; yet my cross, ill-natured brother wants me to refuse Leopold, to marry that ugly old miser, Useph, a justice of peace in our village.

Seras. Useph! Oh! the old poacher! (*Aside.*) does your brother object to Leopold?

Lilla. He says, and please your highness, that Leopold is too passionate to make a good husband; now, I own he is rather violent, but I don't like him a bit the worse for that.

Seras. Where is Leopold?

Lilla. Ah! my lord, my mind misgives me that some mischief has happened to him; but they locked me up to prevent my going in search of him.

Seras. Then how came you here?

Lilla. Please your highness, I jumped out of the window.

Seras. What a pleasing sample of rustic simplicity! how handsome she is! (*To Ismael.*)

Ismael. What, my lord, do you forget your Austrian captive?

Seras. Forget her! no; but why should I confine myself to a single rose, when I can form a bouquet of them. Well, charming Lilla, within this half-hour I promise you redress. Conduct her to my tent, and attend her well.

Lilla. A thousand thanks, your highness. [*Exit.*]

Seras. Is she not beautiful, Ismael?

Ismael. I own, my lord, she is beautiful; but—

Seras. But what?

Ismael. I beg your highness' pardon; but while I see the black eagle soar upon the walls of Belgrade, I cannot forget that I am a soldier.

Seras. Nor I, Ismael; but I have room in my heart for love and valour at the same time; I never fight better than when I am in love; Mars never smiles so propitiously upon me as when I am paying my adoration to Venus; so, if you wish me to conquer the Austrians, you must get me this girl. [*Exit Ismael.*] She is a charming creature, and shall be mine.

AIR.—SERASKIER.

*The rose and the lily their beauties combining,
Delight in adorning a form so divine;
Such charms to a peasant consigning,*

Ah! must I resign?

Forbid it, ye powers! to love 'tis a treason;

Yet, ambition, assuming the semblance of reason,

Commands me, with scorn, the mean thought to decline.

Wealth and power, what are your worth,

To pleasure if you give not birth?

Rich in ambition's gilded toys,

I barter them for real joys.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*Inside of Peter's house.*

Enter PETER and GHITA.

DUETT.

Ghita. *How the deuce I came to like you,
I am sure I cannot tell;
Had my face ne'er chanc'd to strike you,
I'd been pleas'd, sir, just as well.*

Peter. *Faith! as you say, I, too, wonder
Why to like you I'm inclin'd:
Though in love we're apt to blunder;
Love, you know, they say, is blind.*

Ghita. *You're ogling all the lasses.*

Peter. *You're simpering at each lad.*

Ghita. *Each hour in falsehood passes.*

Peter. *You flirt it quite as bad.*

Both. *You had better not provoke me;
Though you think as you've bespoke me,
I shall let you break my heart,
But I'm ready now to part.*

Peter. *Then, suppose I take my leave?
Ghita. Do; I'm sure I shall not grieve.*

Will you stay, or will you go?

Peter. *Shall I stay, or shall I go?*

Both. *As you please, say yes or no.*

Enter USEPH.

Useph. What, the deuce! quarrelling before marriage! Oh, fie! that is very irregular; wait till the ceremony is over, and then you will quarrel of course.

Peter. Indeed, sir!

Ghita. Hear me, sir.

Useph. No, I'll not hear you: am I to be talked to by you? I, who have conversed with his highness the Seraskier!—besides, I hate to hear both sides of the question; it perplexes me so, that I never know how to make a decision.

Peter. Why, then, sir, how can you decide?

Useph. Why, I decide that you are both in the wrong. I fancy that decision will hold good in most quarrels; my friend, his highness the Seraskier, could not make a better decision. But where is your sister? where is my dear Lilla? (*To Peter.*)

Ghita. Why, Peter has locked her up, to keep her from your rival, Leopold.

Useph. Ah! that's a desperate dog: he is always in a desperate passion, and always pretending to keep his temper; he is the very torch of sedition, and always in a blaze. (*Leopold singing without.*) 'Eh! why, that's his voice. I—I—I don't much wish for meeting—Here he comes.

Enter LEOPOLD.

Leop. How are you? how do you do? Harkye! you, sir, where's your sister?

Peter. Why, as to that, Leopold—

Leop. Oh! I know what you are going to say; you mean to say that I am in a passion.—Ah! Ghita, how do you do? Very fine, pleasant, disagreeable, temperate weather, I think.

Useph. Rather cloudy.

Leop. What?

Useph. It was rather cloudy when I was talking to his highness the Seraskier just now. But I believe I can answer your inquiries: in the first place—

Leop. What do you mean by that? I'd have you know that I won't take an insult from any man living.

Useph. Why, there is no talking to you; I can't reason with you.

Leop. It's false; you—I say, you are mistaken. I insist upon your reasoning with me; d—e! you shall reason with me; ay, and coolly, too, though I know you are my rival.

Useph. But give me leave—

Leop. Well, I know what you are going to say, that people needn't quarrel because they are rivals.

Useph. Granted; and besides—

Leop. Well, I know, I know; and you mean to observe, that warmth and anger betray a weakness on these occasions, which, I trust, I am free from. Harkye! you rascal, (*to Peter*) I know your sister is locked up; if you don't give me the key, d—e! I'll break your head; I will, by—

Useph. Sir, do you remember who I am? a magistrate and a courtier: do you respect my authority? (*Marching up to Leopold, who draws back.*)

Leop. (*Marching up to Useph, who draws back.*) No, I do not: that for your authority. (*Snaps his fingers.*) A magistrate, indeed! Ha, ha, ha! Look at the magistrate. What have you to say now, magistrate?

Useph. Nothing: if you don't respect authority, there's an end of the matter.

Leop. (*To Peter.*) Give me the key.

Peter. Why, to say the truth, Leopold, I have lost it.

Leop. Lost it! Oh! very well. But it's no matter: I believe this right shoulder of mine will force any lock. I'll break open the door; and I'll do it without any violence, only to shew how I can keep my temper; now I defy any of you to say that I put myself in a passion. D—e! stand out of the way, or I'll knock you down, you old goat.

[*Pushes violently against Useph and exits.*]

Ghita. What do you think now, sir?

Useph. 'Faith! I don't know; my thoughts are rather confused; I—I—I—(Noise without.) There, there, he has broke the door all to smash. Good morning to you: perhaps his highness waits for me. (*Going.*)

Peter. Consider, sir, you had better not leave us.

Useph. Indeed, I beg your pardon; our good humoured friend may come back and knock out my brains very coolly; only to shew what he can do without being in a passion. [*Exit with Peter.*]

Ghita. Poor Lilla! I hope Leopold will carry her off. I am sure she loves him, and that he loves her; the whole village will rejoice at their wedding.

AIR.—GHITA.

*All will hail the joyous day,
When love his triumph shall display;
The dance shall mingle old and young.
The rustic pipe assist the song;
The sprightly bells with welcome sound,
Shall spread the happy news around,
And give a hint to maidens coy,
That youth they should not misemploy.
Useph will, with sullen pride,
Envy joys to wealth denied;
And as we trip with merry glee,
Wish himself as poor as we.*
The sprightly bells, &c.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—Outside of Peter's house; a garden wall round it.

LEOPOLD discovered at the window, out of which is a veil hanging.

Leop. Poor Lilla! nowhere to be found: she's gone; and, by her veil hanging here out of the window, in a fit of despair. I'll after her. (*Jumps out, and comes out of the door of the garden wall with the veil.*) This relic of my beloved Lilla's shall serve to keep my resentment alive. But where's that cruel villain, Peter? d—e! I'll maul him.

[*Retires into the garden.*]

Enter PETER.

Peter. Ha! the window open! nay, then, madam's off: but where's that mad-brained Leopold?

Enter LEOPOLD.

Leop. Have I caught you, sirrah? Now, what have you to say for yourself? (*Seizes him by the throat.*)

Peter. Why, nothing, to be sure, if you stop my breath.

Leop. Harkye! rascal, if you don't tell me where Lilla is—

Peter. Why, you are in such a passion, Leopold.

Leop. It's false; I'm not in a passion. If you say I'm in a passion, I'll kick you, you scurvy knave.

Enter USEPH and Officers.

Useph. Seize that fellow directly.

TRIO AND CHORUS.

Useph. Seize him, seize him, I say.

Peter. Seize him, seize him! Why, pray?

Leop. Let me come at him, pray.

Chorus. Haste, let us bear him away.

Useph. Don't fear, I'll protect you.

Leop. You're a rogue; I suspect you.

Useph. Knock him down, I command it.

Chorus. Knock him down, he commands it.

Peter. How can justice demand it?

Hear me.

Chorus.

Hear me.

Leop.

No, hear me.

Useph. We are none of us safe—

Chorus. While that fellow is free.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—Inside of Anselm's Cottage.

Enter ANSELM.

Anselm. The hour is almost come. I wonder if Colonel Cohenberg be yet arrived; perhaps he may be the chosen instrument of heaven to destroy this Turkish tyranny, that like a baneful weed, chokes up our every seed of freedom.

AIR.—ANSELM.

*The sapling oak lost in the dell,
Where tangled brakes its beauties spoil,
And every infant shoot repel,
Droops hopeless o'er the exhausted soil.
At length, the woodman clears around
Where'er the noxious thickets spread;
And high reviving from the ground,
The forest monarch lifts his head.*

Enter COLONEL COHENBERG.

Anselm. Colonel Cohenberg!

Colonel. My friend Anselm!

Anselm. What could induce you, Colonel, to trust yourself so far within the enemy's camp?

Colonel. Two powerful motives, my Anselm, love and glory. Our general means to attack this post to-night, and I am honoured with the command of the detachment. Will the villagers assist us, think ye?

Anselm. Assist ye! ay, Colonel, to the last drop of our blood, every man of us. We have groaned under Turkish oppression too long. But you mentioned the word love, Colonel: may I venture to inquire after the fair Catherine, whom I saw at Vienna last year?

Colonel. Adorable girl! she had just consented to be mine, when I was suddenly ordered to the Siege of Belgrade.

Anselm. That was unlucky. How did she bear the news?

Colonel. Like a heroine; when I attempted a faltering adieu, "What," says she, "will you now refuse the hand you have so often solicited? Should the bitter hour of misfortune overtake you, my Cohenberg, you will need the consolation of friendship; and have you a dearer friend than your Catherine? I will go with you, and shall find my happiness in fulfilling the duties of a wife."

Anselm. You married her, then?

Colonel. Ay, but was immediately obliged to join my regiment. How shall I speak the remainder of our melancholy story? She attempted to follow me, but was taken prisoner by a straggling party of the Turkish army, just arrived to the relief of Belgrade.

Anselm. Then, I fear she is taken to the Seraskier's seraglio.

Colonel. That's what I dread. In what part of the camp is his seraglio?

Anselm. You may have observed, about two miles from hence, a convent almost in ruins, which he has converted into his seraglio.

Colonel. I am not personally known to the Seraskier. By pretending business to him I may easily gain admittance to his presence. I have prepared two letters, one to the Seraskier, in my own name, another to my Catherine, informing her of my design.

Anselm. And if you find her there, what then?

Colonel. What then! why, then I'll storm the Seraskier's tent, and carry her off this night.

Anselm. Heaven prosper you! 'tis a hazardous enterprise.

Colonel. Hazardous, my Anselm! I scorn the thought. I have picked the gallant fellows whom

I command; my brave hussars, the flower of the Austrian army; we have fought, we have bled, we have conquered together; and that leader hazards little, who has thought it his first duty to treat his soldiers as his friends.

Anselm. But you know, Colonel, friends in all situations will sometimes desert.

Colonel. I am not speaking of the weathercock friendship that only shews which way the wind of caprice points. We have tried each other in adversity and prosperity, and have cemented our friendship with our blood on the field of battle. But come, lead me to the Seraskier; be diligent, confident, and secret;

*Then trust our cause to Providence above,
The never-failing hope of faithful love.* [Exeunt.]

SCENE V.—*The Seraskier's Tent.*

Enter LILLA.

AIR.

*Blüthe as the hours of May,
Were those I now deplore,
When first I own'd love's gentle sway;
They will return no more.
Every fond hope is lost;
No comfort can they bring;
Winter's untimely chilling frost
Destroy'd the infant spring.
Blüthe as the hours, &c.*

Enter GHITA.

Ghita. Ah! my dear Lilla, I am glad I have found you. Do you know, the surly guard denied me admittance at first. Well, how did you come here? tell me all about it?

Lilla. Hush! some other time; here comes his highness; now, pray, don't leave me alone with him.

Enter SERASKIER.

Seras. Ha! a companion with her! that obstacle must be removed. (*Aside.*) Well, Lilla, you shall find me a man of my word; I promised you redress, and you shall have it, but I must first talk with Useph on the business, and this pretty maiden shall be my messenger, to say that I desire his immediate attendance on me.

Ghita. Yes, your highness. Come, Lilla.

Seras. Lilla, you may remain with me.

Ghita. (*Aside.*) Oh! yes, she's like to remain, indeed, whilst his highness is so violently in love with justice; yes, yes, I understand it very well; ay, ay. [Exit.]

Seras. Lilla, why are you so much alarmed? you have nothing to apprehend: do you know, Lilla, it is in your power to make me very happy?

Lilla. Is your highness unhappy?

Seras. I am. Tell me, Lilla, are you sensible of love?

Lilla. Ah! that I am, indeed, sir.

Seras. Suppose I were to love you.

Lilla. I should be sorry for that, my lord.

Seras. Why so?

Lilla. Because, my lord, I couldn't love you in return: pray, my lord, don't be angry.

Seras. I am not angry: but come, Lilla, I must inspire you with an ambition for grandeur.

Lilla. Will grandeur make me happy, sir?

Seras. Certainly.

Lilla. Then how can your highness be unhappy?

Seras. Oh! that is—that is—I cannot explain that to your comprehension—but say, Lilla, when you behold from your cottage-window the magnificent buildings and gardens of Belgrade, do you not—

Lilla. Oh! my lord, I own I admire them; but my favourite is an humble flower, which, I fear, I should not find in your highness's garden.

Seras. What's that?

Lilla. Heart's-ease, sir.

Seras. Come, come, you shall misunderstand me no longer—(*Takes hold of her.*)

Enter GHITA, hastily.

Ghita. Oh! my lord, my lord.

Seras. You are soon returned.

Ghita. Oh! yes, my lord; ill news, you know, flies apace. Some officers have seized poor Leopold, and are hurrying him to prison, for affronting that wicked old justice Useph.

Lilla. Ah! my lord, pray, have compassion on an unfortunate lover.

Seras. You must first set me an example: the law must have its course.

TRIO.—SERASKIER, LILLA, and GHITA.

Seras. *When justice claims the victim due,
Her dictates I obey.*

Lilla & Ghita. *Yet should distress for pity sue,*

Ghita. *You'll own the gentle sway.*

Seras. *Law must prevail.*

Lilla. *And so it may.*

Except when love is in the way.

Seras. *Your arts forbear,
No more I'll hear.*

Lilla. *When justice she attended,*

Let her not find a foe.

Ghita. *When justice I attended,*

Let me not find a foe.

Lilla. *In what has she offended?*

Alas! I do not know.

Ghita. *In what have I offended?*

Alas! I do not know.

Seras. *In what you have offended,*

Dissembler, well you know.

Lilla & Ghita. *On what will he resolve?*

All. *My troubled bosom vexing,
In varied forms perplexing,
A thousand doubts revolve.*

Lilla & Ghita. *Compassion thus entreating,*

Ghita. *In vain shall we implore?*

Seras. *In vain shall they implore.*

Lilla & Ghita. *May pity, sorrow greeting,*

Ghita. *Our happiness restore.*

All. *In what have I offended, &c.*

Enter ISMAEL, USEPH, PETER, LEOPOLD, and Officers.

Useph. Please your highness, here's a most unruly, obstreperous country fellow, who has broken open a door, and attempted to knock down a magistrate; and all, forsooth, because he's under the influence of the tender passion; he is the most violent, unmannerly—

Leop. It's false, I am not violent.

Ismael. (*Aside to Seras.*) This poor fellow has an honest heart; the magistrate is a villain; the villagers are already disaffected to us; be careful how you act in this affair, my lord. Subdue them by your justice—your clemency.

Seras. (*To Ismael.*) I will take your advice for the present, but I must have the girl, sooner or later. Hear me.

Ismael. Silence; attend to his highness.

Seras. You all know my affection for the good people of this village—

Leop. (*Half aside.*) The women, I believe, know it very well.

Useph. Silence, sirrah!

Seras. I consider you all as my children—

Leop. (*Aside.*) If he were to stay amongst us much longer the whole village would be his children in another generation.

Useph. How dare you mutter, you reprobate!

Seras. (*Whispers Ismael, who goes off.*) I would willingly content you all, but that's impossible; let my sentence be publicly known. (*The curtain at the back of the tent is drawn up; the Turkish camp is*

seen; *Soldiers, Peasants, &c. enter through the tent, and place themselves on each side of the stage.*

Ghita. (Aside.) Now for some terrible sentence.

Seras. Leopold, you are in love with Lilla?

Leop. Yes, my lord.

Seras. And loved by her in return?

Leop. Yes, your highness.

Seras. Then marry her.

Leop. Thanks to your highness.

Seras. You are in love with Lilla, Useph?

Useph. Yes, my lord.

Seras. And not beloved by her?

Useph. I fear not, my lord.

Seras. Leopold has offered you an affront?

Useph. He has, my lord.

Seras. You are a man of authority, and should set an example of moderation; you must forgive him.

Leop. How do you like that, old one? *(Aside to Useph.)*

Seras. (To the Officers.) Take off his chains.

Enter LILLA and ISMAEL.

Lilla. That be my task; it is my duty and happiness. *(Takes off his chains.)*

FINALE.

Lilla. So kindly condescending,
To our complaints attending,
Your highness us befriending,
No more shall wrongs assail.

Chorus. So kindly, &c.

Leop. Your highness, please to hear me—

Lilla. Be silent, I beseech.

Leop. Zounds! I'll be cool, don't fear me.

Peter. Oh! let us hear his speech.

Ghita. We're bound to you for ever. *(To Seras.)*

Seras. No silly compliments, I pray.

Lilla. To thank you I'd endeavour—

Seras. You soon, methinks, might learn the way. *(To Lilla.)*

Chorus. So kindly, &c.

Seras. Seemingly condescending,
To their complaints attending,
Though love my bosom's rending,
Yet shall my scheme prevail.

Chorus. May fate our prayers befriending,
No disappointment sending;

Let love and truth prevail.

Securely, bliss enjoying,

All fear of power annoying,

Your clemency destroying,

Now justice shall prevail.

[During the finale, the Seraskier takes hold of Lilla's hand and kisses it; Leopold observes this, and takes Lilla's place; the Seraskier takes Leopold's hand, supposing it to be Lilla's, but finding his mistake, appears confused. Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Convent.

Enter CATHERINE.

AIR.

My plaint in no one pity moves,

Some echo, who in plaints replies:

Like me, depriv'd of him she loves,

With sympathy she counts my sighs.

Pleas'd with the strain, the hapless maid

Repeats the unavailing moan;

And, while she lends her soothing aid,

Laments my sorrows and her own.

Unhappy as I am, it is some consolation to me that Cohenberg knows my heart, and will not wrong me so far as to doubt my constancy. But see, the Seraskier—he treats me with respect, though he is still ignorant who I am.

Enter SERASKIER.

Seras. Alas! madam, shall I never have the happiness of seeing you wear those smiles which nature,

prodigal in adorning you, meant as her last gift to perfect your charms.

Cath. I am your prisoner, sir; my indignant heart swells whilst I avow it.

Seras. I am your prisoner; does not my every sigh—

Cath. You are a soldier, sir; do not disgrace that character by insulting a defenceless woman.

Enter ISMAEL.

Ismael. My lord, a deserter of no vulgar rank, from the Austrian camp, desires to be admitted to your presence.

Seras. Conduct him hither. *[Exit Ismael.]* I presume, madam, you would wish to retire?

Cath. If I stay, I may hear some news of my friends. *(Aside.)* I request, sir, you will permit me to remain here.

Seras. I thank you, madam, for the request, since it, at last, gives me an opportunity of obliging you.

Re-enter ISMAEL with COLONEL COHENBERG.

Cath. (Aside.) Oh, heavens! my Cohenberg!

Colonel. (Aside.) My Catherine!

Seras. What are you?

Colonel. An Austrian.

Seras. What have you to communicate?

Colonel. Colonel Cohenberg is not unknown to your highness.

Cath. (Aside.) What can he mean?

Seras. His character is not unknown to me: what then?

Colonel. Your highness once wrote to him as to an exchange of prisoners; consequently, know his hand.

Seras. Perfectly well.

Cath. (Aside.) I perceive some artifice; but what a hazard does he run!

Colonel. (Giving a letter.) Here, sir, is my commission.

Seras. 'Tis his seal, his writing. *(Reads.)* "The bearer is in my confidence; if you wish for my aid, tell him on what terms you are willing to acquire my friendship and assistance.—COHENBERG." Is it possible that I shall be the happy means of gaining Cohenberg to the Ottoman cause? Tell the gallant Christian I deem his friendship invaluable; and in the name of my most illustrious sovereign, promise, as a debt of gratitude, whatever he shall ask. Do you know this Colonel Cohenberg, madam?

Cath. Yes, my lord, so well, that I have him now before me. *(Looking at the Colonel.)* He married a lady who was dear to me as myself; they were separated by the chance of war, and Cohenberg now lives to see her he loves in slavery and sorrow.

Colonel. Take comfort, madam; he loves her more tenderly than ever, and vows to relieve her, or perish in the attempt.

Seras. Say, Christian, if I write, when may I expect an answer?

Colonel. Within these few hours you may depend on seeing me again.

Cath. (Aside.) Indeed!

Seras. Heavens! madam, how you are altered! To what am I to attribute this blissful change?

Cath. To the blessed tidings I have just now heard. I am charmed to hear of Cohenberg's inviolable constancy, and transported with the hope of his Catherine being, one day, restored to freedom, by the arms of the hero she adores.

Seras. You take so warm an interest in his favour that, were he here, I should almost suspect myself reduced into his rival.

Cath. There would be no fear of that, for well he knows his Catherine will not suffer him to have a rival.

Seras. I hardly comprehend you. But I must send my answer to Cohenberg's letter. *(Sits down to write.)* 'Tis done. Now, madam, if you have any kind things to say in behalf of your friend, I'll be

your secretary; continue those smiles, and you shall find a Mussulman can be as complaisant a lover as any Christendom can boast. What shall I tell him?

Cath. Tell him—

DUETT.—SERASKIER and CATHERINE.

*Of plighted faith so truly kept,
Of all love's dictates tell:
Of restless thoughts, that never slept,
Since when she bade farewell.
The rising sigh, the frequent tear,
The flush of hope, the chilling fear:
So may the sympathetic soul,
Direct kind fancy's wing,
Where future hours in transport roll,
And love's reward shall bring.*

(During this scene the Colonel and Catherine show their joy at seeing each other, unobserved by the Seraskier, who is between them. In the course of the duett, the Colonel makes an unsuccessful effort to give her a letter.)

Seras. (Gives the Colonel a letter.) There is my answer; and by our holy prophet do I swear faithfully to perform each article. (The Colonel gives a letter to Catherine, unperceived by the Seraskier. A Slave enters, snatches it from her, and presents it to the Seraskier on his knee.) What's this? (Reads.) "I have ventured into the Turkish camp in hopes of seeing you, my beloved Catherine." Ha! Catherine! "This night I mean to storm the Seraskier's fort, and give you liberty. Your true COHENBERG." What ho! a guard!

Enter ISMAEL and Guard.

Seize him.

Cath. Hear me, my lord.

Seras. No more, dissembler! Bear her away.

Cath. My Cohenberg, I have undone thee.

Seras. Away with her. [Exit Guards with Cath.] Slaves, on your lives I charge you, guard well this holy site, this liar. (The Colonel, in great agitation, feels for his sword which the Guards have taken from him, and missing it, clasps his hands in agony.) Deep in the darkest dungeon of the fort let him be chained, there shall he stay till his associates in perfidy shall come to burst his bonds, and storm the post I guard.

Colonel. Alike I scorn thy menaces and taunts. I glory, though I failed, in the attempt. Heap cruelty on cruelty on me, I can bear it; my darkness is the loss of Catherine's eyes, my chains the despair of seeing her; and death were transport to the pangs I feel in knowing her a slave to thee, barbarian! [Exit, guarded.]

Seras. Ismael!

Ismael. My lord?

Seras. Wilt thou not despise me when I tell thee neither Cohenberg's plot, nor Catherine's charms, can drive this rustic Lilla from my heart. I'll carry her off this night. Have you prepared the disguises as I commanded?

Ismael. I have, my lord.

Seras. Give orders that my tent be pitched in yonder wood, and my seraglio instantly removed thither.

Ismael. Why so, my lord?

Seras. To elude the search that will be made after Lilla: besides, Cohenberg's designs have taught me that I lie too near the frontiers of the Austrians. Away! and see my orders are obeyed.

[Exit Ismael.]

AIR.—SERASKIER.

*Confusion! thus defeated!
With bitter scorn thus treated!
Whatever thought pursuing,
Where'er I turn my eyes,
Surrounding mists of ruin
In dark'ning circles rise:*

*In frost, on fire, by turns,
My bosom freezes—burns—
'Tis fis'd—my rival finds a grave.
Yet honour bids me save
From death the captive brave.
Confusion! thus defeated!
With bitter scorn thus treated!
Whatever thought pursuing,
Where'er I turn my eyes,
Surrounding mists of ruin
In dark'ning circles rise.* [Exit.]

SCENE II.—A Wood.

Enter ANSELM and Peasants.

Anselm. It is as I suspected. I am sure 'twas Colonel Cohenberg I saw hurried to the fort. I fear the worst.

1 *Peas.* Is there no help, Anselm?

Anselm. None but this: some of you must swim the river, and inform the Austrian out-posts of Cohenberg's danger; and, perhaps, their succour may arrive in time to free him. I will remain on this side, that, should they arrive, I may conduct them by short and secret paths to the Seraskier's tent.

2 *Peas.* I'll go.

1 *Peas.* And I, if I drown for it; let's all go.

Anselm. Hear me, hear me, friends. You two shall undertake this message to the Austrians, the others stay with me to excite the villagers to revolt. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—Another part of the Village.

Enter LILLA and GHITA.

DUETT.

*Haste, gentle zephyrs, o'er the glade,
If there my love discerning,
Kindly with fluttering pinions aid
His weary steps returning.
So may thy wings (their wanton play
No scorching sun oppressing)
Still gladly fan the sultry day,
And prove the summer's blessing.*

Ghita. Love they call a gentle passion,
Boast its power to calm the breast;
I prefer the jealous fashion;
Sweet's when dash'd with sour are best.

*While the ever-rooming doves,
In fond nonsense tell their loves;
Scarce existing, nought desiring;
Cloy'd with bliss, as well they may;
They, with langour half expiring,
Doze their stupid lives away.*

Lilla. Let me in true pleasure's mirror
Tranquil view love's placid form;
Free from every jealous terror,
Give me the calm, take you the storm.

Lilla. Well, Ghita, now we are married, I hope our husbands will take their leave of jealousy.

Ghita. Psha! Lilla, how often must I tell you jealousy follows love like a shadow.

Lilla. Then love is a pretty thing and an ugly shadow. But I have seen my shadow often in the sun, and it appeared so tall and frightful that I am sure it couldn't be like me. But it begins to grow late, I wish our husbands would come home.

Ghita. There are two men coming this way.

Enter SERASKIER and ISMAEL in long cloaks.

Seras. (To Ismael.) Desire my followers to keep back.

Ghita. (To Lilla.) See, they have wrapped themselves up in long cloaks that we shouldn't know them.

Lilla. Ah! this is another of Leopold's jealous frolics. But I'll not speak first, I am determined.

Seras. Lilla, Lilla!

Lilla. I can't bear to see him uneasy; I must speak to him.

SESTETTO.

Lilla and } *Night thus from me concealing*
 Ghita. } *The form of him I love;*

Oh! let his voice, revealing
The truth, my fears remove.

Seras. & } *Thus from me concealing*
 Ismael. } *The form of her I love;*

Oh! let her voice, revealing
The truth, my fears remove.

Lilla and } *Oh, heavens! the Seraskier!*
 Ghita. }

Seras. } *A lover's accents hear;*
With sympathetic passion,
Fond expectation cheer.

Lilla and } *Ah! should my husband hear us,*
 Ghita. }

What could poor Ghita do?
What could poor Lilla do?

[Enter LEOPOLD and PETER.]

Leop. & } *Hark! I'm sure there's some one near*
 Peter. } *us.*

Peter. } *Ghita!*
 Leop. } *Lilla!*

Lilla and } *Our husbands near us!*

Ghita. } *My love, I'm here.*

Leop. & } *You're here!*

Peter. } *Then, who is this so near?*

Lilla and } *Honest peasants, homeward going*

Ghita. } *From their labour, I suppose.*

Leop. & } *How, I pray, are you so knowing,*

Peter. } *Whether they be friends or foes?*

Jealous fears perplexing,
Like whelming billows roll,
And wreck my tortur'd soul.

Begone; 'tis thy falsehood
(To Lilla and Ghita.)

Lilla and } *Distracts my tortur'd soul.*
 Ghita. } *Ah! can my dear suspect me?*

All. } *My truth he cannot fear.*
Suspense, in clouds, shuts in the day.
Hope, cheering star, afford thy ray
Of silver light; and, to our eyes,
Oh! bid thy bright creation rise.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.—*Inside of Peter's House.*

Enter PETER and LEOPOLD.

Peter. A pretty adventure this.

Leop. Yes, a very pretty adventure, indeed.

Peter. How do you feel, Leopold?

Leop. Oh! I'm composed, quite composed.

Peter. For my part, I own I am in a passion.

Leop. Oh! then you are wrong, my dear friend; you are wrong, Peter.

Peter. My suspicions are not easily roused, but now—

Leop. Oh! for shame, Peter, can't you be calm? Death and d—n! can't you be cool?

Peter. I confess I am angry, and—

Leop. But you sha'n't be angry, I tell you. You must be cool; d—e! you shall.

Peter. Must I?

Leop. Yes.

Peter. Why, then, I will; you know I am naturally very peaceable.

Leop. Peaceable! Here's a fellow, now, that would stand by quietly to have his horns fitted on; by my troth, if I must wear mine, I'll butt with them like a mad bull. [Exit.]

Peter. Poor Leopold, he's angry with me for not putting myself in a passion, desires that I will be cool, then flies in a rage because I follow his advice.

AIR.—PETER.

How few know how to value life,
And taste its real joys,
Unmix'd with jealousy and strife,
With anger, pride, and noise!

Let riches, power, and pomp surpass,
And scorn me, if they please;
Let me love, laugh, and take my glass,
And lead a life of ease.
Limpid and pure life's current seems,
Till passion's wild mistake,
In madness, troubles all the streams
Of which he must partake.
Let riches, &c.

Re-enter LEOPOLD.

Leop. I say, Peter, Ghita's coming this way. Now don't you say anything to her, because you won't keep yourself cool; leave me to manage her, I know more about these matters than you do.

Enter GHITA.

Well, Ghita, your husband and I have been laughing over the whimsical affair that happened just now.

Ghita. Yes, it was whimsical, indeed. All's safe, I find. (Aside.)

Leop. Well, and so they were countrymen returning from their day's labour, were they?

Ghita. Yes, countrymen returning from labour.

Leop. Oh! I dare say they were. Curse me, if I believe a word on't. (Aside.) Well, but who were they?

Ghita. I know no more of the matter than Lilla does.

Peter. Oh! here comes Lilla.

Enter LILLA.

Leop. Lilla, my dear, come here, I want to speak with you: now you know that I never put myself into a passion; but a lie provokes me, therefore, have a care; now I expect you to tell me the truth, for Ghita has confessed the whole matter.

Lilla. Has she, indeed?

Leop. She has; therefore, have a care.

Peter. (Aside to Leop.) Now, Leopold, I tell you—

Leop. Be quiet, you fool; keep yourself:— (Ghita makes signs to Lilla that she has not told.)

Lilla. (Aside.) Oh, oh! very well.

Leop. (To Lilla.) Come, why don't you speak? these countrymen.

Lilla. Ay, these countrymen—Who were they? Why don't you tell me? I am sure you know.

Leop. I know! here's a pretty piece of business.

Lilla. Well, if you won't tell me, Ghita will.

Leop. Harkye! Lilla, I am convinced you are wrong; therefore, I insist on your confession.

Lilla. Oh! you will have me confess?

Leop. Yes, I will; therefore, recollect yourself, I will have it. I say, Peter, this is the way to manage a wife. You see I have carried my point.

AIR.—LILLA.

What can mean that thoughtful frown?
Why those eyes to earth cast down?
Tell me what amiss they see;
Let them kindly look on me.

La ra la la!

What, then, would my dearest have?
Come, indeed, I will be grave;
And, with melancholy face,
Calmly hear thy piteous case.

La ra la la!

(During the song she dances slowly between Peter, Leopold, and Ghita.)

Peter. I say, Leopold, this is the way to manage a wife; you see you have carried your point.

Leop. Why, h—I—I don't know how it is, but good! she has danced me into a good humour, I think.

Lilla. Now, Leopold, how could you serve me so? Why, Ghita says you have been laughing at her.

Leop. Why, yes, I believe I am in a merry

Lilla. I don't think you are merry; you are grumpy.

Leop. Psha! no such thing; I am not grumpy.

Ghita. Ah! you don't deserve the supper we have prepared for you. But come, Lilla, we must forgive 'em.

Lilla. Well, if we must, we must. (*Brings the table with supper forward.*)

Leop. (*Aside to Peter.*) Well, Peter, what do you think of this?

Peter. (*Aside to Leop.*) Why, for my part, I think it looks like innocence.

Leop. So it does, so it does; but we'll watch them, though; so, mum! Peter. (*All sit.*) Egad! I never was happier in my life; come, let's have a toast.

Lilla. I'll give you one: may our happiness ever continue!

Leop. Very well; very well, indeed. (*All drink.*) So good a toast deserves a second bumper. (*Drinks again.*) Now away with suspicions for ever.

SERASKIER *sings without.*

SERENADE.

To mighty love, the trembling strings are pressing;

Sacred to him they praise, their sweet employ.

Ah! the fond heart, whose passion they're expressing,

Vibrates like them to love, but not to joy.

Leop. What's that?

Peter. It sounds like music.

Ghita. What delightful harmony!

Leop. Curse harmony! I don't like it at all. (*Rises.*)

Lilla. Sit down, Leopold.

Leop. I won't sit down.

Lilla. Nay, don't be angry; here's a merry-thought for you.

Leop. Eat it yourself, then.

Lilla. You shall sit down. It is only the villagers amusing themselves; and you know, Leopold, that people of fashion often have music at supper. (*Seraskier sings without.*)

Leop. Oh! choke your singing.

Lilla. (*Aside to Ghita.*) We are undone! 'tis the Seraskier.

Peter. Ah! Leopold, there's danger in that voice. How melodious!

Leop. Horridly melodious! Harkye! Peter, are you courageous?

Peter. Tolerably so.

Leop. (*Takes two swords, and gives one to Peter.*) Here, then, take this sword, and follow me. We'll join the concert; and if I don't put these gallants out of tune, I'll be—it's astonishing how I continue to keep my temper. [*Exit with Peter.*]

Lilla. What will become of us! Let's follow them; I fear there will be mischief. I wonder that Leopold keeps his temper. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter USEPH at a back door.

Useph. All quiet; then I'm sure Leopold can't be here; and I have such a dread of that d-d fellow, that—(*Seeing the supper.*) Eh! What have we here? a good supper, and nobody to eat it. I think my appetite returns, as my fright goes off. Egad! I'll pick a bit. There's nothing in the world I like better than a good supper, especially when anybody else pays for it. Ha, ha, ha! Eh! What's this? (*Holding a large slice of ham on his fork.*) Oh! the Christian dogs! what, eat pork! Oh, horrible! (*Eats the ham eagerly.*) Oh, fie! oh, fie! What have we here? Wine! worse and worse! Wine, indeed! How can people be so impious to drink—(*Drinks a large cupful.*)—Though, I believe a Mahometan may take a cup of wine when nobody sees him. Egad! I'll take another. Here's to the founder of the feast. (*Drinks.*) Now, if I could but meet Lilla—Good cheer puts one in such ex-

cellent spirits, and makes one so valiant and so loving, that—(*Pistols fire.*)—Oh, Lord! (*Starts up.*) They are firing pistols against the door. Oh, dear! oh, dear! What will become of me! (*Goes to the door at a back.*) Eh! this door is fast! Mercy on me! (*Hides under the table.*)

Enter PETER and GHITA.

Ghita. Stay here, my dear Peter, if you love me; all opposition is fruitless. I am sure the Seraskier is amongst them.

Peter. Poor Leopold! he'll be overpowered by numbers. Run up to the house-top, Ghita, and alarm the neighbours.—[*Exit Ghita.*—How unlucky that this accident should happen just at supper-time!

Enter LEOPOLD.

Leop. Confusion! they have carried off my Lilla. Plague on my sword for failing me, when I might have rescued her; but I'll raise the neighbourhood, and if I can but find that old scoundrel, Useph—(*Turns round, and sees Useph.*)—Ha! villain, what brought you here?

Useph. What brought me here? Why, I heard a riot, so I came to—to—

Leop. To what?

Useph. Why, to quell it, and defend your house; and, besides, I came to wish you joy on your marriage, my dear friend.

Leop. And how did you get into the house?

Useph. I came through the garden, and in at the back-door, quietly and peaceably as a magistrate should do, and agreeably to my function.

Peter. Yes, and you seem to have been eating some of our supper: was that agreeably to your function?

Leop. Ah! sirrah, who asked you to supper?

Useph. I only picked a bit.

Leop. Hold your tongue. Harkye, rascal! my Lilla's carried off; and I am almost sure that you are in the plot; so, come along, and if I find my suspicions right, I'll hang you on the next tree. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*A Turkish Watch-tower.*

Enter the SERASKIER, ISMAEL, and Guards, from the Tower.

Seras. Well, Ismael; so far we have proceeded successfully, and Lilla is safe within my power. The villagers fought manfully.

Ismael. I fear, my lord, we shall experience other proofs of their valour.

Seras. To what am I to attribute these unusual apprehensions, Ismael?

Ismael. My lord, I never before fought in a cause I was ashamed of.

Seras. No more: it's time to think of Cohenberg. Are the executioners prepared?

Ismael. They are, my lord.

Seras. Are the horsemen ready to bear off Catherine?

Ismael. They have their orders, my lord. (*Retires back.*)

Seras. (*To the Guards.*) Strike off his chains, and bring your prisoner forth. Do you conduct the lady hither. [*To another Guard, who exits.*]

The Guards lift up a trap-door, one descends and returns with COLONEL COHENBERG.

Colonel. To what new indignities am I reserved?

Enter Guard with CATHERINE.

Seras. Hear me, Christian: had the chance of battle made you my prisoner, I should have treated you as a soldier; but you have degraded yourself into a spy, and an ignominious death is, by the law of nations, your reward; yet life or death, on one condition, may still be yours.

Colonel. And if that one should be unworthy, learn, though life and liberty are dearer to me than

all the treasures of your eastern world, I am gem within my keeping, more valuable far,—honour! which I scorn to barter for it. (*Muffled drums are heard.*)

Seras. Hark! that is thy knell. When thrice those sounds within a few short moments, shall have passed, thy obstinacy, that instant is thy last. Attend! this night thy Austrians mean to attack my fort. Let the deceivers be deceived: deliver them to my sword. Renounce your Christian worship: do this; and, in my Sultan's name, I promise you power, wealth, honour, your Catherine, all your wishes can desire.

Colonel. My Catherine! she is a reward so valuable, so truly great, that—

Cath. Hear me, Cohenberg: should an unmanly tenderness for me make thee forget thy faith, thy country, and thy king, though that instant be my last, I'll tear thee, coward, from my bleeding heart, and cast thee off unworthy of my love.

Seras. (*Aside.*) Death to my hopes! she ruins all my purposes.—Christian, reflect: be quick, or both your lives shall expiate thy fault.

Cath. This is the greatest mercy thou canst shew. He dares to die, and I dare not live to see him dishonoured.

Seras. (*Muffled drums.*) Appear, ye ministers of death.—[*Enter black Slaves.*—] Now, Christian, this moment is thy last.

Colonel. Oh, heavens!

Seras. Bear her away!

Cath. To torture—death. My Cohenberg, remember me.

Colonel. In life and death, my Catherine.

Seras. Away with her! [*Exit Cath. guarded.*]

Colonel. Come, tyrant, give me the fatal bow-string, and end at once this pageant of thy cruelty. Thy threats I boldly despise; thy offers thus I tread beneath my feet; and, though this worthless frame may fall before thee, fixed as the founded rock, my soul shall stand, firm to my God, my king, and my country.

Seras. I'll hear no more.

Colonel. (*Kneels.*) Preserve my Catherine, heaven! (*Muffled drums. The Slaves put the cord round his neck, and prepare to strangle him.*)

Seras. Despatch him, slaves!

Colonel. Good angels, guard my Catherine!

Seras. Christian, thy prayers are vain. (*A great shout is heard, and the drums beating to arms.*)

Seras. Distraction! we are betrayed. [*Exit.*]

Colonel. Off, off! ye slaves.

Enter ANSELM, PETER, LEOPOLD, &c. Anselm gives the Colonel a sword. Slaves go off. Anselm, Peter, and Leopold, go into the tower. SERASKIER re-enters with his sword drawn; the Colonel fights with him, and drives him off. The Turks are driven from the tower; the Turkish flag is taken down, and the Austrian colours hoisted. A party of Austrians enter from the tower, with PETER, LEOPOLD, ANSELM, and Peasants. COLONEL COHENBERG enters. Drums and trumpets.)

Colonel. The villain has escaped me in the throng. But, oh! Catherine is no where to be found.

Peter. A Turkish soldier told me, even now, some horsemen bore her over yonder plain.

Colonel. Ha! over yonder plain! [*Exit.*]

FINALE.

Now victory has, like a mistress kind,

Put an end to all our quarrels;

In a brimming cup our joys we'll find,

From the vine we'll pluck our quarrels.

Let us drink as we fight; with loud huzzas,

We'll charge, and scorn all shrinking;

Till our wine, like the foe, retreats apace,

And we shew our valour in drinking.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Inside of the Seraskier's tent.*

Several Ladies discovered.

CHORUS.

On the warlike plains descending,

Night, in pity, casts her veil;

Hostile strife awhile suspending,

Short-lived peace and rest prevail.

Enter FATIMA and LILLA. Lilla in an elegant Turkish habit.

Fatima. Then you are resolved to leave us, Lilla?

Lilla. Yes, your ladyship, that I will as soon as I can.

Fatima. And are you not sorry to part with your fine clothes, and quit the pleasures of the seraglio?

Lilla. Pleasures, madam, what are they?

Fatima. Why, 'tis our pleasure to obey his highness, the Seraskier, who is our lord and husband.

Lilla. And have you no other husband?

Fatima. Why, that's a very odd question.

Lilla. Nay, I beg your ladyship's pardon; but I understand there are five and twenty; if so, what a pity you should only have one husband amongst you.

Fatima. Nay, nay; I ought not to be sorry at your going, or for the beautiful stranger leaving us. I have, hitherto, been the Seraskier's favourite; and you are two dangerous rivals.—Oh! here she comes.

Enter CATHERINE from the tent.

Cath. This intelligence of Cohenberg's safety, gives me new life. Now let fortune do her worst. Well, Fatima, are the sentinels bribed to let us pass?

Fatima. I gave Selim the gold, as you desired; who, doubtless, has obeyed your orders.

Cath. So, Lilla, I find you are to be my guide to the castle. Are you sure you know the way?

Lilla. Yes, my lady; 'tis by the private path, which leads directly to it. I dare say we shall be safe. (*Trembling.*)

Cath. Why do you tremble, Lilla?

Lilla. No, my lady—yes—yes—yes, I believe I am a little afraid.

Cath. Oh, for shame! You a lover! Consider.

Lilla. No, I won't consider. Now, pray, madam, talk finely to me, as you did a little while ago, and don't let me think of difficulties.

Cath. Difficulties! they are the test of virtue, the spur to courage: the noble mind would lose half its splendour, were it not for the pleasure of surmounting difficulties.

AIR.—CATHERINE.

No more I heave the heartfelt sigh;

No more I drop the briny tear;

Hope's promised hour of bliss is near.

Yet dangers surrounding,

My reason confounding,

Ah! whither shall I fly!

Enter a Turkish Soldier.

*Sold. The drums are beating to arms; we expect to be attacked every moment. [*Exit.*]

Cath. Come, Lilla. Adieu, kind Fatima! [*Exeunt.*]

Peter. (*Without.*) The enemy's camp's on fire. Plunder's the word.

Enter PETER, LEOPOLD, ANSELM, Peasants, and Austrian Soldiers, who cut down the Seraskier's Tent, and carry it off in pieces. The Turkish camp is seen on fire, at a distance. Drums and trumpets are heard. Re-enter LEOPOLD and PETER.

Leop. Lilla not to be found! Oh! she is in the plot; I am sure she is; she has done it on purpose. I knew she would run away when I married her: I was certain.

Peter. 'Tis a pity, indeed.

Leop. 'Tis false! 'tis not a pity.

Peter. Well, then, 'tis not a pity. What a plague, mustn't I be sorry for you?

Leop. Rot your sorrow! No.

Peter. Well, I won't be sorry, then.

Leop. But are you really sorry for me, Peter!

Peter. To be sure I am: you know the friendship I have had for you, ever since we were boys together.

Leop. Give me your hand, then. I ask your pardon. But why will you provoke me?

Peter. Why was you provoked, then?

Leop. No, I was not; but I mean that—I say I mean—Zounds! I don't know what I mean.

SONG.—LEOPOLD.

*How provoking your doubts! Do you think I'm a fool?
In the heat of the battle you know I was cool;*

While ourselves and our neighbours

With guns, pistols, sabres,

Were cutting and slashing,

Mahomedans hashing.

*But need I care for that, since time is on the wing;
You see I am merry, you hear how I sing.*

Tol de rol, &c.

You see I am merry, you hear how I sing.

That jade, madam Lilla, that gipsy, afar,

Is jiggling away to the Turkish guitar;

While great smooth-chin'd frubbles,

With vile squeaking trebles,

Chant her praises to cheer

That cruel Seraskier!

Till the handkerchief's thrown—But, then, what's that to me?

It can't make me uneasy—I'm happy, you see.

Tol de rol, &c.

It can't make me uneasy—I'm happy, you see.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—An Apartment at Colonel Cohenberg's.

Enter an Austrian Soldier, and LILLA, veiled.
Sold. Pray, walk this way; our Colonel will be so glad to see you.

Lilla. Indeed, sir, he won't.

Sold. Oh! but I am sure he will, my lady.

Lilla. Sir!

Sold. I beg your ladyship's pardon; but, though bred in the ranks, I know good manners.

Lilla. Ah! that's my misfortune. I wish you did not; for, then, you would quit the room, and let me alone.

[*Soldier bows, and exits.*]

Useph. (*Without.*) Come along, Michael.

Lilla. Oh, heavens! that wretch, Useph! What shall I do! Though, perhaps, he won't know me in this dress. (*Retires.*)

Enter an Austrian Soldier, conducting in USEPH and MICHAEL. Useph dressed as an Austrian officer.

Useph. Pray, don't disturb the noble Colonel; but when his honour is quite at leisure, let his honour know that I humbly wait to offer my congratulations. My name is Heoon Joseph Wolfgang Baumbork Blandenkerstoon Schwartzbergen.

[*Exit Soldier.*]

Mich. Why, heyday! I thought your name had been Ben Yacomb Ben Mastapha.

Useph. Ay, that was my Turkish title; but it won't do now the Austrians are our masters. I think I have got a good name, eh! Michael?

Mich. Yes; and as you never had a good name before, I hope you will keep it, now you have got it.

Useph. Ha, ha! Very well; you are a sharp fellow, Michael; I'll recommend you to the Colonel, when I am appointed to some post of great emolument under him: you shall be my deputy, and do all the business for me,—(*aside*) and I'll take all the money.

Useph. So I will. I have often wondered where the deuce you could conceal your riches.

Useph. Ay, that's a secret I mean to let you into; for I don't think my boards are quite safe in this time of warlike combustion. We'll remove them, Michael. (*Lilla listens.*)

Mich. But where are they?

Useph. Why, you know the burying-place, about a mile off, which the Turks hold so sacred. In the middle of that ground, stands a high and spacious tomb; there I have hid it. But, mum!

Enter an Austrian Soldier.

Sold. (*To Lilla.*) Our Colonel is not at home, madam; but I shall be happy to attend your ladyship.

Useph. (*To the Sold.*) Harkye! my lad, pray, who is this pretty piece of camp furniture, eh?

Sold. Hush! 'tis our Colonel's lady. I was the first who saw her here, and expect to be made a corporal for it.

Useph. (*Aside to Michael.*) Oh, ho! then I know my own.—Leave us, Michael.—[*Exit Michael.*]

(*Useph bows to Lilla.*) How happy are we all to see your ladyship returned! The Colonel is a most amiable creature; he does me the honour to live in my house: it was mine yesterday. Indeed, he forgot to ask my leave; but true politeness overlooks trifles. He must have a number of very pretty things at his disposal. Oh! if ever I should live to be appointed a commissary—and if your ladyship would but stand my friend—Pray, is your ladyship fond of jewels?

Lilla. (*Aside.*) If I speak to him, he'll know my voice.

Useph. (*Aside.*) I have some of the most beautiful here, which I should be proud to present to your ladyship. (*Offers a casket.*)

Lilla. (*Aside.*) I believe I had best take them, to prevent further questions. (*Takes the casket.*)

Useph. (*Aside.*) I can see that she is used to bribery.

Enter a Soldier.

Sold. The Colonel is not returned yet, madam; till he do, we shall be proud to obey the wife of our noble commander.

Lilla. (*Throws open her veil.*) I am not his wife, sir.

Useph. Why, heyday! Zounds! this is my wife that ought to be.

Lilla. I'll not be the wife of any of you. But, since you say, sir, you will obey my commands, pray, be kind enough to turn that wicked old justice of peace out of the house.

Sold. Oh! that we will directly. [*Exit.*]

Useph. What, turn me out of the house! that's a d—d good joke. Well, but, Lilla, I'll trouble you for my pearls again, dear.

Lilla. Why, I thought you gave them to me.

Useph. Yes, I gave them you to look at.

Lilla. Well, I have looked at them, and like them very well.

Useph. Come, come; I must have my jewels.

Enter two Soldiers.

Lilla. Turn him out.

Useph. I won't go without my pearls. At your peril, detain them. Lookye! my lads, I'm a magistrate; I see you are well-disposed persons, and so I'll explain to you the nature of justice as to private property. For instance: my pearls—I say, my pearls!—(*Soldiers push him out.*)

Lilla. Ha, ha, ha! I think I shall be even with you, Mr. Justice. I am glad I know where his money is hidden. I wish I had told that gentleman of the fine lady that came away with me: I dare say she is the Colonel's wife. Ah! but, then, perhaps, he would have been angry with me for losing her. Well, thanks to fortune, here I am at present; so, I'll think no more of past dangers.

AIR.—LILLA.

*Domestic peace, my soul's desire,
The dearest bliss fate could bestow,
At length, to thee I may aspire;
Misfortune's storms no longer blow.
Escap'd their ire, now safe on shore,
I listen to the tempest's roar;
And while the billows idly foam,
They but endear my long lost home.* [Exit.

SCENE III.—Outside of Colonel Cohenberg's house.
USEPH discovered being pushed out of the house
by two Soldiers.

Useph. Well, but bear me: I say, that—there!
they have turned me out, and won't hear me. No-
body will attend to me. What a miserable dog I
am! Never was there so unhappy a magistrate!

Enter LEOPOLD.

Leop. Cruel, cruel, Lilla!

Useph. What?

Useph. She has robbed me of my peace for ever!

Useph. She has robbed me, too; however, I am
ready to make the matter up, if you'll pay me for
the pearls.

Leop. What does the fellow mean?

Useph. I mean the pearls Lilla had of me.

Leop. What! had of you?

Useph. Hear me patiently, and I'll tell you all.

Leop. Zounds! I am patient.—Well?

Useph. I intended those pearls as a present to a
certain person.

Leop. And you gave them to Lilla?

Useph. Yes, in my house—Colonel Cohenberg's,
I mean; for there she is.

Leop. What, Lilla there! Oh, ho! (Knocks.)

Sold. (Within.) What, you won't go along!—
(Comes out, and sees Leopold.) Ha! brother soldier,
how are you?

Leop. Very well, thankye. Well, and so you
are here. And how are you? Isn't there a young
woman—I'm glad to see you—I say a young woman—
How long have you been here?—Called Lilla,
at this house?

Sold. Yes, she's within. Come with me.

[Exit Leopold and Soldier. Useph at-
tempts to follow; but is pushed back,
and the door shuts.

Useph. What, shut the door in my face! I see
there is no chance of getting the pearls; and I
shall be ruined if I stay here; so, I'll e'en pack up
my remaining treasure, and go over to the Turks.
I got all my money by changing sides, and I'll
change sides to keep it.

AIR.—USEPH.

*Some time ago, I married a wife,
And she, poor soul! was the plague of my life;
I thought, when I lost her, my troubles were done,
But, 'faith, I found they're just begun.*

Tho' she's gone,

Still 'tis all one,

My troubles, alas! are just begun.

A magistrate I next became,

To be impartial was my aim;

No distinction I made between great and small;

Plaintiffs, defendants, I fleec'd them all:

Great and small, fleec'd them all.

Turks and Christians, I cheated 'em all.

In praise of honesty, I've heard,

As policy, 'tis much preferr'd;

Then, if 'tis best, in life's repast,

The damniest dish I'll taste the last.

Honest at last,

Tir'd of the past,

Perhaps, as a change, I may try it at last. [Exit.

SCENE IV.—A Room at Colonel Cohenberg's.

Enter LEOPOLD and LILLA.

Lilla. My dear Leopold, how glad I am to see

you! Was it not lucky that I heard Useph say
where his riches were?

Leop. Yes, very lucky.—(Aside.) Not a word
of the pearls yet.—Well, but, Lilla,—I say this
fine dress of yours—Zounds! I can't bear to look
at it.

Lilla. What, more suspicions, Leopold?

Leop. No, my suspicions are vanished.

Lilla. I am glad of it.

Leop. Yes, I am convinced of your falsehood.—
Where are the pearls that Useph gave you? I sup-
pose you can explain that to me.

Lilla. I'll explain nothing, Leopold. Your want
of confidence in me vexes me to the heart. I am
sure we shall never be happy, if this be the case.
(Cries.)

Leop. Oh! very well. I see what—you wish to
part—Oh! with all my heart.

Lilla. And with all mine.

DUETT.—LEOPOLD and LILLA.

Lilla. *Though you think by this to vex me,*

Love no more can give me pain.

Leop. *Vainly strive not to perplex me,*

You shall dupe me ne'er again.

Lilla. *Now your falsehood is requited,*

I'll enjoy a single life.

Leop. *Hark! to glory I'm invited,*

By the cheerful drum and fife.

Lilla. *By consent, then, now we sever,—*

Leop. *Love's all nonsense, freedom's sweet;*

Lilla. *And we take our leave for ever,*

Leop. *Never more again to meet.*

Lilla. *Never more?*

Leop. *Never more.*

Lilla. *I don't want, sir, to allure you;*

I don't wish your stay, not I.

Leop. *I'm quite happy, I assure you;*

Gladly I pronounce good b'ye!

Lilla. *You will change your mind, believe me—*

Leop. *No; I told you so before.*

Lilla. *Can you have the heart to leave me?*

Leop. *Yes: I'll never see you more.*

Lilla. *Never more?*

Leop. *Never more.*

Both. *Never more my love shall leave me;
Never part—no, never more.* [Exit.

SCENE V.—A Turkish Burial-ground.

Enter PETER, followed by LEOPOLD with a small
cane.

Peter. How fortunate that Lilla should overhear
Useph discover where his treasures are hidden.
But you say we are to carry this money to Colonel
Cohenberg, who will deliver it to the lawful
owners.

Leop. Yes; we are to commit a robbery for the
public good. So, follow me, Peter. In we go.

Enter MICHAEL with a sack, and USEPH disguised
in a long cloak.

Useph. Come along, Michael. But make no
noise, that we may make our escape, undiscovered,
to Belgrade. This is the spot where I buried my
poor, dear wife, two years ago.

Mich. I recollect it.

Useph. Ah! many a time, in the dead of the
night, have I visited this place.

Mich. What the plague, did you want to steal
your wife?

Useph. No, no; I ran away with her once, when
she was alive; and repented it ever afterwards.
She was a good soul, but rather turbulent; never
quiet, till she arrived here; and, now she is at
rest, I should be sorry to disturb her. There, Mi-
chael; that tomb is my banking-house; and, per-
haps, it is not the first banking-house where a
fortune has been buried. However, this is an old-
established shop, and all the parties in it quiet,
safe people.

Misch. Then we come to remove the treasure!

Useph. Even so, my boy: I shall take away my money, and leave my wife. Many a husband would think that no bad bargain. (*Going in, meets PETER and LEOPOLD.*) Oh, terrible! What do I see! my riches! Oh! you audacious robbers! Oh! you sacrilegious villains!

Leop. Now, don't make a noise; you must be cool.

Useph. Why, you impudent varlet! Do you plunder me, and preach to me at the same time? Zounds! I'll never be cool again.

Leop. Yes, you will. (*Strikes him with a cane.*) How do you find yourself, now? (*Strikes him again.*)

Useph. Oh! good, kind Leopold, I am cool—indeed, I am quiet.

Leop. Now, then, let's hear what you have to say.

Useph. May I, then, without offence, ask what right you have to take my money? I don't ask this in anger; I am quite cool.

Leop. Your money! Why, your name is Heron Joseph Wolfgang Baumhork Blandenkersteen Schwartzbergen.

Peter. And this money belongs to one Ben Yacomb Ben Ali Ben Mustapha.

Leop. An old, roguish magistrate of this village, who used to cheat people of their property. Come, honest Michael, you shall carry this treasure for us to Colonel Cohenberg's.

Useph. To Colonel Cohenberg's! Why, what the devil—

Leop. What, you want the other dose?

Useph. No, no.

Leop. Well, then, assist Peter in loading Michael.

Useph. I tell you I will not assist. That—

Leop. (*Strikes him.*) Now be cool.

Useph. This is d—d hard to make a man accessory to robbing himself. (*They put several bags, which Peter and Leopold brought from the tomb, into the sack, then place it on Michael's back, who carries it off. Useph puts one of the bags into his pocket, unseen by Peter or Leopold.*)—*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—*Outer Wall of the Burial-ground.*—*Several voices are heard crying—"Follow! Follow!"*

Enter CATHERINE, LEOPOLD, PETER, MICHAEL, and USEPH.

Cath. Oh, heavens! I am closely pursued!—Which way shall I escape? My friends, will you conduct me to Colonel Cohenberg's.

Leop. Ay, madam, at the hazard of our lives. Lead on, Useph. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter SERASKIER, ISMAEL, and Guards.

Seras. Confusion! My camp destroyed, and Catherine escaped!

Ismael. Pray, my lord, return. You are near the frontiers of the Austrians.

Seras. Not till I recover Catherine. (*Trumpets.*) Hark! I am called to arms. Begone, and bear our crescent to the wars. [*Exit Ismael.*]

AIR.—SERASKIER.

*Love and honour now conspire
To rouse my soul with martial fire.
Holy prophet, hear my prayer,
Give me once more the charming fair.
The Austrian trumpet's bold alarms
Breathe defiance to our arms.
Fir'd with ardour to engage,
Give me to dare the battle's rage,
When groans that shall be heard no more,
Echo to the cannon's roar.*

Death stalks triumphant o'er the field:

On every side the Christians yield.

Still conquest doubly presses

The lover-soldier's arms,

In prospect he possesses

Complying beauty's charms. [*Exit.*]

SCENE VII.—*Castle and view of Belgrade.*—*The siege commences. Guns firing balls of fire, supposed to be thrown to fire the citadel. A party of Turks are repulsed by a party of Austrians. An Austrian Soldier fights some time sword in hand with a Turkish soldier; but, losing his sword, takes a pistol from his belt, and fires at him; the Turk falls, and is thrown into the ditch that surrounds the Castle.*—*Enter the SERASKIER and COHENBERG fighting. The Seraskier falls.*—*PETER, LEOPOLD, ANSELM, &c. fight with the Turkish soldiers. USEPH enters, and flourishes his sword on the side of the Turks; but finding they are sure to be conquered, joins the Austrians. Drums and trumpets heard all the time.*

Colonel. (*To the Seraskier, who is down.*) Rise, and learn Christian revenge.

Enter CATHERINE.

FINALE.—*In the course of which, enter GHITA and LILLA.*

Cho. Loud let the song of triumph rise,
Bless'd triumph o'er oppression's sway;
Valour has gain'd the brightest prize,
For freedom's voice shall join the lay.

Cath. Fortune relenting, from her stores,
Her richest treasures lavish pours;
The bliss for which so long we strove,
The joys of victory and love.

Seras. Vanquish'd, I boast my victor brave;
Light were the chains which valour gave;
More potent fetters now I find,
Kindness subdues his captive's mind.

Cho. Loud let the song of triumph rise,
Bless'd triumph o'er oppression's sway;
Valour has gain'd the brightest prize,
For freedom's voice shall join the lay.

DUETT.—LILLA and GHITA.

*Now while music her strains most inviting,
Shall in sweet gratitude's cause display;
Tho' untutor'd in skill so delighting,
Our heartfelt thanks let us humbly pay.
Strains so artless tho' we proffer,
Hearts o'erflowing zest the offer.*

Cho. Now while music, &c.

Leop. All ill-humour thus vented in fighting,
We are, as usual, good-humour'd and gay;

Lilla. Happy liberty's blessings regaining,
They inspiring our simple lay;

Ghita. Freedom's glorious cause sustaining,
The theme our humble song will raise.

Lilla. Strains so artless,—
Though we proffer,—
Hearts o'erflowing,
Zest the offer.

Cho. Freedom's glorious cause, &c.

Cath. From companions in danger, this greeting
Of friendship, how can we requite?

Trio. A reception so gracious when meeting,
Our duty becomes our delight.

Lilla and Ghita. } Bright the laurel of victory gracing,
The manly brow merit marks it to wear;—

Cho. Doubly dear is that laurel while placing
By the lov'd hand of the favourite fair.
Toils forgetting, pleasure court'ing,
Beauty beaming, smiles transporting.
Bright the laurel, &c. [*Exeunt.*]

THE DISTREST MOTHER;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY AMBROSE PHILIPS.



Act I.—Scene I.

CHARACTERS.

PYRRHUS
ORISTES

PHŒNIX
PYLADES

ANDROMACHE
HIRMIONF

CIPHISA
CLEONF

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A great Hall in the court of Pyrrhus.*
Enter ORISTES, PYLADES, and Attendants.

Ores. Oh! Pylades, what a life without a friend!
At sight of thee my gloomy soul cheers up,
My hopes revive, and gladness dawns within me.
After an absence of six tedious moons,
How could I hope to find my Pylades,
My joy, my comfort, on this fatal shore?
Even in the court of Pyrrhus? in these realms,
These hated realms, so cross to all my wishes.
Oh! my brave friend, may no blind stroke of fate
Divide us more, and tear me from myself.

Pyl. Oh, Prince! oh, my Oristes! oh, my friend!
Thus let me speak the welcome of my heart.

(Embraces.)

Since I have gain'd this unexpected meeting,
Bless'd be the powers that barr'd my way to Greece,
And kept me here! ere since the unhappy day
When warring winds (Epirus full in view)
Sunder'd our barks on the loud stormy main.

Ores. It was, indeed, a morning full of horror!

Pyl. A thousand boding cares have rack'd my soul
In your behalf. Often, with tears, I mourn'd
The fatal ills, to which your life's involv'd,
And grudge'd you dangers which I could not share.
I fear'd to what extremities the black despair
That prey'd upon your mind might have betray'd
And lest the gods, in pity to your woes, (you,
Should hear your prayers, and take the life you
loath'd.

But now with joy I see you. The retinue,
And numerous followers that surround you here,
Speak better fortunes, and a mind dispos'd
To relish life.

Ores. Alas! my friend, who knows
The destiny to which I stand reserv'd?
I come in search of an inhuman fair,
And live or die, as she decrees my fate.

Pyl. You much surprise me, prince, I thought you

Of your unpiety'd, unsuccessful passion.

Why, in Epirus, should you hope to find
Hermione less cruel, than at Sparta?

I thought her pride, and the disdainful manner
In which she treated all your constant sufferings,
Had broke your fetters, and assur'd your freedom
Asham'd of your repulse, and slighted vows,
You hated her: you talk'd of her no more
Prince, you deceiv'd me!

Ores. I deceiv'd myself.

Do not upbraid the unhappy man that loves thee
Thou know'st I never hid my passion from thee,
Thou saw'st it, in its birth, and in its progress,
And when, at last, the hoary king, her father,
Great Menelaus, gave away his daughter,
His lovely daughter, to the happy Pyrrhus,
Thy avenger of his wrongs, thou saw'st my grief,
My torture, my despair: and how I dragg'd,
From sea to sea, a heavy chain of woes.

Oh! Pylades, my heart has bled within me,
To see thee, press'd with sorrows not thy own,
Still wand'ring with me like a banish'd man,
Watchful, and anxious for thy wretched friend,
To temper the wild transports of my mind,
And save me from myself.

Pyl. Why thus unkind?

Why wilt you envy me the pleasing task
Of generous love, and sympathising friendship?

Ores. Thou miracle of truth! But hear me on.

When in the midst of my disastrous fate,
I thought how the divine Hermione,
Deaf to the vows, regardless of my plaints,
Gave up herself, and all her charms, to Pyrrhus,
Thou may'st remember, I abhor'd her name,
Strive to forget her, and repay her scorn.

I made my friends, and even myself, believe
My soul was freed. Alas! I did not see,
That all the malice of my heart was love.
Triumphing thus, and yet a captive still,
In Greece I landed; and in Greece I found

The assembled princes all alarm'd with fears,
In which their common safety seem'd concern'd.
I join'd them: for I hop'd that war and glory
Might fill my mind, and take up all my thoughts;
And that my shatter'd soul, impair'd with grief,
Once more would reassume its wonted vigour,
And every idle passion quit my breast.

Pyl. The thought was worthy Agamemnon's son.

Ores. But see the strange perverseness of my stars,
Which throws me on the rock I strove to shun!
The jealous chiefs, and all the states of Greece,
With one united voice, complain of Pyrrhus;
That now, forgetful of the promise giv'n,
And mindless of his godlike father's fate,
Asryanax he nurses in his court;
Asryanax, the young, surviving hope
Of ruin'd Troy; Asryanax, descended
From a long race of kings—great Hector's son.

Pyl. A name still dreadful in the ears of Greece!

But, Prince, you'll cease to wonder why the child
Lives thus protected in the court of Pyrrhus,
When you shall hear the bright Andromache,
His lovely captive, charms him from his purpose:
The mother's beauty guards the helpless son.

Ores. Your tale confirms what I have heard; and
—hence

Spring all my hopes. Since my proud rival woos
Another partner to his throne and bed,
Hermione may stili be mine. Her father,
The injur'd Menelaus, thinks already
His daughter slighted, and th' intended nuptials
Too long delay'd. I heard his loud complaints
With secret pleasure; and was glad to find
Th' ungrateful maid neglected in her turn,
And all my wrongs aveng'd in her disgrace.

Pyl. Oh! may you keep your just resentments
warm! [found

Ores. Resentments! Oh! my friend, too soon I
They grew not out of hatred. I am betray'd:
I practise on myself, and fondly plot
My own undoing. Goaded on by love,
I canvass'd all the suffrages of Greece;
And here I come, their sworn ambassador,
To speak their jealousies, and claim this boy.

Pyl. Pyrrhus will treat your embassy with scorn.
Full of Achilles, his redoubted sire,
Pyrrhus is proud, impetuous, headstrong, fierce;
Made up of passions: will he, then, be sway'd,
And give to death the son of her he loves?

Ores. Oh! would he render up Hermione,
And keep Asryanax, I should be bless'd!
He must; he shall! Hermione is my life,
My soul, my rapture! I'll no longer curb
The strong desire that hurries me to madness:
I'll give a loose to love; I'll bear her hence;
I'll tear her from his arms; I'll—Oh, ye gods!
Give me Hermione, or let me die!
But tell me, Pylades, how stand my hopes?
Is Pyrrhus still enamour'd with her charms?
Or dost thou think he'll yield me up the prize,
The dear, dear prize, which he has ravish'd from me?

Pyl. I dare not flatter your fond hopes so far;
The king, indeed, cold to the Spartan princeas,
Turns all his passion to Andromache,
Hector's afflicted widow. But in vain,
With interwoven love and rage, he sues
The charming captive, obstinately cruel.
Oft he alarms her for her child, confin'd
Apart; and when her tears begin to flow,
As soon he stops them, and recalls his threats.
Hermione a thousand times has seen
His ill-requited vows return to her;
And takes his indignation all for love.
What can be gather'd from a man so various?
He may, in the disorder of his soul,
Wed her he hates, and punish her he loves.

Ores. But tell me how the wrong'd Hermione
Brooks her slow nuptials, and dishonour'd charms?

Pyl. Hermione would fain be thought to scorn
Her wavering lover, and disdain his falsehood;

But, spite of all her pride and conscious beauty,
She mourns in secret her neglected charms,
And oft has made me privy to her tears;
Still threatens to be gone, yet still she stays,
And sometimes sighs, and wishes for Orestes.

Ores. Ah! were those wishes from her heart, my
friend,

I'd fly in transport— (Flourish within.)

Pyl. Hear! the king approaches
To give you audience. Speak your embassy
Without reserve: urge the demands of Greece;
And, in the name of all her kings, require
That Hector's son be giv'n into your hands.
Pyrrhus, instead of granting what they ask,
To speed his love, and win the Trojan dame,
Will make it merit to preserve her son.
But, see: he comes!

Ores. Meanwhile, my Pylades,
Go, and dispose Hermione to see
Her lover, who is come thus far, to throw
Himself, in all his sorrows, at her feet. [Exit Pyl.]

Enter PYRRHUS, PHENIX, and Attendants.

Before I speak the message of the Greeks,
Permit me, sir, to glory in the title
Of their ambassador; since I behold
Troy's vanquisher, and great Achilles' son;
Nor does the son rise short of such a father:
If Hector fell by him, Troy fell by you.
But what your father never would have done,
You do. You cherish the remains of Troy;
And, by an ill-tim'd pity, keep alive
The dying embers of a ten years' war.
Have you so soon forgot the mighty Hector?
The Greeks remember his high brandish'd sword,
That fill'd their state with widows and with or-
phans;

For which they call for vengeance on his son.
Who knows what he may one day prove? Who
knows

But he may brave us in our ports, and fill'd
With Hector's fury, set our fleets on blaze?
You may, yourself, live to repent your mercy.
Comply, then, with the Grecians' just demands;
Satisfate their vengeance, and preserve yourself.

Pyl. The Greeks are for my safety more con-
cern'd

Than I desire. I thought your kings were met
On more important counsel. When I heard
The name of their ambassador, I hop'd
Some glorious enterprise was taking birth.
Is Agamemnon's son despatch'd for this?
And do the Grecian chiefs, renown'd in war,
A race of heroes, join in close debate,
To plot an infant's death? What right has Greece
To ask his life? Must I, must I alone,
Of all her scepter'd warriors, be deny'd
To treat my captive as I please? Know, Prince,
When Troy lay smoking on the ground, and each
Proud victor shar'd the harvest of the war,
Andromache, and this her son, were mine;
Were mine by lot. And who shall wrest them from
Ulysses bore away old Priam's queen; [me?
Cassandra was your own great father's prize.
Did I concern myself in what they won?
Did I send embassies to claim their captives?

Ores. But, sir, we fear for you and for ourselves.
Troy may again revive, and a new Hector
Rise in Asryanax. Then think betimes—

Pyl. Let dastard souls be timorously wise:
But tell them, Pyrrhus knows not how to form
Far fancied ills, and dangers out of night. [Troy;

Ores. Sir, call to mind the unrivall'd strength of
Her walls, her bulwarks, and her gates of brass;
Her kings, her heroes, and embattled armies.

Pyl. I call them all to mind; and see them all
Confus'd in dust; all mix'd in one wide ruin!
All but a child, and he in bondage held.
What vengeance can we fear from such a Troy?
If they have sworn to extinguish Hector's race,
Why was their vow for twelve long months deferr'd?

Why was he not in Priam's bosom slain?
He should have fall'n among the slaughter'd heaps,
Whelm'd under Troy. His death had then been just.
My fury then was without bounds; but now,
My wrath appeas'd, must I be cruel still?
And, deaf to all the tender calls of pity,
Like a cool murderer, bathe my hands in blood?
An infant's blood? No, Prince; go bid the Greeks
Mark out some other victim; my revenge
Has had its fill. What has escap'd from Troy
Shall not be sav'd to perish in Epirus.

Ores. I need not tell you, sir, Astyanax
Was doom'd to death in Troy; nor mention how
The crafty mother sav'd her darling son.
The Greeks do now but urge their former sentence:
Nor is't the boy, but Hector they pursue;
The father draws their vengeance on the son:
The father, who so oft in Grecian blood
Has drench'd his sword; the father, whom the
Greeks

May seek e'en here. Prevent them, sir, in time.
Pyr. No: let them come; since I was born to wage
Eternal wars. Let them now turn their arms
On him who conquer'd for them. Let them come;
And in Epirus seek another Troy.

'Twas thus they recompens'd my godlike sire;
Thus was Achilles thank'd. But, Prince, remember,
Their black ingratitude then cost them dear.

Ores. Shall Greece, then, find a rebel son in
Pyrrhus? [Greece?]

Pyr. Have I, then, conquer'd to depend on
Ores. Hermione will sway your soul to peace,
And mediate 'twixt her father and yourself.
Her beauty will enforce my embassy.

Pyr. Hermione may have her charms, and I
May love her still, though not her father's slave.
I may, in time, give proofs that I'm a lover;
But never must forget that I'm a king.
Meanwhile, sir, you may see fair Helen's daughter:
I know how near in blood you stand ally'd.
That done, you have my answer, Prince. The
Greeks,

No doubt, expect your quick return.

[Exit Orestes and Attendants.]

Pha. Sir, do you send your rival to the Princess?

Pha. I am told that he has lov'd her long.

Pha. If so,

Have you not cause to fear the smother'd flame
May kindle at her sight, and blaze anew;
And she be wrought to listen to his passion? [fill:]

Pyr. Ay, let them, Phoenix; let them love their
Let them go hence; let them depart together;
Together let them sail for Sparta; all my ports
Are open to them both. From what constraint,
What irksome thoughts, should I then be reliev'd!

Pha. But, sir—

Pyr. I shall, another time, good Phoenix,
Unbosom to thee all my thoughts: for see,
Andromache appears. [Exit Phoenix.]

Enter ANDROMACHE and CEPHISA.

May I, madam,
Flatter my hopes so far as to believe
You come to seek me here?

Andro. This way, sir, leads
To those apartments where you guard my son.
Since you permit me, once a day, to visit
All I have left of Hector and of Troy,
I go to weep a few sad moments with him.
I have not yet to-day embrac'd my child;
I have not held him in my widow'd arms.

Pyr. Ah! madam, should the threats of Greece
prevail,

You'll have occasion for your tears, indeed.

Andro. Alas! what threats? What can alarm the
There are no Trojans left. [Greeks?]

Pyr. Their hate to Hector

Can never die: the terror of his name [son.
Still shakes their souls, and makes them dread his

Andro. A mighty honour for victorious Greece,
To fear an infant, a poor, friendless child!

Who smiles in bondage, nor yet knows himself
The son of Hector, and the slave of Pyrrhus.

Pyr. Weak as he is, the Greeks demand his life,
And send no less than Agamemnon's son
To fetch him hence.

Andro. And, sir, do you comply
With such demands? This blow is aim'd at me.
How should the child avenge his slaughter'd sire?
But, cruel men! they will not have him live
To cheer my heavy heart, and ease my bonds.
I promis'd to myself in him a son,
In him a friend, a husband, and a father.
But I must suffer sorrow heap'd on sorrow,
And still the fatal stroke must come from you.

Pyr. Dry up those tears: I must not see you weep;
And know, I have rejected their demands.
The Greeks already threaten me with war;
But, should they arm, as once they did for Helen,
And hide the Adriatic with their fleets;
Should they prepare a second ten years' siege,
And lay my towers and palaces in dust;
I am determin'd to defend your son,
And rather die myself than give him up.
But, madam, in the midst of all these dangers,
Will you refuse me a propitious smile?
Hated of Greece, and press'd on every side,
Let me not, madam, while I fight your cause,
Let me not combat with your cruelties,
And count Andromache amongst my foes.

Andro. Consider, sir, how this will sound in
Greece!

How can so great a soul betray such weakness?
Let not men say, so generous a design
Was but the transport of a heart in love.

Pyr. Your charms will justify me to the world.

Andro. How can Andromache, a captive queen,
O'erwhelm'd with grief, a burden to herself,
Harbour a thought of love? Alas! what charms
Have these unhappy eyes, by you condemn'd
To weep for ever! Talk of it no more.

To reverence the misfortunes of a foe;
To succour the distress'd; to give the son
To an afflicted mother; to repel

Confederate nations, leagu'd against his life;
Unbri'd by love, unterrify'd by threats,
To pity, to protect him: these are cares,
These are exploits worthy Achilles' son. [ever?]

Pyr. Will your resentments, then, endure for
Must Pyrrhus never be forgiven? 'Tis true,
My sword has often reek'd in Phrygian blood,
And carried havoc through your royal kindred;
But you, fair Princess, amply have aveng'd
Old Priam's vanquish'd house; and all the woes
I brought on them, fall short of what I suffer.
We both have suffer'd in our turns; and now
Our common foes shall teach us to unite.

Andro. Where does the captive not behold a foe?

Pyr. Forget the term of hatred, and behold
A friend in Pyrrhus. Give me but to hope,
I'll free your son, I'll be a father to him:
Myself will teach him to avenge the Trojans.
I'll go in person to chastise the Greeks,
Both for your wrongs and mine. Inspir'd by you,
What would I not achieve? Again shall Troy
Rise from its ashes: this right arm shall fix
Her seat of empire, and your son shall reign.

Andro. Such dreams of greatness suit not my
condition:

His hopes of empire perish'd with his father.
No; thou imperial city, ancient Troy,
Thou pride of Asia, founded by the gods!
Never, oh! never, must we hope to see
Those bulwarks rise, which Hector could not guard!
Sir, all I wish for is some quiet exile,
Where far from Greece remov'd, and far from you,
I may conceal my son, and mourn my husband.
Your love creates me envy. Oh! return,
Return to your betroth'd Hermione. [cannot,

Pyr. Why do you mock me thus? you know, I
You know my heart is your's; my soul hangs on you;

You take up every wish: my waking thoughts,
And nightly dreams, are all employ'd on you.
'Tis true, Hermione was sent to share
My throne and bed; and would, with transport, hear
The vows which you neglect.

Andro. She has no Troy,
No Hector to lament: she has not lost
A husband by your conquests. Such a husband!
(Tormenting thought!) whose death alone has made
Your sire immortal. Pyrrhus and Achilles
Are both grown great by my calamities.

Pyr. Madam, 'tis well; 'tis very well; I find
Your will must be obey'd; imperious captive,
It shall! Henceforth, I blot you from my mind;
You teach me to forget your charms; to hate you:
For know, inhuman beauty, I have lov'd
Too well to treat you with indifference.
Think well upon it; my disorder'd soul
Wavers between th' extremes of love and rage.
I have been too tame; I will awake to vengeance!
The son shall answer for the mother's scorn.
The Greeks demand him; nor will I endanger
My realms, to pleasure an ungrateful woman.

Andro. Then he must die! alas! my son must die!
He has no friend, no succour left, beside
His mother's tears, and his own innocence.

Pyr. Go, madam, visit this unhappy son;
The sight of him may bend your stubborn heart,
And turn to softness your unjust disdain.
I shall once more expect your answer. Go;
And think, while you embrace the captive boy,
Think, that his life depends on your resolves.

[Exit with Attendants.]

Andro. I'll go, and in the anguish of my heart,
Weep o'er my child; if he must die, my life
Is wrapp'd in his; I shall not long survive.
'Tis for his sake that I have suffer'd life,
Groan'd in captivity, and out-liv'd Hector.
Yes, my Astyanax, we'll go together.
Together to the realms of night we'll go;
There to thy ravish'd eyes thy sire I'll show,
And point him out among the shades below. [Exeunt.]

ACT II.—SCENE I.

Enter HERMIONE and CLEONE.

Her. Well, I'll be rul'd, Cleone; I will see him:
I have told Pylades that he may bring him;
But trust me, were I left to my own thoughts,
I should forbid him yet.

Cle. And why forbid him?
Is he not, madam, still the same Orestes?
Orestes, whose return you oft have wish'd?
The man whose sufferings you so late lamented,
And often prais'd his constancy and love?

Her. That love, that constancy, so ill requited,
Upbraids me to myself. I blush to think
How I have us'd him, and would shun his presence.
What will be my confusion when he sees me,
Neglected and forsaken, like himself?
Will he not say, "Is this the scornful maid,
The proud Hermione, that tyranniz'd
In Sparta's court, and triumph'd in her charms?
Her insolence, at last, is well repaid!"
I cannot bear the thought.

Cle. You wrong yourself
With unbecoming fears. He knows too well
Your beauty and your worth. Your lover comes not
To offer insults, but to repeat his vows,
And breathe his ardent passion at your feet.
But, madam, what's your royal father's will?
What orders do your letters bring from Sparta?

Her. His orders are, if Pyrrhus still delay
The nuptials, and refuse to sacrifice
This Trojan boy, I should with speed embark,
And with their embassy return to Greece. [time]

Cle. What would you more? Orestes comes in
To save your honour. Pyrrhus cools apace
Prevent his falsehood, and forsake him first.
I know you hate him; you have told me so.

Her. Hate him! My injur'd honour bids me hate
him.

The ungrateful man, to whom I fondly gave
My virgin heart; the man I lov'd so dearly;
The man I doated on! Oh! my Cleone,
How is it possible I should not hate him?

Cle. Then give him over, madam. Quit his court,
And with Orestes—

Her. No: I must have time
To work up all my rage; to meditate
A parting full of horror! My revenge
Will be but too much quicken'd by the traitor.

Cle. Do you, then, wait new insults, new affronts?
To draw you from your father; then to leave you;
In his own court to leave you, for a captive!
If Pyrrhus can provoke you, he has done it.

Her. Why dost thou heighten my distress? I fear
To search out my own thoughts, and sound my heart.
Be blind to what thou seest; believe me cur'd;
Flatter my weakness; tell me I have conquer'd;
Think that my injur'd soul is set against him;
And do thy best to make me think so, too.

Cle. Why would you loiter here, then?

Her. Let us fly!
Let us be gone; I leave him to his captive.
Let him go kneel, and supplicate his slave.

Let us begone! But what if he repent?
What if the perjurd prince again submit,
And sue for pardon? What, if he renew
His former vows? But, oh! the faithless man!
He slights me; drives me to extremities. However,
I'll stay, Cleone, to perplex their loves:
I'll stay, till by an open breach of contract,
I make him hateful to the Greeks. Already
Their vengeance have I claim upon the son;
The second embassy shall claim the mother;
I will redouble all my griefs upon her.

Cle. Ah! madam, whither does your rage trans-
port you?

Andromache, alas! is innocent.
A woman plung'd in sorrow, dead to love;
And when she thinks on Pyrrhus, 'tis with horror.

Her. Would I had done so, too! he had not then
Betray'd my easy faith. But I, alas!
Discover'd all the fondness of my soul;
I made no secret of my passion to him,
Nor thought it dangerous to be sincere.
My eyes, my tongue, my actions spoke my heart.

Cle. Well might you speak without reserve, to one
Engag'd to you by solemn oaths and treaties.

Her. His ardour, too, was an excuse to mine:
With other eyes he saw me then. Cleone,
Thou may'st remember, everything conspir'd
To favour him: my father's wrongs aveng'd;
The Greeks triumphant; fleets of Trojan spoils;
His mighty sire's, his own immortal fame;
His eager love; all, all conspir'd against me.
But I have done; I'll think no more of Pyrrhus:
Orestes wants not merit, and he loves me.
My gratitude, my honour, both plead for him;
And if I've power o'er my own heart, 'tis his.

Cle. Madam, he comes—
Her. Alas! I did not think
He was so near. I wish I might not see him.

Enter ORESTES.

How am I to interpret, sir, this visit?
Is it a compliment of form, or love? — [fate]

Ores. Madam, you know my weakness. 'Tis my
To love unquid'd; to desire to see you;
And still to swear each time shall be the last.
My passion breaks through my repeated oaths,
And every time I visit you I'm perjurd.
Even now I find my wounds all bleed afresh;
I blush to own it, but I know no cure.
I call the gods to witness, I have tried
Whatever man could do (but tried in vain)
To wear you from my mind. Through stormy seas,
And savage climes, in a whole year of absence,
I courted dangers, and I long'd for death. [tale?]

Her. Why will you, Prince, indulge this mournful
It ill becomes the ambassador of Greece
To talk of dying and of love. Remember

The kings you represent: shall their revenge
Be disappointed by your ill-tim'd passion?
Discharge your embassy. 'Tis not Orestes
The Greeks desire should die.

Ores. My embassy
Is at an end; for Pyrrhus has refus'd
To give up Hector's son. Some hidden power
Protects the boy.

Her. Faithless, ungrateful man! (*Aside.*)

Ores. I now prepare for Greece; but ere I go,
Would hear my final doom pronounced by you.
What do I say? I do already hear it!
My doom is fixed: I read it in your eyes.

Her. Will you then still despair? be still suspicious?

What have I done? wherein have I been cruel?
'Tis true, you find me in the court of Pyrrhus;
But 'twas my royal father sent me hither.
And who can tell but I have shar'd your griefs?
Have I ne'er wept in secret? never wish'd
To see Orestes?

Ores. Wish'd to see Orestes!
O joy! O ecstasy! My soul's entranc'd!
O charming princess! O transcendent maid!
My utmost wish!—Thus, thus let me express
My boundless thanks!—I never was unhappy.
Am I Orestes?

Her. You are Orestes:
The same, unalter'd, generous, faithful lover;
The prince whom I esteem, whom I lament,
And whom I fain would teach my heart to love.

Ores. Ay, there it is!—I have but your esteem,
While Pyrrhus has your heart.

Her. Believe me, prince,
Were you as Pyrrhus, I should hate you.

Ores. No.
I should be blest, I should be lov'd as he is!
Yet all this while I die by your disdain,
While he neglects your charms, and courts another.

Her. And who has told you, Prince, that I'm
neglected?

Has Pyrrhus said—(Oh! I shall go distracted!)
Has Pyrrhus told you so? or is it you
Who think thus meanly of me!—Sir, perhaps,
All do not judge like you.

Ores. Madam, go on;
Insult me still; I'm us'd to bear your scorn.

Her. Why am I told how Pyrrhus loves or hates?
Go, Prince, and arm the Greeks against the rebel;
Let them lay waste his country, rase his towns,
Destroy his fleets, his palaces—himself!

Ores. Go, Prince, and tell me then how much I love him.
Ores. To hasten his destruction, come yourself;
And work your royal father to his ruin.

Her. Meanwhile he weds Andromache.

Ores. Ah! Princess;
What is't I hear?

Her. What infamy for Greece,
If he should wed a Phrygian, and a captive!

Ores. Is this your hatred, madam?—'Tis in vain
To hide your passion; every thing betrays it:
Your looks, your speech, your anger, nay, your
silence;

Your love appears in all; your secret flame
Breaks out the more, the more you would conceal it.

Her. Your jealousy perverts my meaning still,
And wrests each circumstance to your disquiet:
My very hate is construed into fondness.

Ores. Impute my fears, if groundless, to my
love.

Her. Then hear me, Prince. Obedience to a
father

First brought me hither; and the same obedience
Detains me here, till Pyrrhus drive me hence,
Or my offended father shall recal me.
Tell this proud King, that Menalaus scorns
To match his daughter with a foe of Greece:
Bid him resign Astyanax or me.

If he persists to guard the hostile boy,
Hermione embarks with you for Sparta.

[*Exeunt Hermione and Cleone.*]

Ores. Then is, Orestes blest! My griefs are
fed!

Bled like a dream!—Methinks I tread in air?
Pyrrhus, enamour'd of his captive queen,
Will thank me, if I take her rival hence.
He looks not on the Princess with my eyes.
Surprising happiness! unlook'd for joy!
Never let love despair. The prize is mine!
Be smooth, ye seas, and ye propitious winds,
Breathe from Epirus to the Spartan coasts!
I long to view the sails unfurl'd!—But see!
Pyrrhus approaches in a happy hour.

Enter PYRRHUS and PHENIX.

Pyr. I was in pain to find you, Prince. My
warm,

Ungovern'd temper would not let me weigh
The importance of your embassy, and hear
You argue for my good. I was to blame.
I since have pois'd your reasons: and I thank
My good allies: their care deserves my thanks.
You have convinc'd me that the weal of Greece,
My father's honour, and my own repose,
Demand that Hector's race should be destroy'd.
I shall deliver up Astyanax,
And you yourself shall bear the victim hence.

Ores. If you approve it, sir, and are content
To spill the blood of a defenceless child,
The offended Greeks, no doubt, will be appeas'd.

Pyr. Closer to strain the knot of our alliance,
I have determined to espouse Hermione.

You come in time to grace our nuptial rights:
In you the Kings of Greece will all be present,
And you have right to personate her father,
As his ambassador and brother's son.
Go, Prince, renew your visit; tell Hermione,
To-morrow I receive her from your hands.

Ores. Oh! change of fortune! Oh! undone
Orestes! [*Aside, and exit.*]

Pyr. Well, Phoenix, am I still a slave to love?
What think'st thou now? Am I myself again?

Phæ. 'Tis as it should be; this discovers Pyr-
rhus;

Shows all the hero: now you are yourself—
The son, the rival of the great Achilles!
Greece will applaud you, and the world confess
Pyrrhus has conquer'd Troy a second time!

Pyr. Nay, Phoenix, now I but begin to triumph;
I never was a conqueror till now.

Believe me, a whole host, a war of foes,
May sooner be subdu'd than love. Oh! Phoenix;
What ruin have I shunn'd! The Greeks, enrag'd,
Hung o'er me like a gathering storm, and soon
Had burst in thunder on my head; while I
Abandon'd duty, empire, honour, all,
To please a thankless woman!—One kind look
Had quite undone me!

Phæ. Oh! my royal master!

The gods, in favour to you, made her cruel.

Pyr. Thou saw'st with how much scorn she
treated me!

When I permitted her to see her son,
I hop'd it might have work'd her to my wishes;
I went to see the mournful interview,
And found her bath'd in tears, and lost in passion.
Wild with distress, a thousand times she call'd
On Hector's name: and when I spoke in comfort,
And promised my protection to her son,
She kiss'd the boy, and call'd again on Hector.
Does she, then, think that I preserv'd the boy
To soothe and keep alive her flame for Hector?

Phæ. No doubt she does, and thinks you favo-
rit in it;

But let her go, for an ungrateful woman.

Pyr. I know the thoughts of her proud stubborn
heart:

Vain of her charms, and insolent in beauty,

She mocks my rage; and when it threatens
loudest,

Expects would soon be humbled into love.
But we shall change our parts, and she shall find
I can be deaf, like her, and steel my heart.
She's Hector's widow; I, Achilles' son!
Pyrrhus is born to hate Andromache.

Phœ. My royal master, talk of her no more;
I do not like this anger. Your Hermione
Should now engross your thoughts. 'Tis time to
see her;

'Tis time you should prepare the nuptial rites,
And not rely upon a rival's care:
It may be dangerous.

Pyr. But tell me, Phœnix,
Dost thou not think the proud Andromache
Will be enrag'd, when I shall wed the princess?

Phœ. Why does Andromache still haunt your
thoughts?

What's it to you, be she enrag'd or pleas'd?
Let her name perish—think of her no more.

Pyr. No, Phœnix, I have been too gentle with
her;

I have check'd my wrath, and stifled my resent-
ment:

She knows not yet to what degree I hate her.
Thou'lt see, Phœnix, how I'll break her pride.

Phœ. Oh! go not, sir. There's ruin in her
eyes!

You do not know your strength. You'll fall before
her,

Adore her beauty, and revive her scorn.

Por. That were, indeed, a most unmanly weak-
ness!

Thou dost not know me, Phœnix.

Phœ. Ah! my prince;

You are still struggling in the toils of love.

Pyr. Canst thou, then, think I love this woman
still?

One who repays my passion with disdain!
A stranger, captive, friendless and forlorn;
She, and her darling son, within my power;
For life a forfeit to the Greeks: yet I
Preserve he, son, would take her to my throne,
Would fight her battles, and avenge her wrongs;
And all this while she treats me as her foe!

Phœ. You have it in your power to be reveng'd.

Pyr. Yes, and I'll shew my power! I'll give
her cause

To hate me! her Astyanax shall die.

What tears will then be shed! How will she then,
In bitterness of heart, reproach my name!
Then, to complete her woes, will I espouse
Hermione—'twill stab her to the heart!

Phœ. Alas! you threaten like a lover still.

Pyr. Phœnix, excuse this struggle of my soul;

'Tis the last effort of expiring love.

Phœ. Then hasten, sir, to see the Spartan prin-
cess,

And turn the bent of your desires on her.

Pyr. Oh! 'tis a heavy task to conquer love,
And wear the soul from her accustomed fondness.
But come—a long farewell to Hector's widow.

'Tis with a secret pleasure I look back,

And see the many dangers I have pass'd.

The merchant thus, in dreadful tempests tost,

Thrown by the waves on some unlook'd for coast,

Of turns, and seas, with a delightful eye,

Midst rocks and shelves the broken billows fly!

And while the outrageous winds deep deform,

Smiles on the tumult, and enjoys the storm.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Enter PYLADES and ORESTES.*

Pyl. For heaven's sake, sir, compose your ruff'd
mind,

And moderate your rage!

Ores. No, Pylades,

This is no time for counsel. I am deaf.

Talk not of reason. I have been too patient.

Life is not worth my care. My soul grows des-
perate.

I'll bear her off, or perish in th' attempt.

I'll force her from his arms—by heaven! I will.

Pyl. Well, 'tis agreed, my friend, we'll force her
hence:

But still consider we are in Epirus.

The court, the guards, Hermione herself,

The very air we breathe, belongs to Pyrrhus.

Good gods! what tempted you to seek her here?

Ores. Lost to myself, I knew not what I did;

My purposes were wild. Perhaps I came

To menace Pyrrhus, and upbraid the woman.

Pyl. This violence of temper may prove fatal.

Ores. It must be more than man to bear these
shocks,

These outrages of fate, with temper.

He tells me that he weds Hermione.

And will, to-morrow, take her from my hand!

My hand shall sooner tear the tyrant's heart.

Pyl. Your passion blinds you, sir; he's not to
blame.

Could you but look into the soul of Pyrrhus,
Perhaps you'd find it tortur'd like your own.

Ores. No, Pylades! 'tis all design. His pride,

To triumph over me, has chang'd his love.

The fair Hermione, before I came,

In all her bloom of beauty, was neglected.

Ah! cruel gods! I thought her all my own!

She was consenting to return to Sparta:

Her heart, divided betwixt rage and love,

Was on the wing to take its leave of Pyrrhus.

She heard my sighs, she pitied my complaints,

She prais'd my constancy. The least indifference

From this proud king, had made Orestes happy!

Pyl. So your fond heart believes.

Think not to force her hence;

But fly yourself from her destructive charms.

Ores. Talk no more!

I cannot bear the thought! She must be mine!

Did Pyrrhus carry thunder in his hand,

I'd stand the bolt, and challenge all his fury,

Ere I resign Hermione! By force

I'll snatch her hence, and bear her to my ships.

Have we forgot her mother Helen's rape?

Pyl. Will, then, Orestes turn a ravisher,

And blot his embassy?

Ores. Oh! Pylades,

My grief weighs heavy on me—'twill distract me!

The gods have set me as their mark, to empty

Their quivers on me. Leave me to myself.

Mine be the danger, mine the enterprise.

All I request of thee, is to return,

And in my place convey Astyanax

(As Pyrrhus has consented) into Greece,

Go, Pylades—

Pyl. Lead on, my friend, lead on!

Let us bear off Hermione! No toil,

No danger can deter a friend. Lead on!

Draw up the Greeks; summon your num'rous

train;

The ships are ready, and the wind sets fair:

There eastward lies the sea; the rolling waves

Break on those palace-stairs. I know each pass,

Each avenue, and outlet of the court.

This very night we'll carry her on board.

Ores. Thou art too good! I trespass on thy

friendship:

But, oh! excuse a wretch, whom no man pities,

Except thyself: one, just about to lose

The treasure of his soul: whom all mankind

Conspire to hate, and one who hates himself.

When will my friendship be of use to thee?

Pyl. The question is unkind. But now, re-
member,

To keep your counsels close, and hide your

thoughts;

Let not Hermione suspect. No more—
I see her coming, sir.

Ores. Away, my friend;
I am advis'd; my all depends upon it.

[*Exit Pylades.*]

Enter HERMIONE and CLEONE.

Madam, your orders are obeyed; I have seen
Pyrrhus, my rival; and have gain'd him for you.
The king resolves to wed you.

Her. So I am told;
And, further, I am inform'd, that you, Orestes,
Are to dispose me for the intended marriage.

Ores. And are you, madam, willing to comply?

Her. What can I do? alas! my faith is prom-
is'd;

Can I refuse what is not mine to give?
A princess is not at her choice to love;
All we have left us is a blind obedience:
And yet you see how far I had comply'd,
And made my duty yield to your entreaties.

Ores. Ah! cruel maid! you knew—but I have
done.

All have a right to please themselves in love.
I blam'd you not. 'Tis true, I hop'd—but you
Are mistress of your heart, and I'm content.
'Tis fortune in my enemy, not you.
But, madam, I shall spare you further pain
On this uneasy theme, and take my leave. [*Exit.*]

Her. Cleone, couldst thou think he'd be so
calm?

Cle. Madam, his silent grief sits heavy on him.
He is to be pitied. His too eager love
Has made him busy to his own destruction.
His threats have wrought this change of mind in
Pyrrhus.

Her. Dost thou think Pyrrhus capable of fear?
Whom should the intrepid Pyrrhus fear? The
Greeks?

Did he not lead their harrass'd troops to conquest,
When they despair'd, when they retir'd from
Troy,

And sought for shelter in their burning fleets?
Did he not then supply his father's place?
No, my Cleone, he is above constraint;
He acts unforc'd; and where he weds, he loves.

Cle. Oh! that Orestes had remain'd in Greece!
I fear to-morrow will prove fatal to him.

Her. Wilt thou discourse of nothing but
Orestes?

Pyrrhus is mine again! Is mine for ever!
Oh! my Cleone, I am wild with joy!
Pyrrhus! the bold, the brave, the godlike Pyrrhus!
Oh! I could tell the numberless exploits,
And tire thee with his battles. Oh! Cleone—

Cle. Madam, conceal your joy; I see Andro-
mache;

She weeps, and comes to speak her sorrows to you.

Her. I would indulge the gladness of my heart:
Let us retire; her grief is out of season.

Enter ANDROMACHE and CEPHISA.

Andro. Ah! madam, whither, whither would
you fly?

Where can your eyes behold a sight more pleasing
Than Hector's widow, suppliant, and in tears?
I come not an alarm'd, a jealous foe,
To envy you the heart your charms have won;
The only man I sought to please, is gone;
Kill'd in my sight, by an inhuman hand.
Hector first taught me love; which my fond heart
Shall ever cherish; till we meet in death.

But, oh! I have a son! And you, one day,
Will be no stranger to a mother's fondness:
But heaven forbid that you should ever know
A mother's sorrow for an only son.
Her joy, her bliss, her last surviving comfort!
When every hour she trembles for his life!
Your power o'er Pyrrhus may relieve my fears.
Alas! what danger is there in a child,

Sav'd from the wreck of a whole ruin'd empire?

Let me go hide him in some desert isle:

You may rely upon my tender care

To keep him far from perils of ambition:

All he can learn of me will be to weep!

Her. Madam, 'tis easy to conceive your grief;

But it would ill become me to solicit

In contradiction to my father's will:

'Tis he who urges to destroy your son.

Madam, if Pyrrhus must be wrought to pity,

No woman does it better than yourself.

If you gain him, I shall comply of course.

[*Exit with Cleone.*]

Andro. Didst thou not mind with what disdain
she spoke?

Youth and prosperity have made her vain;

She has not seen the fickle turns of life.

Ceph. Madam, were I as you, I'd take her
counsel;

I'd speak my own distress: one look from you

Will vanquish Pyrrhus, and confound the Greeks.

See, where he comes. Lay hold on this occasion.

Enter PYRRHUS and PHOENIX.

Pyr. Where is the Princess? Did you not in-
form me

Hermione was here? (*To Phoenix.*)

Phœ. I thought so, sir.

Andro. Thou seest what mighty power my eyes
have on him! (*To Cephisa.*)

Pyr. What says she, Phoenix?

Andro. I have no hope left!

Phœ. Let us be gone; Hermione expects you.

Ceph. For heaven's sake, madam, break this
sullen silence.

Andro. My child's already promis'd. (*Apart.*)

Ceph. But not given. (*Apart.*)

Andro. No, no: my tears are vain! His doom
is fix'd! (*Apart.*)

Pyr. See if she deigns to cast one look upon us.
Proud woman!

Andro. I provokes him by my presence.

Let us retire.

Pyr. Come, let us satisfy
The Greeks, and give them up this Phrygian boy.

Andro. Ah! sir, recal those words! What have
you said?

If you give up my son, oh! give up me.

You, who, so many times, have sworn me friend-
ship:

Oh! heavens, will you not look with pity on me?

Is there no hope? Is there no room for pardon?

Pyr. Phoenix will answer you; my word is
pass'd.

Andro. You, who would brave so many dangers
for me.

Pyr. I was your lover then, I now am free.

To favour you, I might have spar'd his life;

But you would ne'er vouchsafe to ask it of me.

Now 'tis too late.

Andro. Oh! sir, excuse

The pride of royal blood, that checks my soul,

And knows not how to be importunate.

You know, alas! I was not born to kneel,

To sue for pity, and to own a master.

Pyr. No; in your heart you curse me! you
disdain

My generous flame, and scorn to be obliged.

But I shall leave you to your great resentments.

Let us go, Phoenix, and appease the Greeks.

Andro. Then let me die, and let me go to
Hector.

Ceph. But, madam—

Andro. What can I do more? The tyrant

Sees my distraction, and insults my tears.

(*To Cephisa.*)

Behold, how low you have reduc'd a queen!

These eyes have seen my country laid in ashes,

My kindred fall in war, my father slain,

My husband dragg'd in his own blood, my son
Condemn'd to bondage, and myself a slave;
Yet, in the midst of these unheard-of woes,
'Twas some relief to find myself your captive;
And that my son, deriv'd from ancient kings,
Since he must serve, had Pyrrhus for his master.
When Priam kneel'd, the great Achilles wept:
I hop'd I should not find his son less noble.
I thought the brave were still the more compas-
sionate.

Oh! do not, sir, divide me from my child!
If he must die—

Pyr. Phoenix, withdraw awhile. [*Exit Phoenix.*]
Rise, madam. Yet you may preserve your son.
I find, whenever I provoke your tears,
I furnish you with arms against myself.
I thought my hatred fix'd before I saw you.
Oh! turn your eyes upon me while I speak,
And see if you discover in my looks
An angry judge, or an obdurate foe.
Why will you force me to desert your cause?
In your son's name I beg we may be friends!
Think, oh! think,
('Tis the last time,) you both may yet be happy!
I know the ties I break, the foes I arm;
I wrong Hermione; I send her hence;
And with her diadem I bind your brows.
Consider well; for 'tis of moment to you.
Choose to be wretched, madam, or a queen.
I leave you to your thoughts. When I return,
We'll to the temple. There you'll find your son;
And there be crown'd, or give him up for ever.

[*Exit.*]
Ceph. I told you, madam, that in spite of
Greece,

You would o'errule the malice of your fortune.

Andro. Alas! Cephisa, what have I obtain'd?
Only a poor short respite for my son.

Ceph. You have enough approv'd your faith to
Hector;

To be reluctant still would be a crime.

He would himself persuade you to comply.

Andro. How! wouldst thou give me Pyrrhus for
a husband?

Ceph. Think you 'twill please the ghost of your
dead husband,

That you should sacrifice his son? Consider
Pyrrhus once more invites you to a throne;
Turns all his power against the foes of Troy,
Remembers not Achilles was his father,
Retracts his conquests, and forgets his hatred.

Andro. But how can I forget it? how can I
Forget my Hector, treated with dishonour,
Depriv'd of funeral rites, and vilely dragg'd,
A bloody corpse, about the walls of Troy?
Can I forget the good old king, his father,
Slain in my presence; at the altar slain;
Which vainly for protection he embrac'd?
Hast thou forgot that dreadful night, Cephisa,
When a whole people fell? Methinks I see
Pyrrhus, enrag'd, and breathing vengeance, enter
Amidst the glare of burning palaces:

I see him hew his passage through my brothers,
And, bath'd in blood, lay all my kindred waste.
Think, in this scene of horror, what I suffer'd!
This is the courtship I receiv'd from Pyrrhus;
And this the husband thou wouldst give me: No!
We both will perish first! I'll ne'er consent.

Ceph. Since you resolve Astyanax shall die,
Haste to the temple; bid your son farewell.—
Why do you tremble, madam?

Andro. Oh! Cephisa!

Thou hast awaken'd all the mother in me.

How can I bid farewell to the dear child,

The pledge, the image of my much-lov'd lord!

But, oh! while I deliberate, he dies.

No, no; thou must not die, while I can save thee:

Oh! let me find out Pyrrhus. Oh! Cephisa,
Do you go find him.

Ceph. What must I say to him?

Andro. Tell him I love my son to such excess—
But dost thou think he means the child shall die?
Can love rejected turn to so much rage?

Ceph. Madam, he'll soon be here. Resolve on
something.

Andro. Well, then, assure him—

Ceph. Madam, of your love?

Andro. Alas! thou know'st that is not in my
power.

Oh! my dear lord! Oh! Priam's royal house!

Oh! my Astyanax! at what a price

Thy mother buys thee!—Let us go.

Ceph. But whither?

And what does your unsettled heart resolve?

Andro. Come, my Cephisa, let us go together

To the sad monument which I have rais'd

To Hector's shade; where, in their sacred urn,

The ashes of my hero lie enclos'd,

The dear remains which I have sav'd from Troy;

There let me weep, there summon to my aid,

With pious rites, my Hector's awful shade;

Let him be witness to my doubts, my fears;

My agonizing heart, my flowing tears:

Oh! may he rise in pity from his tomb,

And fix his wretched son's uncertain doom.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Enter HERMIONE and CLONE.*

Cle. This unexpected silence, this reserve,
This outward calm, this settled frame of mind,
After such wrongs and insults, much surprise me;
You, who before could but command your rage,
When Pyrrhus look'd but kindly on his captive;
How can you bear unmov'd, that he should wed
her,

And seat her on a throne which you should fill?

'Twere better, madam—

Her. Have you call'd Orestes?

Cle. Madam, I have; his love is too impatient

Not to obey, with speed, the welcome summons.

His love-sick heart o'erlooks his unkind usage:

His ardour's still the same.—Madam, he's here.

Enter ORESTES.

Ores. Ah! madam, is it true? does then Orestes

At length attend you by your own commands?

What can I do?

Her. Orestes, do you love me?

Ores. What means that question, Princess? Do
I love you?

My oaths, my peijuries, my hopes, my fears,

My farewell, my return—all speak my love.

Her. Avenge my wrongs, and I'll believe them
all.

Ores. It shall be done. My soul has caught th'
alarm.

We'll spirit up the Greeks; I'll lead them on:

Your cause shall animate our fleets and armies.

Let us return; let us not lose a moment,

But urge the fate of this devoted land:

Let us depart.

Her. No, Prince, let us stay here!

I will have vengeance here; I will not carry

This load of infamy to Greece, nor trust

The chance of war to vindicate my wrongs.

Ere I depart, I'll make Epirus mourn.

If you avenge me, let it be this instant;

My rage brooks no delay; haste to the temple,

Haste, Prince, and sacrifice him.

Ores. Whom?

Her. Why, Pyrrhus.

Ores. Pyrrhus! Did you say Pyrrhus?

Her. You demur.

Oh! fly! begone! give me not time to think.

Talk not of laws—he tramples on all laws.

Let me not hear him justified—away!

Ores. You cannot think I'll justify my rival.

Madam, your love has made him criminal.

You shall have vengeance; I'll have vengeance, too:

But let our hatred be profess'd and open:
Let us alarm all Greece, denounce a war;
Let us attack him in his strength, and hunt him down

By conquest. Should I turn base assassin,
'Twould sully all the kings I represent.

Her. Have not I been dishonour'd, set at nought,

Expos'd to public scorn?—And will you suffer
The tyrant, who dares use me thus, to live?
Know, prince, I hate him more than once I lov'd him.

The gods alone can tell how once I lov'd him!
Yes, the false, perjurd man, I once did love him;
And, spite of all his crimes and broken vows,
If he should live, I may relapse—who knows
But I, to-morrow, may forgive his wrongs?

Ores. First, let me tear him piecemeal. He shall die.

But, madam, give me leisure to contrive
The place, the time, the manner of his death:
Yet I'm a stranger in the court of Pyrrhus;
Scarce have I set my foot within Epirus,
When you enjoin me to destroy the Prince.
It shall be done this very night.

Her. But now,
This very hour, he weds Andromache;
The temple shines with pomp, the golden throne
Is now prepar'd, the joyful rites begin;
My shame is public.—Oh! be speedy, prince;
My wrath's impatient—Pyrrhus lives too long!
Intent on love, and heedless of his person,
He covers, with his guards, the Trojan boy.
Now is the time; assemble all your Greeks;
Mine shall assist them; let their fury loose:
Already they regard him as a foe.

Begone, Orestes! kill the faithless tyrant:
My love shall recompense the glorious deed.

Ores. Consider, madam—

Her. You but mock my rage!
I was contriving how to make you happy.
Think you to merit by your idle sighs,
And not attest your love by one brave action?
Go, with your boasted constancy, and leave
Hermione to execute her own revenge.
I blush to think how my too easy faith
Has twice been baffled in one shameful hour!

Ores. Hear me but speak! You know I'll die to serve you!

Her. I'll go myself; I'll stab him at the altar;
Then drive the poniard, reeking with his blood,
Through my own heart. In death we shall unite.
Better to die with him, than live with you!

Ores. That were to make him bless'd, and me more wretched.

Madam, he dies by me! Have you a foe,
And shall I let him live? My rival, too!
Ere yon meridian sun declines, he dies;
And you shall say that I deserve your love.

Her. Go, prince; strike home! and leave the rest to me.

Let all your ships stand ready for our flight.

[Exit Orestes.]

Cle. Madam, you'll perish in this bold attempt.

Her. Give me my vengeance, I'm content, to perish.

I was to blame to trust it with another:
In my own hands it had been more secure.
Orestes hates not Pyrrhus as I hate him.
Oh! would Orestes, when he gives the blow,
Tell him he dies my victim! Haste, Cleone,
Charge him to say, Hermione's resentments,
Not those of Greece, have sentenc'd him to death.
Haste, my Cleone! My revenge is lost,
If Pyrrhus know not that he dies by me!

Cle. I shall obey your orders.—But I see
The king approach. Who could expect him here?

Her. Oh! fly, Cleone, fly! and bid Orestes
Not to proceed a step before I see him.

[Exit Cleone.]

Enter PYRRHUS.

Pyr. Madam, I ought to shun an injur'd princess.
Your distant looks reproach me; and I come
Not to defend, but to avow my guilt.
Pyrrhus will ne'er approve his own injustice,
Nor form excuses while his heart condemns him.
Discharge your anger on this perjurd man!
For I abhor my crime, and should be pleas'd
To hear you speak your wrongs aloud: no terms,
No bitterness of wrath, nor keen reproach,
Will equal half the upbraidings of my heart.

Her. I find, sir, you can be sincere: you scorn
To act your crimes with fear, like other men.
A hero should be bold, above all laws;
Be bravely false, and laugh at solemn ties.
To be perfidious shews a daring mind!
And you have nobly triumph'd o'er a maid!
To court me—to reject me—to return—
Then to forsake me for a Phrygian slave—
To lay proud Troy in ashes; then to raise
The son of Hector, and renounce the Greeks,
Are actions worthy the great soul of Pyrrhus!

Pyr. Madam, go on! Give your resentment birth,
And pour forth all your indignation on me.

Her. 'Twould please your queey, should I upbraid your falsehood;

Call you perfidious, traitor, all the names
That injur'd virgins lavish on your sex;
I should o'erflow with tears, and die with grief,
And furnish out a tale to sooth her pride;
But, sir, I would not overcharge her joys.
If you would charm Andromache, recount
Your bloody battles, your exploits, your slaughters,
Your great achievements in her father's palace.
She needs must love the man who fought so bravely,

And in her sight slew half her royal kindred!

Pyr. With horror I look back on my past deeds!
I punish'd Helen's wrongs too far; I shed
Too much of blood: but, madam, Helen's daughter
Should not object those ills the mother caus'd.
However, I'm pleas'd to find you hate me;
I was too forward to accuse myself;
The man who ne'er was lov'd, can ne'er be false.
Obedience to a father brought you hither;
And I stood bound by promise to receive you:
But our desires were different ways inclin'd;
And you, I own, were not oblig'd to love me.

Her. Have I not lov'd you, then? Perfidious man!

For you I slighted all the Grecian princes;
Forsook my father's house; conceal'd my wrongs,
When most provok'd; would not return to Sparta,
In hopes that time might fix your wavering heart.
I lov'd you when inconstant; and even now,
Inhuman king! that you pronounce my death,
My heart still doubts if I should love or hate you.
But, oh! since you resolve to wed another,
Defer your cruel purpose till to-morrow,
That I may not be here to grace your triumph!
This is the last request I e'er shall make you.
See, if the barbarous prince vouchsafes an answer!
Go, then, to the lov'd Phrygian; hence! begone!
And bear to her those vows that once were mine:
Go, in defiance to the avenging gods!
Begone! the priest expects you at the altar;
But, tyrant, have a care I come not thither! [Exit.]

Enter PHENIX.

Phœ. Sir, did you mind her threats? your life's in danger:

There is no trilling with a woman's rage.
The Greeks that swarm about the court, all hate you;

Will treat you as their country's enemy,
And join in her revenge: besides, Orestes
Still loves her to distraction. Sir, I beg—

Pyr. How, Phoenix, should I fear a woman's threats?

A nobler passion takes up all my thoughts:
I must prepare to meet Andromache.
Do thou place all my guards about her son:
If he be safe, Pyrrhus is free from fear. [Exit.]

Phœ. Oh! Pyrrhus, oh! what pity 'tis, the gods,
Who fill'd thy soul with every kingly virtue,
Form'd thee for empire and consummate greatness,
Should leave thee so expos'd to wild desires,
That hurry thee beyond the bounds of reason!
(*Flourish.*)

But, see, the queen,
Magnificent in royal pride, appears.
I must obey, and guard her son from danger. [Exit.]

Enter ANDROMACHE and CEPHISA.

**Ceph.* Madam, once more you look and move a queen.

Your sorrows are dispers'd, your charms revive,
And every faded beauty blooms anew.

Andro. Yet all is not as I could wish, Cephisa.

Ceph. You see the king is watchful o'er your son;

Decks him with princely robes, with guards surrounds him.

Astyanax begins to reign already.

Andro. Pyrrhus is nobly minded; and I fain

Would live to thank him for *Astyanax*:

'Tis a vain thought. However, since my child

Has such a friend, I ought not to repine.

Ceph. These dark unfoldings of your soul perplex me.

For heaven's sake, madam, let me know your griefs!

If you distrust my faith—

Andro. That were to wrong thee.

Oh! my Cephisa, this gay, borrow'd air,

This blaze of jewels, and this bridal dress,

Are but mock trappings to conceal my woe:

My heart still mourns; I still am Hector's widow.

Ceph. Will you, then, break the promise giv'n to Pyrrhus;

Blow up his rage again, and blast your hopes?

Andro. I thought, Cephisa, thou hadst known thy mistress.

Couldst thou believe I would be false to Hector?

Fall off from such a husband? break his rest,

And call him to this hated light again,

To see Andromache in Pyrrhus' arms?

Would Hector, were he living, and I dead,

Forget Andromache, and wed her foe?

Ceph. I cannot guess what drift your thoughts pursue;

But, oh! I fear there's something dreadful in it:

Must, then, *Astyanax* be doom'd to die,

And you to linger out a life in bondage?

Andro. Know, then, the secret purpose of my soul:

Andromache will not be false to Pyrrhus,

Nor violate her sacred love to Hector.

This hour I'll meet the king; the holy priest

Shall join us, and confirm our mutual vows.

This will secure a father to my child:

That done, I have no further use for life:

This pointed dagger, this determin'd hand,

Shall save my virtue, and conclude my woes.

Cephisa, thou

Wilt lend a hand to close thy mistress' eyes.

Ceph. Oh! never think that I will stay behind you.

Andro. No, my Cephisa, I must have thee live.

I must commit into thy faithful hands

All that is dear and precious to my soul.

Live, and supply my absence to my child;

All that remains of Troy; a future progeny

Of heroes, and a distant line of kings,

In him, is all intrusted to thy care.

Tell him my soul repos'd itself on him,
When I resign'd my son to his protection.

Ceph. Oh! for a spirit to support my grief!
Is there aught more, before you go for ever?

Andro. Oh! my Cephisa, my swoon heart is full!

I have a thousand farewells to my son—

But tears break in; grief interrupts my speech!

My soul o'erflows in fondness! Let him know

I died to save him, and would die again.

Season his mind with early hints of glory;

Make him acquainted with his ancestors;

Trace out their shining story in his thoughts;

Dwell on the exploits of his immortal father;

And sometimes let him hear his mother's name.

He must be taught to stifle his resentments,

And sacrifice his vengeance to his safety.

Should he prove headstrong, rash, or unadvis'd,

He then will frustrate all his mother's virtue,

Provoke his fate, and I shall die in vain.

Ceph. Alas! I fear I never shall outlive you!

Andro. No more; thy tears, Cephisa, will betray me.

Assume a cheerful look. But still remember—

(*Flourish within.*)

Hark how the trumpet, with its sprightly notes,

Proclaims th' appointed hour, and calls us hence!

Hector, I come once more a queen, to join thee!

Thus the gay victim, with fresh garlands crown'd,

Pleas'd with the sacred fire's enlivening sound,

Through gazing crowds, in solemn state proceeds,

And dress'd in fatal pomp, magnificently bleeds.
[Exit.]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Enter HERMIONE.*

Her. What have I done? Where am I? Where is Pyrrhus?

Ye gods! what mean these horrors? I'm undone!—

My soul is on the rack! I cannot bear it!

Why do I wander like some guilty ghost?

What brought me to this place? What keeps me here?

The court of Pyrrhus has no room for me!

Do I still doubt if I should love or hate him?

Hard-hearted man! how unconcern'd he left me!

Did he once sigh? bestow one pitying look?

Once shed a tear? or speak one soft, kind word?

Did he so much as feign one moment's sorrow,

To calm my grief, and mitigate his falsehood?

Why am I still thus anxious for his life?

Why do I start at his impending fate?

Shall he, then, live? Shall the base traitor live

To laugh at my distress? No, let him perish!

Be quick, Orestes! Execute my orders!

Alas! my orders! Oh! preposterous guilt!

Can I decree the death of him I love?

Was it for this my soul delighted in him?

Was it for this I left my father's court?

Have I, then, cross'd so many realms and seas

To murder Pyrrhus?

Enter CLEONE.

Oh! Cleone, help me!

What have I done? Is Pyrrhus yet alive?

What say'st thou? Answer me. Where is the king?

Cle. Madam, I saw the cruel prince set forward,
Triumphant in his looks, and full of joy.

Still as he walk'd, his ravi'd eyes were fix'd

On the fair captive, while through shouting crowds

She pass'd along with a dejected air,

And seem'd to mourn her Hector to the last.

Her. Insulting tyrant! I shall burst with rage!

But say, Cleone, didst thou mark him well?

Was his brow smooth? Say, did there not appear

Some shade of grief? some little cloud of sorrow?

Did he not stop? Did he not once look back?

Didst thou approach him? Was he not confounded?

Did he not—Oh! be quick, and tell me all!

Cle. Madam, the tumult of his joy admits

No thought but love. Unguarded, he march'd on,
'Midst a promiscuous throng of friends and foes;
His cares all turn upon Astyanax,
Whom he has lodg'd within the citadel,
Defended by the strength of all his guards.

Her. Enough! he dies! the traitor! Where's
Orestes?

Cle. He's in the temple, with his whole retinue.
Her. Is he still resolute? Is he still determin'd?

Cle. Madam, I fear—

Her. How? Is Orestes false?

Does he betray me, too?

Cle. A thousand doubts
Perplex his soul, and wound him with remorse;
His virtue and his love prevail by turns.
He told me Pyrrhus should not fall ignobly;
Pyrrhus, the warlike son of great Achilles.
He dreads the censure of the Grecian states,
Of all mankind, and fears to stain his honour.

Her. Poor tim'rous wretch! 'tis false! he basely
fears

To cope with dangers, and encounter death!
'Tis that he fears. Am I bright Helen's daughter?
To vindicate her wrongs all Greece conspir'd;
For her confederate nations fought, and kings were
slain;

Troy was o'erthrown, and a whole empire fell.
My eyes want force to raise a lover's arm
Against a tyrant that has dar'd to wrong me!

Cle. Madam, like Helen, trust your cause to
Greece.

Her. No; I'll avenge myself; I'll to the temple;
I'll overturn the altar, stab the priest;
I'll hurl destruction, like a whirlwind, round me!
They must not wed! they must not live! they
shall not!

Let me begone; I have no time to lose!
'Stand off! hold me not! I am all distraction!
Oh, Pyrrhus! tyrant! traitor! thou shalt bleed.

Enter ORESTES.

Ores. Madam, 'tis done; your orders are obey'd;
The tyrant lies expiring at the altar.

Her. Is Pyrrhus slain?

Ores. Even now he gasps in death.
Our Greeks, all undistinguish'd in the crowd,
Flock'd to the temple, and dispers'd themselves
On every side the altar. I was there:
Pyrrhus observ'd me with a haughty eye,
And, proud to triumph over Greece in me,
From his own brows he took the diadem,
And bound it on the temples of his captive.
"Receive," said he, "my crown; receive my
faith;

Mine and my people's sovereign reign for ever.
From this bless'd hour, a father to your son;
I'll scourge his foes. Henceforward, be he styl'd
The Trojan king: I swear it at the altar,
And call the gods to ratify my vows."
His subjects with loud acclamations shook
The spacious dome; our Greeks, enrag'd, cried
out,

"Revenge! revenge!" broke through the throng-
ing press,

And rush'd, tumultuous, on the unguarded king.
Pyrrhus, awhile, oppos'd their clashing swords,
And dealt his fatal blows on every side
With manly fierceness; till oppress'd by numbers,
Streaming with blood, all over gash'd with wounds,
He reel'd, he groan'd, and at the altar fell.
Haste, madam; let us fly! haste to our ships!
They lie unmoor'd; our friends attend us there.

Her. What have they done?

Ores. Madam, forgive their rage.
I own your vengeance had been more complete
Had Pyrrhus fall'n by me; and had he known
Hermione chastis'd him by my arm.

Her. Peace, monster, peace! Go tell thy horrid
tale

To savages, and howl it out in deserts.
Wouldst thou impute to me thy barbarous guilt?
Me wouldst thou make th' accomplice of thy
crimes?

Hence to thy Greeks, and boast thy foul exploits!

My soul abhors them! I disclaim the deed.

Begone! I know thee not, thou fell barbarian!

What had he done? What could provoke thy mad-
ness

To assassinate so great, so brave a man?

Who set thee on?

Ores. Oh! grant me patience, heaven!

With your own lips did you not curse the tyrant,
Pronounce his death, and urge me to destroy him?

Her. What if transported by my boundless pas-
sion,

I could not bear to see him wed another,
Were you t' obey a jealous woman's frenzy?

You should have divid'd into my inmost thoughts;

My heart, though full of rage, was free from mal-
ice;

And all my anger was excess of love.

Why did you take me at my word? You saw
The struggles of my soul; you heard me rave;
You should have question'd me a thousand times,
Yet still have doubted, and have question'd me
Before you ventur'd on a life so precious.

Ores. Hear me but speak. Heaven knows,
against my will—

Her. Why did you not return? Why not con-
sult me

A second time? and, undetermin'd still,

Again return, and still find new delays?

What had your rash, officious Greeks, dire blood-
hound—!

To do with my revenge? What drew you hither?

To bring on me the vengeful foes that haunt you?

Are these the fruits of your detested love?

Your fatal embassy, your hateful presence,

Drove Pyrrhus to my rival, and destroys

Both him and me. He might have lov'd me still,

Had you ne'er interpos'd. Avaunt! begone!

And leave me in Epirus. I renounce
My friends, my country, Greece, and all man-
kind;

But chiefly I renounce thee, monster, thee! [*Exit.*]

Ores. Am I awake? where am I? Soft, my soul;
Be not too rash. Was that Hermione?

Why should her anger thunder against me?

Was not this blood shed all by her command?

I am, indeed, a most outrageous monster!

A ruffian, murderer, a base assassin!

And all to please a false, ungrateful woman.

Henceforward, let the laws of nature cease;

And let the pale that severs right and wrong,

Things sacred and profane, be broken down:

Gods in their temples, kings upon their thrones,

Are not in safety while Orestes lives.

Oh! never more shall my torn mind be heal'd,

Nor taste the gentle comforts of repose!

A dreadful band of gloomy cares surround me,

And lays strong siege to my distracted soul.

Enter PYLADES, attended by Greeks.

Pyl. Haste, prince; let us be gone: 'tis death
to stay.

Andromache reigns queen: she gives the alarm,

And vows revenge upon the foes of Pyrrhus.

The people arm, and muster in the streets.

Our Greeks will not be able long to guard

The palace gates, and to secure our flight.

We must be speedy, sir.

Ores. You may depart,

My friends: Hermione and I remain.

Her cruelty has quite undone me. Go!

Pyl. Alas! unhappy princess! she's no more.

Ores. Hermione no more! Oh! all ye powers!

Pyl. Full of disorder, wildness in her looks,

With hands expanded, and dishevell'd hair,
Breathless and pale with shrieks, she sought the temple;

In the midway, she met the corpse of Pyrrhus:
She started at the sight; then, stiff with horror,
Gaz'd frightful! Waken'd from the dire amaze,
She rais'd her eyes to heaven with such a look
As spoke her sorrows, and reproach'd the gods;
Then plung'd a poniard deep within her breast,
And fell on Pyrrhus, grasping him in death.

Ores. I thank you, gods! I never could expect
To be so wretched! You have been industrious
To finish your decrees; to make Orestes
A dreadful instance of your power to punish.
I'm singled out to bear the wrath of heaven.

Pyl. You hazard your retreat by these delays.
The guards will soon beset us. Your complaints
Are vain, and may be fatal.

Ores. True, my friend;
And, therefore, 'twas I thank'd the bounteous
gods.

My fate's accomplish'd; I shall die content.
Oh! bear me hence. Blow winds!

Pyl. Let us be gone.

Ores. The murder'd lovers wait me. Hark! they
call.

Nay, if your blood still reek, I'll mingle mine:
One tomb will hold us all.

Pyl. Alas! I fear
His raving will return with his misfortunes.

Ores. I am dizzy! Clouds! Quite lost in utter
darkness!

Guide me, some friendly pilot, through the storm!
I shiver! oh! I freeze! So—light returns,
'Tis the grey dawn. See, Pylades! behold
I am compass'd with a sea of blood!

The crimson billows! Oh! my brain's on fire!

Pyl. How is it, sir? Repose yourself on me.

Ores. Pyrrhus, what wouldst thou? How he
glares!

What envious hand has clos'd thy wounds? Have
" at thee!

It is Hermione that strikes. Confusion!

She catches Pyrrhus in her arms. Oh! save
me!

How terrible she looks! She knits her brow!
She frowns me dead! she frights me into mad-
ness!

Where am I? Who are you?

Pyl. Alas! poor prince!

Help to support him! How he pants for breath!

Ores. This is most kind, my Palades. Oh!
why,

Why was I born to give thee endless trouble?

Pyl. All will go well: he settles into reason.

Ores. Who talks of reason? Better to have
none,

Than not enough. Run, some one, tell my Greeks
I will not have them touch the king. Now, now!
I blaze again! See there—look where they come—
A shoal of furies! How they swarm about me?

My terror—hide me—Oh! their snake locks—
Hark, how they hiss—see, see their flaming
brands!

Now they let drive at me! How they grin,
And shake their iron whips! My ears—what
yelling—

And see Hermione she sets them on.
Thrust not your scorpions thus into my bosom!
Oh! I am stung to death! Despatch me soon!
There—take my heart, Hermione! tear it out!
Disjoin me! kill me! Oh! my tortur'd soul!

Pyl. Kind heaven, restore him to his wonted
calm!

Oft have I seen him rave, but never thus.
Quite spent! Assist me, friends, to bear him off.
Our time is short. Should his strong rage return,
'Twould be beyond our power to force him hence.
Away, my friends! I hear the portal open.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter PHENIX, attended by Guards.

Pha. All, all are fled! Orestes is not here!
Triumphant villains! The base, giddy rabble,
Whose hands should all have been employ'd with
fire,

To waste the fleet, flock'd round the dying prin-
cess:

And, while they stand agaze, the Greeks embark.
Oh! 'tis too plain; this sacrilegious murder
Was authoriz'd. The ambassador's escape
Declares his guilt. Most bloody embassy!
Most unexampled deeds! Where, where, ye
gods!

Is majesty secure, if in your temples
You give it no protection?—See, the queen.

*A flourish of trumpets. Enter ANDROMACHE and
CEPHISA, with Attendants.*

Andro. Yes, ye inhuman Greeks! the time will
come

When you shall dearly pay your bloody deeds!
How should the Trojans hope for mercy from you,
When thus you turn your impious rage on Pyr-
rhus?

Pyrrhus, the bravest man in all your league;
The man, whose single valour made you triumph.
(*A dead march behind.*)

Is my child there?

Ceph. It is the corpse of Pyrrhus;
The weeping soldiers bear him on their shields.

Andro. Ill-fated prince! too negligent of life,
And too unwary of the faithless Greeks!
Cut off in the fresh rip'ning prime of manhood,
E'en in the prime of life! thy triumphs new,
And all thy glories in full blossom round thee!
The very Trojans would bewail thy fate.

Ceph. Alas! then will your sorrows never end?

Andro. Oh! never, never! While I live, my
tears

Will never cease; for I was born to grieve.

Give present orders for the funeral pomp.
(*To Phenix.*)

Let him be rob'd in all his regal state;
Place round him every shining mark of honour:
And let the pile that consecrates his ashes,
Rise like his fame, and blaze above the clouds.

[*Exit Phenix. A flourish of trumpets.*]

Ceph. The sound proclaims th' arrival of the
Prince:

The guards conduct him from the citadel.

Andro. With open arms I'll meet him! Oh! Ce-
phisa,

A springing joy, mix'd with a soft concern,
A pleasure which no language can express,
An ecstasy that only mothers feel,
Plays round my heart, and brightens up my sorrow,
Like gleams of sunshine in a low'ring sky.

Though plung'd in ills, and exercis'd in care,

Yet never let the noble mind despair.

When press'd by dangers, and beset with foes,

The gods their timely succour interpose;

And when our virtue sinks, o'erwhelm'd with
grief,

By unforeseen expedients bring relief. [*Exeunt.*]

ANIMAL MAGNETISM;

A FARCE, IN THREE ACTS.—BY MRS. INCHBALD.



Act III.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

MARQUIS DE LANCY
DOCTOR
LA FLEUR

JEFFREY
PICCARD
FRANCOIS

CONSTANCE
LISETTE
SERVANTS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Doctor's house.*

Enter CONSTANCE, hastily, meeting LISETTE.

Con. Lisette, Lisette! who do you think I have just seen?

Lis. Your old guardian, I suppose.

Con. Do you think I should look thus pleasant, if it were him I meant?

Lis. Who, then? our gaoler, who keeps the keys?

Con. What, poor Jeffrey? Ha, ha, ha! How you talk!

Lis. No, no; I guess who you mean: the young Marquis De Lancy; and he has passed so frequently under your window, within these few days, that I am amazed your guardian, with all his suspicions, has not observed him.

Con. He has walked by above ten times within this hour, and every time with his eye fixed up to the lattice of my window, and I had no heart to remove from it, for every time he saluted me with a most respectful bow.

Lis. Was his valet with him?

Con. No; but I saw another person in deep conversation with him; a strange-looking man, who appeared like one of the faculty, for his dress very much resembled that of my guardian's.

Lis. Who could it be?

Con. But what most surprised me, he had a let-

ter in his hand, which he respectfully held up to me, but I could not reach it.

Lis. I know who it is: La Fleur, valet to the Marquis, disguised as a doctor; and I have no doubt, but, under that disguise, he will find means to introduce himself to your old guardian, and, perhaps, be brought into the very house; and if I can assist his scheme, I will; for is it not a shame, the Doctor should dare, here in Paris, to forbid you and your servant to stir from home; look us up, and treat us as women are treated in Spain?

Con. Never mind, Lisette, don't put yourself in a passion; for we can learn to plot and deceive, and treat him as men are treated in Spain.

Lis. Right, madam; and to prove I am not less inclined than yourself to Spanish manners, I am as much in love as you are.

Con. Not with the Marquis?

Lis. Do you think I don't know better where it is my duty to love? I am in love with his man.

Con. I wish I knew the contents of that letter he held out to me.

Lis. That you are beloved—admired; I can tell every word in it; I know every sentence as well as if I had read it; and now, madam, it is my advice you sit down and answer it directly.

Con. Before I have read it?

Lis. Yes, yes; give your answer at the time you receive his letter; consider how convenient it will be to give the one, while you take the other: we are so watched, you know, that we ought to let no

opportunity pass, for fear we should never get another; and, therefore, when he finds means to send his letter, you must take the same to return your's.

Con. But if my guardian should ever know I had written to a gentleman—

Lis. I'll write for you: and, should there be any discovery, the letter will be in my hand-writing, not your's. We must lose no time; the Doctor is abroad at present, and it must be both written and delivered before his return. (*Goes to the table, and writes.*)

Con. But, my dear Lisette—

Lis. Don't put me out.

Con. What are you saying?

Lis. (*Writing.*) What you are thinking.

Con. You don't know my thoughts.

Lis. I do. And here they are, in this letter.

Con. Let me look at it.

Lis. No, don't examine your thoughts, I beg you won't: (*folds the letter*) besides, you have no time to read it; I must run to the garden-gate and deliver it immediately. The worst difficulty is having, for near an hour, to supplicate this poor, simple, decrepit fool of the old Doctor's to open me the garden-gate for a moment. Jeffrey!

Con. The Doctor has lately appointed Jeffrey his apothecary; he is busy preparing of medicines, and will be angry at being disturbed.

Lis. No matter; it may save the life of some of his master's patients.

Enter JEFFREY, *with a bandage on his left eye, and one on his right leg.*

Jef. You made me overthrow the whole decoration.

Lis. Great apothecary!

Con. And alone worthy the physician under whom you have received instructions!

Jef. I am very sorry I overthrew the decoction, for it was for my use: my leg is in pain still, and I am not yet satisfied that the dog was not mad.

Lis. I tell you, I am sure he was not; and, had you suffered him to live, it would have proved so.

Jef. My master ordered me to kill him.

Lis. Merely to make you believe he was mad, and to shew his skill by pretending to preserve you from the infection.

Jef. Nay, don't speak against my master.

Lis. Who was it undertook to cure your eyes?

Jef. He; and, thank heaven, Lisette, I shall not suffer any more from that!

Lis. Why, then, do you wear a bandage?

Jef. To hide the place where it was.

Lis. And is it thus the Doctor cured you?

Jef. He was so kind to put my left eye out, in order to save the right.

Con. Well, still you are more fortunate than the god of Love; for he has no eyes at all.

Jef. And I shall have two, very soon; for my master has promised to buy me one at the great manufactory, which will be much handsomer than either of my other—a very handsome glass one.

Lis. And if the Doctor will remake you thus, piece by piece, in time, my dear Jeffrey, you may become a very pretty man: but you know, Jeffrey, I love you even as you are.

Jef. Love me! that's a good joke. Lisette, I am afraid you want something of me, you speak to me so pleasantly.

Lis. Want something of you! How could such an idea enter your head?

Jef. Because when you don't want something of me, you huff me and cuff me from morning to night, eh? you look no more as you do now. Why, if I were dying, I durst hardly speak to you.

Lis. Well, henceforward, you shall have no reason to complain. But do you know, Jeffrey, I have a little favour to ask of you.

Jef. Ay, I thought so.

Con. My dear Jeffrey, we will make you any recompence.

Jef. What is it you want? If I can do it without offending my master, I will.

Lis. If you don't tell him, he'll never know it.

Jef. But I tell him everything; he pays me my wages for telling, and I must not take them without earning them.

Con. If money be of such value to you, here, take my purse.

Jef. No; it is not money I want, it is something else.

Lis. What, what, then?

Jef. Oh! Mrs. Lisette, you know what I want, but you always denied me.

Lis. Pshaw! if I could grant it, indeed, without my master knowing it—

Jef. Oh! I won't tell him of that, I protest.

Con. Well, Jeffrey, what is your favour?

Jef. Just one salute of Mrs. Lisette.

Lis. Oh! if that's all, after you have obliged us, you shall have twenty.

Jef. But I had rather have one now, than the twenty you promise after.

Lis. Come, then, make haste, if it must be so.

Jef. (*Salutes her.*) Oh! the first kiss of the girl one loves is so sweet!

Lis. Now you are ready to comply with our request?

Jef. Tell me what it is?

Lis. To give us the key of the garden-gate.

Jef. I am very sorry I can't oblige you.

Lis. Why not?

Jef. For several reasons.

Lis. Tell me one.

Jef. In the first place, I have not got the key—my master took it with him when he went out.

Lis. You know you tell a falsehood: he has not got it. Is this your bargain and your gratitude?

Jef. Nay, if you are angry at that, give me the kiss again.

Lis. Ugly, foolish, yet artful and cunning wretch! leave the room. You make love to me, indeed! Why, I always hated you, laughed at you, and despised you.

Jef. I know that. Did not I tell you, when you spoke so kindly to me, you wanted something? how, then, could you expect me to oblige you?

Lis. I shall ever detest the sight of you.

Jef. Unless you want something, and then you'll call me again—and then I shall kiss you again. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit, shewing the key.*]

Lis. I never was so provoked in my life.

Con. My dear Lisette, if our two lovers, the Marquis and his servant, prove no more fortunate in their schemes, than we have been in ours, I fear I must, according to his desire, marry the Doctor, and you Jeffrey.

Lis. I marry Jeffrey! Here comes the Doctor.

Enter DOCTOR.

Doc. What an indignity! I can't put up with it; I can't bear it; I'm ready to choke with passion!

Con. Dear sir, what is the matter?

Doc. I am disgraced, ruined, undone!

Con. And what has caused it, sir?

Doc. A conspiracy of the blackest kind. Man's weakness has arrived to its highest summit; and there is nothing wanting but merit to draw upon us the most cruel persecution.

Lis. Ah! I understand: the faculty have been conspiring against you.

Doc. They have refused to grant me a diploma; forbid me to practise as a physician; and all because I don't know a parcel of insignificant words, but exercise my profession according to the rules of reason and nature. Is it not natural to die? Then,

f a dozen or two of my patients have died under my hands, is not that natural?

Lis. Very natural, indeed.

Doc. But, thank heaven! in spite of the scandalous reports of my enemies, I have, this morning, nine visits to make.

Con. Very true, sir: a young ward has sent for you, to attend his guardian; three nephews have sent for you, to attend their uncles, very rich men; and five husbands have sent for you, in great haste, to attend their wives.

Doc. And is not that a sign they think what I can do? Is it not a sign they have the highest opinion of my skill? And the faculty shall see I will rise superior to their machinations. I have entered upon a project that, I believe, will tease them: I have made overtures to one of their professed enemies, a man whom they have crushed, and who is the chief of a sect just sprung up; of which, perhaps, you never heard; or, simply, by the power of magnetism, they can cure any ill, or inspire any passion.

Con. Is it possible?

Doc. Yes; and every effect is produced upon the frame merely by the power of the magnet, which is held in the hand of the physician, as a wand of a conjurer is held in his; and it produces wonders in physic, equally surprising.

Con. And will you become of this new sect?

Doc. If they will receive me; and, by this time, the president has, I dare say, received my letter, and I wait impatiently for an answer.

Enter JEFFREY.

Jef. A doctor, at the door, desires to speak with

Doc. A doctor in my house! [you.]

Lis. I dare say it is the magnetising doctor you have been writing to.

Doc. Very likely; I dare say 'tis Doctor Mystery; shew him in, Jeffrey.

Jef. Please to walk this way, sir. [Exit.]

Enter LA FLEUR, dressed as a doctor.

La F. Doctor, I hope I have your pardon, that, though no farther acquaintance than by letter, I thus wait upon you to pay my respects—

Con. (*To Lis.*) It is the same I saw with the Marquis.

Lis. (*Aside.*) And it is La Fleur, his valet.

La F. And to assure you, that I, and all my brethren, have the highest respect for your talents, and shall be happy to have you a member of our society.

Doc. I presume, sir, you are Doctor Mystery, author and first discoverer of that healing and sublime art, Animal Magnetism.

La F. I am.

Doc. And it will render you immortal: my curiosity to become acquainted with the forms and effects of your power is scarcely to be repressed a moment. Will you indulge me with the smallest specimen of your art, just to satisfy my curiosity?

La F. You are, then, entirely ignorant of it?

Doc. Entirely.

La F. And so am I. (*Aside.*) Hem—hem! you must know, Doctor—

Doc. Shall I send the women out of the room?

La F. By no means; no, no; but I will shew both you and them a specimen of my art directly. You know, Doctor, there is an universal fluid, which spreads throughout all nature.

Doc. A fluid?

La F. Yes, a fluid—which is—a fluid—and you know, Doctor, that this fluid—generally called a fluid—is the most subtle of all—that is, the most subtle. Do you understand me?

Doc. Yes, yes.

La F. It ascends on high, (*looking down*) and descends on low; (*looking up*) penetrates all sub-

stances, from the hardest metal to the softest bosom—you understand me, I perceive?

Doc. Not very well.

La F. I will give you a simile, then.

Doc. I shall be much obliged to you.

La F. This fluid is like a river—you know what a river is?

Doc. Yes, certainly.

La F. This fluid is like a river, that—that runs—that goes—that gently glides—so—so—so—while there is nothing to stop it; but if it encounter a mound, or any other impediment—boo—boo—boo—it bursts forth—it overflows the country round—throws down villages, hamlets, houses, trees, cows, and lambs; but remove obstacles which obstruct its course, and it begins again, softly and sweetly, to flow, thus—thus—thus—the fields are again adorned, and everything goes on, as well as it can go on. Thus it is with the animal fluid, which fluid obeys the command of my art.

Doc. Surprising art! But what are the means you employ?

La F. Merely gestures, or a simple touch.

Doc. Astonishing! give me some proof of your art directly; do satisfy my curiosity.

La F. I will; and by holding up ~~this wand~~, in which is a magnet, in a particular position, I will so direct the fluid, that it shall immediately give you the most excruciating rheumatism, which will last you a couple of hours. I will then change it to the gout; then to strong convulsions; and after, into a raging fever; and in this manner shall your curiosity become satisfied. (*Holds up his wand as if to magnetise.*)

Doc. Hold, Doctor! I had rather see the experiment on some one else.

La F. Oh! then, sir, I have now at my house, a patient whom the faculty have just given up as incurable; and notwithstanding his disorder is of a most violent and dangerous kind, I will have him brought here, and I will teach you to perform his cure yourself.

Doc. By the power of magnetism?

La F. By the power of magnetism.

Doc. That would do me infinite honour, indeed: but why bring him to my house? pray, who is he?

La F. A young man of quality.

Con. Dear sir, let him be brought hither, and let me see the cure performed.

Doc. (*Takes La F. aside.*) I can't say I approve of a young man being brought into my house; for you must know, Doctor, that young lady is to be my wife: as we are not exactly of an age, another may make an impression.

La F. Consider my patient's state of health; he is like a dying man.

Doc. But he'll be well after I have cured him.

La F. Very true. (*Doctor whispers La F.*) True; certainly it is. (*They whisper again.*)

Con. Why this whispering? I am ignorant what are the virtues of your art, Doctor; but I am sure it has not that of rendering you polite.

La F. Pardon, madam; I was but instructing the Doctor in some particulars of which you may hereafter have reason to be satisfied.

Lis. I doubt that, sir; unless your art could render this solitary confinement we are doomed to, agreeable.

La F. Before the end of the day, you shall prefer it to all the false pleasures of the gay world; for what are more false than the pleasures derived from bills, masquerades, and theatres?

Doc. Very true.

Lis. Well, I must own I love a theatre.

La F. The worst place of all, to frequent; once in my life I was present at a theatrical representation; but such a piece did I see!—ah! the most dangerous for a young woman to be present at.

Lis. Pray, sir, what was it?

La F. An honest gentleman, of about seventy years of age, was before the audience in love with a young lady of eighteen, whom he had brought up from her infancy, and whom he meant to make his wife.

Doc. Very natural.

La F. A young gentleman of the neighbourhood, because he was young, rich, and handsome, imagined he would suit the lady better.

Doc. Just like them all.

La F. He, therefore, disguised his valet, who, under the mask of friendship, introduced himself to this good man, the guardian.

Doc. A villain! he deserved to be hanged.

La F. And seized the moment when he embraced him, as I now embrace you, to stretch out his hand, while it was behind him, and convey a letter to the lady's waiting-maid. (*Embraces the Doctor, and exchanges letters with Lisette; Lisette gives the letter she receives to Constance; La Fleur puts the other into his pocket.*)

Lis. And she gave him another. I have seen the play myself; and it was very well acted. (*Retires.*)

La F. And is it not scandalous to put such examples before young people?

Con. And pray, Doctor, do you think I am not under sufficient confinement, that you take the same methods to make me still more unhappy.

La F. (*To the Doctor.*) Why does your ward dislike confinement?

Doc. Because she dislikes me.

La F. Are you sure of that?

Doc. Yes, I think I am.

Con. I am dying with curiosity to read my letter.

[Aside, and exit.

La F. This wand shall cause in her sentiments the very reverse. In this is a magnet which shall change her disposition. Take it, (*gives the wand*) and, while you keep it, she will be constrained to love you with the most ardent passion.

Doc. I thank you a thousand times.

Lis. Excellent!

[Exit.

Doc. Her maid has overheard us.

La F. No, no; but take me into another apartment, and I will explain to you what, at present, you are not able to comprehend: after which, you will permit me to step home, and fetch my patient hither.

Doc. Certainly: when I am in possession of my ward's affection, I can have nothing to apprehend from him. And you are sure she will now become favourable to me? You are sure I shall attract her?

La F. Yes, sure—by the loadstone. *[Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Another Apartment in the Doctor's house.*

Enter LISETTE and CONSTANCE.

Lis. I overheard it all; and he has given your guardian the wand in which you heard him say the magnet was contained; and while he keeps it, it is to magnetise you, and force you to love him in spite of yourself.

Con. All this agrees with the letter he has given me from his master, in which the Marquis informs me by what accident that letter my guardian sent to the doctor who professes magnetism, fell into his hands, and immediately gave him the idea of disguising his valet, and sending him hither under the name of that doctor. But where is La Fleur now?

Lis. Just left your guardian, and gone home to bring the patient you heard him speak of; and I would lay a wager, that very patient is no other than the Marquis himself.

Con. But for what end is all this?

Lis. That they have planned, you may depend upon it. For the present, you have nothing to do but to pretend an affection for your guardian.

Con. It will be difficult to feign a passion my heart revolts at.

Lis. Never fear your good acting: besides, I will take an equal share in it.

Con. How? you!

Lis. I'll fall in love with the Doctor as well as you. If the magnetism affect you, why not have the same power over me? and if it make you love him, it shall make me adore him.

Con. Hush! here he comes. (*They retire.*)

Enter DOCTOR, with the wand.

Doc. (*Aside.*) What he has told seems so very surprising, that nothing but proofs can thoroughly convince me; and now for the proof. (*Looks at Constance.*)

Lis. (*Aside to Con.*) He ogles you; cast a tender look, and accompany it with a sigh.

Con. (*Sighing.*) Alas!

Doc. My dear Constance, my lovely ward, what—what makes you sigh? Weariness of your confinement, I suppose?

Con. (*Sighing.*) Ah! sir.

Doc. Come, come; I confess, the restraint you have been under has been too much, and I am not surprised you have taken a dislike to me.

Con. A dislike to you! Ah, sir! (*Sighing.*) Oh! guardian! (*Going to speak, turns away, and hides her face.*)

Doc. (*Aside.*) I believe it will do. Come, come, Constance, do not sigh and make yourself uneasy; you shall not live many weeks thus retired, for I am thinking of marrying you very soon (*she turns eagerly to him*) to a fine young gentleman. (*She turns away from him.*)

Con. Ah! cruel.

Doc. What did you say? If I have the good fortune to be beloved by you, let me have the happiness to hear it from yourself.

Con. Yes, cruel man! some invincible power compels me, in spite of my resistance. Yes, I love you.

Lis. And I adore you.

Doc. What, you, too? I did not expect that.

Lis. No, mine is not merely a love, but a rage—a violence—I doat to distraction—love you to the loss of my health, of spirits, of rest and life.

Con. If you do not take pity on the passion which burns in my heart—

Lis. If you can be regardless of the flames which consume me with violence—

Con. Can you be insensible of my tender pleadings?

Lis. Take care how you turn my affection to hatred.

Doc. (*Aside.*) What a terrible situation I have got myself into! the effect of the magnetism is very natural; it acts upon one as well as another; but Lisette's love is very troublesome. I'll call Jeffrey in, and give up part of my power to him; he will take the wand for a few minutes, and charm Lisette.

Con. Why do you thus run from me? Is this the return my love demands? But be not uneasy; death shall deliver you from an object, whose passion you despise.

Doc. Oh! that you could but read what is written in my heart!

Lis. Ah! sir, behold the state (*kneels*) to which you have reduced a poor innocent. If I am treated with kindness, I am naturally soft, gentle, and tender; but, if I am neglected, (*rising*) by all that's great and precious, I will do some strange thing either to you or my rival!

Doc. This Lisette is so furious, she makes me tremble; I must put an end to her affection. (*Aside.*) Jeffrey!

Enter JEFFREY.

Jef. Here, sir; what do you want with me?

Doc. Take this, and carry it to my study. (*Gives the wand.*)

Jef. Yes, sir; directly.

Doc. Stop a moment, Jeffrey; stop a moment!

Jef. Two or three moments, if you please.

Doc. (*Aside.*) Now we shall see what effect it has.

Lis. (*To Con.*) I see through this design; let us fall in love with Jeffrey.

Con. With all my heart.

Doc. Well, Jeffrey—and—and how do you do, Jeffrey?

Jef. Pretty well, considering my leg, where the dog bit me, and considering I can only see with one eye.

Lis. But even that misfortune does not prevent your looking very agreeable, Jeffrey.

Doc. (*Aside.*) It succeeds; she is taken.

Jef. What are you beginning to laugh at me again?

Lis. Laugh at you! No, Jeffrey. I now wonder how it was possible I should ever laugh at you: how becoming is that bandage! and the eye we do see has a thousand times more bewitching charms for the absence of that we do not. Dear madam, only observe him.

Con. Who can resist that amiable figure, dearest Jeffrey?

Jef. Ha, ha, ha!

Doc. (*Aside.*) This is as bad as the other.

Jef. I think the mad dog has bit us all.

Lis. Is it possible you can love Jeffrey? No, no; your situation forbids it. Take, take my master; I resign him to you.

Con. No, I resign him to you.

Lis. I will not have him.

Doc. This is a very disagreeable situation.

Lis. Jeffrey, will you be deaf to my passion?

Con. Yes, I'm sure he will prefer me.

Jef. No, I won't: I have been in love with her this twelvemonths, and I'll make choice of her.

Con. Then what will become of me?

Doc. I can bear this no longer. Give me that; (*snatches the wand;*) and do you make up some medicines.

Jef. Ah! my dear Lisette, you have made me so happy, I must shake hands. (*Offers to take her hand, she slaps his face.*)

Lis. Learn to behave with more reserve for the future.

Jef. Ecod! I think you have not behaved with much reserve. Did you not hang upon me, and say you loved me!

Lis. Love you! Behold my master, and do not imagine I can love any but him.

Con. No; who can love any but him?

Doc. This is worse and worse! Where is the Doctor? If he do not come, and give me some relief, I am a ruined man. (*Loud knocking.*) Jeffrey, see if that is him. [*Exit Jeffrey.*] I have no doubt but it is; and with him the young patient, on whom I am to prove my skill. Constance, and you, Lisette, leave the room for the present.

Con. Yes, if you will go with me. But how do you think it is possible for me to leave you? A feeling, which I cannot explain—

Lis. And one I cannot explain—

Doc. But I am going to prescribe, and it is improper.

Enter LA FLEUR, leading the MARQUIS DE LANCY, dressed in a handsome robe-de-chambre.

La F. This, Doctor, is your patient. This is the renowned physician, from whom you are to expect a cure.

Doc. He looks surprisingly well, considering how much he has suffered.

La F. That renders his case the more dangerous. I would rather a patient of mine should look ill, and be in no danger, than look well, and be in imminent danger.

Mar. To conceive the sufferings I have undergone, a being must be transformed! he must be more, before he can conceive what I have felt: for months have I led this agonizing life! But I am told, Doctor, you can put an end to my disorder; you have, in your possession, that which can give me ease; but by what science you are master of so great a power, I own, is beyond my comprehension.

La F. Dear sir, you know not all the resources in the art of medicine; trust firmly, that you are in the hands of persons well informed and well practised. We know how to give nature a fillip.

Doc. Doctor Mystery, do you use your authority with these females, to leave us to ourselves.

Con. I can't go.

Lis. Nor I.

La F. I believe it is very true. (*Feels their pulse.*) No, they can't go; no, the force of the attraction will not suffer them to go.—(*To Doctor.*) What do you think of the power of magnetism now?

Doc. It has double the power I desire, and I wish it not to act on Lisette. [*ill.*]

Con. (*To Lis.*) I hope the Marquis is not really

La F. I will remedy that. (*Whispers to the Doctor, while the Marquis makes signs of love to Constance.*) Now attend to what I am going to do; I'll turn the whole affection of the maid upon myself.

Doc. I will be very much obliged to you. (*La Fleur whispers to the Doctor again.*)

Mar. (*Apart to Constance.*) One word only:—will you be mine, should my scheme prove successful?

Con. What is it? [*ful?*]

Mar. I have no time to say—but answer me, will you be mine?

Con. I will.

Doc. (*Apart to La Fleur.*) Very well, extremely well; this will do very well; and now deliver me from her love as soon as you can.

La F. I must approach her, and 'tis done. (*Goes to Lisette, makes signs of magnetism, and speaks apart.*) I am in love with you, feign to be so with Lis. I am in earnest, without feigning. [*me.*]

La F. So much the better; it will appear more natural.—(*To the Doctor.*) It's done; observe how she looks at me.

Doc. What an art!

La F. But I will shew its power in a manner yet more astonishing.

Con. (*Apart to the Marquis.*) I was on the point of being married to my guardian.

Doc. Is it possible?

Mar. (*Forgetting himself, and in warmth.*) Distraction! that must never be! (*Doctor turns to him in surprise, Lisette perceives it.*)

Lis. Oh, heavens! look to the patient.

La F. One of his fits has seized him.—(*Marquis pretends a fit.*) But it's nothing; it will soon be over.

Mar. Nay, do not hide yourself. Oh! oh! that I could plunge this steel (*holds up his handkerchief*) a hundred times in that detestable heart. Come on, monster, and acknowledge thy conqueror, expiring under this hand.

Doc. I'll go into the next room. It is me, I believe, he is going to kill.

La F. But he has no weapon; don't be afraid.

Con. (*To La F.*) Oh! dear sir, relieve him from this terrible fit.

Doc. Do; I beg you will.

La F. I cannot wholly relieve him at present; but you shall see me change the manner of his raving. Behold my power! (*Pretends to magnetise.*) See, his countenance changes; his looks express tenderness. Now it is no longer fury that transports him; but the soft languor of love now pervades his senses.

Mar. (*Looking at Constance.*) Oh! charming Arpasia!

La F. Arpasia was the name of his first love: he fancies himself near to her. (*The Marquis kneels to Constance.*)

Mar. Is it you, then, whom I behold? But, alas! you do not suspect what I have suffered in your absence; and I only retain my life, in the pleasing hope of one day passing it with you, and rendering yours as happy as my own. What am I to think of this silence? You do not answer to my tender complaints. Ah! you hate me, you despise me! But dread the effects of this contempt; I feel it is in my power to accomplish all. (*Rising.*)

Lis. He is going into his raving fit again. Pray, madam, speak to him, if it be but a word.

Mar. Speak to me one word, if it be only one word!

La F. Your ward is afraid of disobliging you; but give her leave to speak to him, if it be but one word, only to be witness to a scene so nouvelle.

Doc. But, harkye!

La F. Psha, psha! She looks at you for consent: tell her, she may say yes—just yes.

Doc. But why suffer her to speak?

La F. Consider you are in possession of the magnet, and nothing can prevent the power of that charm.

Mar. Ah! cruel! Ought I thus to wait for a word from those lips? You wish, then, to behold me die?

Doc. Well, well; answer him, yes.

Mar. Do you love me?

Con. Yes.

Mar. (*Kisses her hand.*) I am transported!

Doc. (*Endeavouring to separate them.*) Hold, hold! This is a fit as powerful to me as it is to you.

Lis. Dear sir, let him alone; he may fall into his rage again.

Mar. What thrilling transport rushes to my heart! all nature appears to my ravished eyes more beautiful than poets ever formed! Aurora dawns; the feathered songsters chant their most melodious strains; the gentle zephyrs breathe their choicest perfumes, and the inspiring scene intoxicates my very soul!

Doc. Come, change this fit into another.

Mar. And you, who listen to me, partake my joy. Come and dwell with me under the shady branches of the river-side. Come, lovely shepherdess; (*takes hold of Constance;*) come, young shepherd; (*takes hold of the Doctor;*) mingle in the dance.

Lis. Come, young shepherd. (*Takes hold of the Doctor with one hand, and La Fleur with the other.*)

Doc. I can't dance.

Mar. In vain you refuse. Pass, with gentle steps, the mossy banks, and join in the rural pastime.

[*They all dance.—Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Doctor's house.*

Enter LISETTE and LA FLEUR.

Lis. But when is this farce to end?

La F. My master, now he is introduced, will take advantage of some circumstances, to obtain, either by force or stratagem, the Doctor's consent to his wishes; and as he finds he is beloved by the young lady, which, before, he was in doubt of—

Lis. Psha! he might easily have guessed her sentiments. A young woman, weary of confinement as she was, is easily in love with the first young man who solicits her affections.

La F. And may I hope you love me?

Lis. Ay, sir; I am weary of confinement, like my mistress.

La F. A thousand thanks, my dear Lisette!

Lis. But while Jeffrey keeps the keys of every door, no creature can either go out, or enter, without his leave.

La F. And is there no way to get rid of him?

Lis. Yes; a thought strikes me this moment: a couple of days ago, a neighbour's dog bit him, and our Doctor, merely to shew his skill in the cure, persuaded him the dog was mad. Suppose we make the Doctor himself believe he was really so, and that poor—

Enter DOCTOR, with the wand.

Doc. He has had another fit; but I have just now left him in a sound sleep, which came upon him as suddenly as any of his waking paroxysms.

La F. If that be the case, he must be left alone; we will not disturb him.

Lis. (*Aside to La F.*) When I return, be sure to confirm whatever I shall say. [*Exit.*]

Doc. What! have you persuaded her to leave you?

La F. Yes, for a little while.

Doc. Why, too much of love is something tedious. I come once more to talk with you, Doctor, upon this surprising art; which, though you have taken such great pains to explain, I am still far from comprehending so much as I think I ought.

La F. I will, before long, give you such proof.

Enter LISETTE, followed by JEFFREY.

Lis. Oh! save me! or I'm a dead woman!

Doc. What's the matter?

Jef. This is no joke, and I won't take it as such.

Lis. (*Goes between La F. and Doctor.*) Have a care of him. Speak low; he'll be at us.

Doc. Will he be at us?

Lis. (*In a low voice.*) Jeffrey is mad!

Doc. What do you say?

Lis. I found him in his bed, gnawing the bed-clothes; and, when he saw me, he would have gnawed me. (*The Doctor turns to him.*) Don't look at him, sir! don't look at him!

Doc. Why, I don't think this possible; the dog that bit him was not—

Lis. Indeed, sir, he was as mad as ever—

La F. Indeed, the poor creature looks as if some horrible infection had seized him.

Doc. Why, I can't say but I think he does.

Lis. And I'll give you the true proof immediately. (*Throws a glass of water at him.*)

Jef. What's that for? How dare you use me thus!

Lis. There! you see what a dislike he has to *La F.* That is a symptom which confirms our suspicions.

Doc. An evident sign of the hydrophobia!

La F. Yes, of the hydrophobia. (*Lisette comes with another glass of water to throw at him; at the sight of which he starts.*)

Lis. See, see, how he looks, only at the sight of water.

Jef. If you dare throw any more upon—(*Holds up his hand.*)

Doc. Lisette, let him alone. It is dangerous to push the poor creature to extremities. Doctor, suppose we magnetise him?

La F. No; magnetism, in cases like this, can have no effect.

Doc. What remedy, then?

La F. I know of but one: to smother him.

Lis. The only thing in the world.

Doc. And we ought to lose no time, if it must be done.

Jef. What, smother me? (*Falls on his knees to the Doctor.*) Oh! sir, have pity on me.

Doc. Don't be frightened; it will be over in ten minutes.

Jef. But I had rather not.

Doc. Ungrateful wretch! do you consider the consequence of living?

Lis. For shame, Jeffrey! don't ask such a thing.

Doc. But, since he won't consent with a good grace, we must seize him all three together.

Jef. Ah! mercy, what will become of me?

Lis. (*Aside to Jeffrey.*) Run out of the house, and never come back, if you would save your life.

[*Jeffrey runs off.*]

La F. He shan't escape. Stop him there!

[*Exit.*]

Doc. Why, he has run into the street! What a deal of mischief he may cause; and, as I'm alive, he has run away with all the keys in his pocket.

Lis. But, luckily, the doors are open.

Doc. But, why does not the doctor come back?

Lis. Depend upon it, he will not leave him till he has secured him in some safe place where he can do no mischief.

Enter CONSTANCE.

Con. Dear sir, come to the assistance of your patient; he has followed me to my chamber, and frightened me out of my senses: I thought he were going to die. Indeed, sir, he is very ill; I am sure he can't live long.

Enter MARQUIS DE LANCY, creeping slowly to the couch, as if unable to walk.

Mar. Oh! Doctor, relieve me from this pressure, or I die.

Doc. I wish my brother physician were returned! Come, sir, lean your head this way. Where is your complaint?

Mar. Here, here it lies! (*Laying his hand on his stomach.*) I fear this will be the last hour of my life!

Doc. No, no; I hope not. (*Magnetising him sometimes with one end of the wand, and sometimes with the other.*)

Mar. The malady changes its place. Oh! my head! remove it from my head! make it descend. Now it flies to my heart! it sets it on fire! it tears it to pieces!

Doc. I wish the doctor would return.

Mar. My tortures redouble! vultures gnaw me! Can't you remove them? (*Attempts again to magnetise.*) No, no; my strength fails me! my eyes lose their sight! I die! (*Groans, sinks on the couch, and remains motionless.*)

Mar. Oh! he's dead! he's dead! he's dead!

Con. What will become of us all? He's dead! he's dead!

Doc. I am quite shocked at it! But, my dear children, don't make such a noise. The neighbours will hear you; and they will say I have killed him with some of my experiments.

Lis. It was that fatal wand you put upon his heart.

Doc. Yes; I suppose I directed the fluid the wrong way. But, perhaps, he only fainted. Who knows but we may recover him? I will go and find some of my newly-invented drops, which may, perhaps, restore him. (*Feels in his pockets.*) And that poor, unhappy Jeffrey has taken away the key of my cabinet, where all my drops are.

Con. Break open the locks, then; there is no time to lose.

Doc. And Doctor Mystery not to return! Everything conspires to ruin me! I was loth to receive this patient into my house: my heart foreboded some ill consequence. Dear me! dear me! [*Exit.*]

Mar. If my scheme succeed, the consequence will be such as you little dream of. Where is La Fleur?

Lis. Gone to secure Jeffrey somewhere out of the house.

Mar. If he should not return soon, all my long-concerted plan will be overturned.

Lis. Here he is.

Enter LA FLEUR.

La F. I have lodged him safe for these two days.

Mar. (*Takes off his robe.*) Give me your clothes, and take this immediately, and be dead.

La F. Dead! What do you mean?

Mar. Ask no questions; but lie on that couch, and counterfeit being dead.

Lis. Your master has been doing it this half hour.

La F. (*Putting on the robe.*) It is very strange; but since you command it—

Mar. Dare not stir, or breathe! All depends on your acting well. You must have your face powdered, that he may not know you.

La F. Now I am in character.

Mar. Where are my people?

La F. At the tavern, in the next street, both disguised like doctors.

Mar. That's right; I fly to them directly.—(*Going.*)

La F. Your night-cap, your night-cap! (*The Marquis throws it to him.*)

Mar. And give me your wig. (*Plays it on.*) I hear the Doctor coming. Farewell! Play your part to a miracle. [*Exit.*]

Con. And heaven prosper your designs!

La F. (*Sitting on the couch.*) But what does all this mean? I don't understand.

Lis. Hush! dead people never speak. (*Throws him down on the couch.*)

Enter DOCTOR.

Doc. Well, how is he? what does he say?

Lis. Why, like all other persons in his state, he does not complain.

Doc. Hold this bottle to his nose, and sprinkle this on his face.

Con. Alas! he is gone, and nothing can be of use.

Doc. How a few moments have changed him! I shouldn't have known him again. He's as white as ashes. Lay your hand upon his heart, Lisette, and feel if it beats at all: for my part, I am so disconcerted with the accident, I am fit for nothing.

Lis. (*Lays her hand on his heart.*) All is still, sir.

Doc. Is there no motion?

Lis. None in the least. (*Slaps his face.*) Like marble—has little feeling in it.

Doc. Doctor Mystery not returning, I conceive this was a plot upon me.

Lis. And this poor creature was in the plot, you think, and died on purpose to bring it about?

Doc. No; but the other found he could not cure him, and so left the disgrace of his death to me; and my enemies will take the advantage of it, considering how many of my patients have died lately.

Lis. What are we to do with the body?

Doc. I have yet one hope left; it is my last; and I won't hesitate, but about it instantly.

Con. What resource?

Doc. (*To Lis.*) He is certainly dead, is he not?

Lis. Certainly; there can be no doubt of that.

Doc. And, do what we will, nothing worse can happen to him.

Lis. No, certainly; not in this world.

Doc. Well, then, I will try an experiment upon him, which I once read, and I have often had a vast mind to try it upon Jeffrey; but, as he was alive, it might have proved fatal.

Lis. What is it?

Doc. No matter; you shall see it performed; and I can't say I have much doubt of its success.

Begin to take off some of his garments, while I go and get all the apparatus ready. *[Exit.]*

La F. But I am not such a fool to stay till you come back. My master may say what he will; but I will go away.

Lis. Nonsense, man! Have you not undertaken to be dead? Come, finish your part with a good grace.

Con. Pray do, *La Fleur*.

La F. But what experiment is he going to try upon me? I always hated doctors, and would never let any one of them come near me.

Con. But this is not a doctor: the college have refused to admit him; so, don't be afraid.

La F. Oh! as that's the case—

Lis. *(Throws him down, as before.)* Hush! play your part.

Enter DOCTOR, with a bag of instruments.

Doc. *Lisette*, help me with these instruments, and then run and watch that skillet of oil on the fire; and, when it boils, bring it hither.

Lis. But, suppose anybody should come in while we are trying the experiment?

Doc. Right; I'll lock the door. My fright makes me forget everything. *[Exit.]*

La F. *(Now we see the instruments.)*

Lis. Psha! what signifies seeing them; a'n't you to feel them?

Doc. *(Without!)* What! force into a man's house, whether he will or no?

Con. I hear a noise! *(Looks out.)* It is the Marquis returned; and all his schemes, perhaps, will be fulfilled. *(La Fleur lies down again.)*

Enter MARQUIS DE LANCY, PICCARD, and FRANÇOIS, disguised as doctors, (the Marquis having changed his dress,) followed by the DOCTOR.

Mar. I have powerful reasons for entering this house. I came hither accompanied by these physicians, sent with me by the college, to demand a patient, who was this morning brought hither by a notorious professor of quackery: the young gentleman is of family, and nearly allied to me.

Doc. *(Aside.)* I am undone!

Mar. Where is he, sir? I must see him, and speak with him.

Lis. At present, you can't speak with him: he is in a better world. *(Pointing to La Fleur.)*

Mar. Alas! behold him there, or am I deceived? No; it is he himself whom I see! and he is dead! Gentlemen, I call you as witnesses that he is dead, and that yonder stands the assassin. *(Piccard and François examine the body; Piccard puts on his spectacles.)*

Fran. *(Feeling his pulse.)* Yes, he is dead; but he is not dead according to our rules.

Mar. Oh! my dear friend, and are you gone? But your death shall be revenged.—*(To the Doctor.)* Villain, tremble! for thy life shall answer for this. Gentlemen, gentlemen, please to take notes of what you see and hear in this house. *(The doctors write.)*

Lis. Dear sir, have pity on my poor master; he has killed the poor gentleman, to be sure; but it was without malice.

Doc. But you know, gentlemen, this is not the first patient that has been killed during an operation.

Pic. Ay, by the authority of the college.

Doc. *(To the Marquis.)* Dear sir, my only hope is in your mercy.

Mar. Then despair! for know, I am the Marquis de Lancy; and call to your remembrance with what insolence you rejected all my overtures to espouse your ward. Here is the advantageous contract I repeatedly sent to you, which you had the arrogance to return to me, without even deigning to look at.

Doc. Only deliver me from this trouble, and I will sign it without reading it at all.

Mar. But will the lady also sign it?

Con. No; for how can I wed another, when he *(pointing to the Doctor)* is the object of my love?

Doc. But consider, my dear Constance, that I am old and ugly, jealous and infirm. Indeed I am, indeed I am, I protest, Constance!

Con. But my love for you is so implanted in my heart—

Mar. If that be the case—Come, sir, follow us.

Doc. Stay; give me the contract, and let me sign it.—*(Aside.)* I will once more have recourse to the wand.

Mar. What imports your signing, if your ward will not?

Doc. She will sign.

Con. Never!

Doc. Give me the contract, and hold that. *(Gives the wand to the Marquis, takes the contract, and signs it.)*

Mar. What's this?

Doc. Keep it, never let it go from you.

Con. Yes, I feel a desire to sign; give me the contract.

Doc. Ay, I was sure of it. *(Constance signs the contract.)* And there, Marquis, is the contract. *(Giving the contract to the Marquis.)*

La F. *(Rising.)* Ah! I breathe again! I am a little better!

Doc. *(Starting.)* Why, is he not dead?

La F. No; I am mending apace.

Doc. Gentlemen, tear in pieces the process.—*(To La F.)* Oh! sir, what misery have you brought upon me!

La F. And what misery would your d—d instruments, and your boiling oil, have brought upon me?

Doc. How did you hear, in that fit, what I said?

La F. Very easily, sir. Return him the wand; and the ladies, I dare say, will fall in love with him again.

Doc. *(Looking at La F. and then at the Marquis.)* My eyes are open! I recollect them both! But this was the sick man! *(To the Marquis.)*

La F. But I was the dead one!

Doc. I am cheated, defrauded! What ho! neighbours! Here are thieves, murderers!

Mar. Nay, Doctor, reflect upon the arts you made use of, to keep my Constance yours, even in spite of her inclinations, then do not condemn the artifice I employed to obtain her with her own consent. A reward like this, urged me to encounter every hazard and every danger; for, believe me, Doctor, there is no magnetism like the powerful magnetism of love. *[Exeunt.]*

THE REGISTER OFFICE;

A FARCE, IN TWO ACTS.—BY JOSEPH REED.



Act II.—Scene I.

CHARACTERS.

CAPTAIN LE BRUSH
GULWELL
WILLIAMS

SCOTCHMAN
IRISHMAN
FRENCHMAN

MRS. DOGGEREL
MARGERY
A GIRL

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Register Office.

Enter WILLIAMS.

Wil. The business of the morning is partly over. What a crowd of deluded females have flocked here within these three hours, in expectation of the imaginary place we have advertised! A register-office, under the direction of so conscientious a person as Mr. Gulwell, instead of a public good, becomes a public evil. My upright master seldom feels any reflections of this kind; avarice is his leading principle; and so long as he can swell his bags by the folly or credulity of mankind, he will not suffer conscience to hinder him in the pursuit of gain. I think I hear him coming.

Enter GULWELL.

Gul. So, this advertisement has brought in two pounds, thirteen shillings! no very bad morning's work. Well, thanks to the memory of our witty founder, say I. Had he not hit on the scheme of a register-office, I might have dangled on at quill-driving without ever being worth a groat.

Wil. But, sir, do you think this calling of ours the most conscientious one in the world? I begin to imagine my old employment, the law, the more honest profession of the two.

Gul. Mr. Williams, there is roguery in all the employments under the sun. Every day's experience will convince you, that there is no getting through the world without a necessary portion of trick and chicanery.

Wil. Sir, if the imposture of this advertisement were found out and duly punished, one or both of

us would stand a fair chance for the pillory. How many poor girls have been stripped of perhaps their last shilling, by being amused with the hopes of the place we have advertised. I faith! sir, some of our profession are little better than downright pick-pockets. I am glad I shall have the good fortune to leave it so soon.

Gul. Mr. Williams, I am truly sorry for our separation, but rejoice at the occasion of it; however, if you hope to make a fortune in your altered condition of life, you must learn to keep your conscience in proper subordination. I can assure you, that fraud is as necessary a requisite in a stewardship as in an intelligence-office. Is there no message from Dr. Skinflint about the Welsh living?

Wil. Yes, sir; he says, as curates are so cheap in Wales, he will not take less than a thousand guineas.

Gul. A spiritual curmudgeon! Why, it is not quite a hundred a year. I forgot to ask if you called at Captain Sparkle's last night?

Wil. I did, sir; and was surprised to see him so greatly recovered.

Gul. I thought he would grow better after the embarkation. I never supposed him in any very great danger, because he refused eight hundred guineas for his commission, when his life was despaired of. Have you finished the assignment of the surgeoncy?

Wil. No, sir.

Gul. Then get it done, Mr. Williams: stay, you must write an advertisement for the Daily, any time this afternoon will do, of an employment to be disposed of in Ireland, of a thousand pounds per annum, which requires little learning or attendance,

and may be executed by a deputy. Remember to add, that secrecy is required, and none but principals need to apply.

Wil. I forgot to tell you, the young gentleman was here to know if you had received an answer about the secretary's place.

Gul. Truly, I am sorry I could not succeed: fifteen hundred guineas were insisted on; I pleaded the young gentleman's acknowledged merit, and the public services of his brave father, who lost his life in fighting for his country, which so softened my principal, that he sunk his demand from—

Wil. Fifteen to five hundred, I hope.

Gul. From guineas to pounds: I could get no further abatement.

Wil. It is a pity that such extraordinary merit should have no better success.

Gul. Ah! Mr. Williams, if places were given to persons of merit only, the Lord have mercy upon many a big-looking family. Away; here's company a coming. [*Exit Williams.*] Heyday! who have we here? By his looks, he must be one of the tribe of the soup maigres.

Enter a Frenchman.

French. Ra votre nom Monsieur le Gulvelle?

Gul. It is, sir, your business?

French. Sire, me be tell dat dere be de grand nombres d'academies Françaises en Londres, and me vould be glad to be employé as un maitre de langues. Me speak a de Frens vid de vrai prononciation; and you see beside ma connoissance in de langue Angloise be not the most inconsiderable.

Gul. Oh! yes, sir; you speak very pretty English, I must own. Pray, what business have you been bred to?

French. Bissness! do you mean to front a me? me be von de gens de qualité.

Gul. How, sir! a person of quality, and so poor as to be seeking after a livelihood.

French. Vy vere be de vonders of all dat? Nothing be more commun in France. Me dit, indeed, sometimes, pour passer le temps, amuse myself vid curl a de air, and cut a de corn of mine comrades de qualité of bot sex.

Gul. Sir, if you be a proficient in these sciences, I give you joy with all my heart, for I don't know a more profitable calling in London; nay, nor a more reputable one; for its professors are caressed by persons of the first fashion and distinction. There's your countryman, Monsieur Frizzellette de la Corbille, a hair and corn-cutter in St. James's, that keeps his chariot, though 'tis scarce half a score years since he would have made a bow to the ground for a bellyful of soup-maigre.

French. And begar, so would me too!

Gul. Sir, I will cook you up an advertisement as long as a proclamation, that will effectually do your business. In the meantime, I shall give orders for one of the laconic kind, to hang in golden letters over your door: "Hair and corns cut after the French taste, by a person of quality."

French. Ay, dat vil do ver vell. Par un personne de qualité.

Gul. But, sir, as you are a man of rank, you may, perhaps, think it below your dignity to follow any profession that has the least appearance of business?

French. Non, non, monsieur; tout au contraire.

Gul. Then I dare venture to say, that in less than a dozen years you will be rich enough to return to your native country, and marry a princess of the blood. How, in the name of wonder, could you think of being a pitiful teacher of French for a livelihood, when you are possessed of talents superior to all the learning in the world?

French. Me vill tell you, monsieur: it be not more as dix, onze, douze, treize—ay, thirteen years, since mon cousin comed over to l'Angleterre, to

teash a de Frens in de boarding-école. Vell, he dit engage de affection of de Angloise young lady, sa belle écolière, runned away wid her, and so, begar, he getted de vife vid not less as von hundred tousand livres. Now, as mon cousin could marry de lady vid so much of de l'argent, vy may not me hope to do the same?

Gul. True, sir; but there's an ugly act of parliament since that time, which hinders our fortune-hunting gentlemen from gaining such wives. Well, sir, you will deposit a small sum; two or three guineas, or so; and I shall begin the advertisement.

French. Hey! vat you say? deposit! Je n'entends pas deposit.

Gul. Oh! sir, I'll soon explain it. Deposit signifies—

French. Non, non, mon cher ami! it be impossible for me to know vat you means; for me do not understand un mot de la langue Angloise.

Gul. Why, sir, I thought your connoissance in de langue Angloise had not been de most inconsiderable! (*Mimicking him.*)

French. Oh! monsieur—but dat—dat—dat vas une autre chose—quite anoder ting.

Gul. Well, sir, I must have two or three guineas, by way of earnest, before I proceed any further in your business.

French. Two, tree guinee! begar! me could so soon give you two, tree million. Vat you take a me for? un grand voleur—von tief? You tink me ave rob your Ingliasse exchequer; for all de world know dat de exchequer of my countree ave scarce so much to be rob of. Let a me see: me ave no more as von chelin, and von, two, three shillings.

Gul. Thirteen pence halfpenny! a very critical sum in England. Well, sir, you may leave that in part; I must give you credit for the remainder.

French. (*Gives his money.*) Dere, sir. And so, Monsieur le Gulvelle, you tink en verité me sal ride in my coach.

Gul. Not at all impossible. Call again in a week, and you shall see what I have done for you.

French. Begar! you have elevé mine heart. Sire, me be votre tres humble, tres obligé, and tres dévot serviteur. Oh! mon Dieu! ride in my carrosse!

[*Exit.*]

Gul. Your most humble servant, good Monsieur le Carosse. If it were not for the credulity of mankind, what a plague would become of us office-keepers!

Enter MARGERY.

Mar. Sur, an I may be so bold, I've come to ax an ye've sped about t'woman servant, 'at ye advertised for?

Gul. I have not. Come nearer, young woman. *Mar.* Let me steek t' deer first, an ye please. (*Shuts the door.*)

Gul. What countrywoman are you?

Mar. I've Yorkshire, by my truly! I was bred and b'worn at little Yatton, aside Roseberry Topping.

Gul. Roseberry Topping! Where is that, my pretty maid?

Mar. Certainly God! ye know Roseberry! I thought only fule had known Roseberry. It's t' biggest hill-in all Yorkshire; it's about a mile an a hofe high, and as coad as ice at top on't i't' hottest summer's day, that it is.

Gul. You've been in some service, I suppose?

Mar. Ay, I'll uphole ye have I, ever sin I was neen year ald. Nay, makins, I'd a God's penny at Stowstah market, about hofe a year afore 'at I was neen; and as good a servant I've been, thof I say't myself, as what came within pair o'doers. I can milk, karn, fower, bake, brew, sheer, winder, card, spin, knit, sew, and do everything 'at belangs to a husbandman, as weel as ony lass 'at ever ware

clogheen: and as to my kareoter, I defy onybody, gentle or simple, to say black's my nail.

Gul. Have you been in any place in London?

Mar. Ay, an' ye please; I lived wi' Madam Shrilippe, in St. Pole's Kirk-garth, but was forced to leave my place afore 'at I had been a week o' days in't.

Gul. How so?

Mar. Marry, because she ommost flighted and scauded me out o' my wits. She was t' arrantest scaud 'at ever I met wi' in my bworn days. She had seerly sike a tongue, as never was in ony woman's head, but her awn. It wad ring, ring, like a larum frae mworn to neeght. Then she wad put hersel into sike flusters, that her face wad be as black as t' reeking-crook. Nay, for that matter, I was but rightly sarra'd, for I was telled aforehand, by some verra sponisible fwoke, as she was a mere donnot; howsomever, as I fand my money grow less and less every day, (for I had brought my good seven-and-twenty shilling to neen groats and twopence,) I thought it wad be better to take 'up wi' a bad place than nea place at all.

Gul. And how do you like London?

Mar. Marry, sir, I like nowther egg nor shell on't. They're sike a set of fwoke as I never saw with my eyn. They laugh and slier at a body like onything: I went no but t' other day ti' t' baker's shop for a lafe of bread, and they fell a giggling at me, as I'd been yan o' t' greatest gawvions i' t' world.

Gul. Pray, what is a gawvion?

Mar. Why, you're a gawvion for not knowing what it is; I thought ye Londoners ha' known everything: a gawvion's a ninny-hammer. Now, do you think, sir, 'at I look ought like a gawvion?

Gul. Not in the least, my pretty damsel.

Mar. They may bwoast as they will o' their manners, but they have nea mare manners than a miller's horse, I can tell them that; that I can. I wish I had been still at canny Yatton.

Gul. As you have so great a liking to the place, why would you leave it?

Mar. Marry, sur, I was forced, as van may say, to leave 't: the 'squire wad not let me be. By my truly, sir, he was efer after me, mworn, noon, and neeght. If I wad but ha consented to his wicked ways, I might ha' had goud by goppins, that I might. "Lo ye, 'squire," say I, "you're mista'en o' me; I'se none o' thea sort o' cattle; I'se a vartuous young woman, I'll assure ye; ye're other fwoke's fwoke; wad ye be sike a taystrel as to ruin me?" But oll wadn't do; he kept following and following, and teasing and teasing me: at length, run I telled my auld dame, and she advised me to gang to London to be out of his way; that she did, like an onnist woman as she was. I went to my cousin Isbell, and says I to her, "Isbell," says I, come, will you goway to London?" and telled her the hale affair atween me and the 'squire. "Ods-bede!" says she, "my lass, I'll gang wi' thee ti' t' world's end." And away we come in good yearnest.

Gul. It was a very vartuous resolution. Pray, how old are you?

Mar. I'se nineteen: come Collop-Monday.

Gul. Would you undertake a housekeeper's place?

Mar. I'se flaid I cannot manage't, unless it were in a husbandman's house.

Gul. It is a very substantial farmer's in Buckinghamshire: I am sure you will do; I'll set you down for it. Your name?

Mar. Margery Moorpoint, an ye please.

Gul. How do you spell it?

Mar. Nay, makins, I knaw naught o' speldering: I'se nea schollard.

Gul. Well, I shall write to him this evening. What wages do you ask?

Mar. Nay, marry, for that matter, I wadn't be ower stiff about wage.

Gul. Then I can venture to assure you of it. You must give me half-a-crown, my pretty maid. Our fee is only a shilling for a common place, but for a housekeeper's we have always half-a-crown.

Mar. There's twen shilling, an' yan, tes, three, four, fave, six penn'orth o' bross, with a thousand thanks. God's prayer light o' you! for I'se sear ye'r't best friend I have met wi' sin I come frae canny, Yatton, that you are. When shall I coll again, sir?

Gul. About the middle of the next week.

Mar. Sir, an' ye please, gud mworning to you.

[Exit.]

Gul. Good morning to you, dear, vartuous Mrs. Margery Moorpoint. So, this is a specimen of Yorkshire simplicity, that it is—More customers!

Enter Scotchman.

Well, sir, your business with me?

Scotch. Gin ye be the maister o' this office, my business wi' ye is to speare at ye, gin ye can be o' ony service till a peur distressit gentleman?

Gul. Sir, I shall be glad to do a gentleman in distress any service in my power, especially one of your country. I have a veneration for the very name of Scotchman; my father was one.

Scotch. Troth, ye speak vera mickle like a gentleman, and seem to hae a proper sense o' national honour. I'm glad that I've been sae fonsy as to fa' into sic hands. Ye maun ken that my family is as aungient as ony i' a Scotland, and that by direct lineal deshept, I sprang frae the great Jamy Mac-kintosh, who was a preevy-counsellor to King Sandy the second.

Gul. A very considerable origin, indeed! But, pray, sir, what may have been the cause of your present distress?

Scotch. I'se tell ye the hale matter: when I was a laddie I was sae daft to get the ill wull o' a' my kin, by the disgrace I had brought upo' the Mac-kintoshes, by pitting myself 'prentice till a cankert auld carle o' a sword-slipper in Aberdeen, whose bonny daughter I was so unsonsy as to click a fancy to.

Gul. Well, sir?

Scotch. When I was out o' my 'prenticeship, I wanted gear to begin the world wi': I axed a' my friends, but they girnit at me like the vengeances. "Hald ye there, lad!" quo' they: "Ye maun e'en pickle i' your ain poke nuke." "As ye baked ye may brew." An' the de'il o' owther gowd or siller; nae no sae mickle as a plack or a bawbie wad they gi' me, unless I wad betak' mysel' to some mare gentleman-like occupation. Weel, sir, I was forrit to wale a new business. They ga' me graith enough to buy a pack; and turnaed travelling merchant, whilk the English, by way o' derision, ca' a pedder, that I might nae langer be a disgrace to my kin.

Gul. Why, this was a way to retrieve the disgrace of the Mac-kintoshes, indeed!

Scotch. Right, sir, verra right a truly. But wi' your permission, I'se speed me to the tragical part o' my story: as I was ganging my gate towards Portsmouth, I was attackit by twa robbers, who gar'd me strip frae the muckle coat o' my back to my vera sark; an' rubbit me o' a', an' mare nor a' I could ca' my ain. An' no content wi' taking my gudes, they ruggit my hair; they pou'd me by the lags; they briaset and skelpit me to sic a groe, that the gore blude rin into my breeks, an' my skin was amaist as black as pick; nay, when I graned i' meikle dool an' agonie, the fallows lough at my pitifu' mains, ca'd me an ill-fared scabbitt tyke; an' bad me begane into my ain crowdie country to sell butter an' brunstane.

Gul. The barbarous villains! Not only to rob and abuse you, but to insult your country.

Scotch. I wot, it was a downright national reflection; an' I'm sic a loo'er o' my country, that it hurt me mair nor a' the whacks they ga'me, an' the loss o' my pack into the bargain. Weel, sir, I am now brought to the maist ruefu' plight, that ever peer fallow was in, for I canna' git claiths to my back, or veetle to my wame: I'm sae blate that I maun starve to deid, or I can ax charity; albeit, I'm sae hungry that I could make a braw meal upo' a whin sour kail, an' a haggise, ta'en aff a middling, gif it s'en stank like a brook.

Gul. Poor gentleman! I pity your condition with all my heart.

Scotch. As I trudge along the wynds, I can hear the cawler waiter, I drink at the pump, gang jaup, jaup, jaup, i' my empty kyte. Except a bicker o' gud fat brose, an' a lunch o' salt beef, whilk I gat last Sabbath day aboard o' a wee Sootch barkie, I ha' na had my peur wame weel kight this twa owks an' aboon; an' hunger, ye ken, is unco fare to bide.

Gul. It is so, indeed.

Scotch. Now, gin ye can pit me intill any creditable way o' getting my bread, I sall rackon it a very great kyndness.

Gul. For what station in life do you think yourself fittest?

Scotch. For ony station, where learning is necessary. I ca'e na' a pickle o' sneshing what it be. Ye may ken, by my elocution, I'm a man o' nae sma' lair. I was sae weel-leered, that ilka auld wife in Aherdeen wad turn up the whites of her e'en like a mass John at kirk, an' cry, "Ay, God guide us! what a panky chiel is Donald! He's sae aldgabbit tha' a speaks like a print buke. I could like vera weel to be a Latin secretary till a minister o' state, an' can say, wi'out vanity, I'm as fit for an office as ony man i' the British dominions."

Gul. Then you understand Latin?

Scotch. Latin! Hoot awa' man! hoot awa', ye daft gowk! do ye jeer a body? a Scotchman, an' not unnerstan' Latin! Ha, ha, ha! A vera gude joke a truly unnerstan' Latin, quo' he! Why, we speak it better nor ony o' his majesty's subjects, an' wi' the genuine original pronunciation, too. I se gi' you a specimen frae that wutty chiel, Maister Ovid:

*Parve, nec invidio, sine me, liber, ibis in urbem,
Hui mihi, quod Domino non licet ire tuo!*

Now, ken ye, man, whether I unnerstan' Latin or no?

Gul. Oh! sir, I see you are a complete Latinist. Well, if we can't fall in for the secretary, suppose you should take up with translating awhile, till something better offer? there are pretty pickings, very comfortable pickings, now and then, to be had in that way.

Scotch. Anything at present to satisfy the cravings of my wamie, there is no an'nder the dignity o' my family. Ye ken the ald saw, beggars mun na be choosers: for that matter, I se no repine, gif I can but e'en git bannocks, an' sneehing, till something better fa' out.

Gul. Give me your name and place of abole, and you may expect to hear from me very shortly.

Scotch. Donald Maackintosh, gentleman; at Maister Archibald Buchanan's, a tobacco-merchant, at the sign of the Highlander and snuff-bledder, ower anesat King James's stairs, Shadwell. (*Gulwell writes.*) What's your charge, sir?

Gul. Only a shilling, sir: 'tis a perquisite for my clerk.

Scotch. There it's for ye, sir. (*Gives money.*) I was fain to borrow't o' Sandy Ferguson, the coal-heaver; for the de'il a bodle had I o' my ain.

Gul. Have you got anybody to give you a character?

Scotch. In troth, I canna say I ha' e'en now. I kes no living soul in London but Sandy an' my landlord, that I would ax sic a favour o'; and

ablins their karacter o' me would no be thought sufficient.

Gul. Nay, sir, it is no very great matter: it would have saved you a trifle; for when we make characters, we must be paid for them. We have characters, as jockies have pedigrees, from five shillings to five guineas.

Scotch. Weel, sir, we may taulk o' that anither time: gin ye succeed, ye se find me no ungratefu'. Ye sall see I ha' no sae mikle o' the fau'se Englishman wi' me, as to be forgetfu' o' my benefactors. I'm afeard I've been vera fasheous; howe'er, I se fash ye nae langer, but gang my wa's home. Sir, your vera abliged servant. Ik gude troth, this is a *rara avis in terris, nigroque simillima cygno*. [*Exit.*]

Gul. Your most obedient, good Mr. Latin secretary. There goes one of the many fools that owe their ruin to family pride. Mr. Williams, give an eye to the office; I shall be back in a few minutes. [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Register Office.

Enter GULWELL, meeting WILLIAMS.

Gul. Her ladyship hath released me sooner than I expected. Go, get the instrument finished, Mr. Williams. [*Exit Williams.*] A comb-brush for Lady Vixen. (*Writing.*) This, I believe, will be the one-and-twentieth she hath had from my office within these two years: a special customer, i' faith! Heyday! Who have we here? A spruce coxcomb of the military cast.

Enter CAPTAIN LE BRUSH.

Capt. Sir, your most obedient. Pray, a'n't you Mr. Geoffrey Gulwell, esquire?

Gul. The same, sir.

Capt. Then I am come to have a little talk with you.

Gul. Your business, good sir?

Capt. You must know, sir, I am an ensign in a new raised ridgmen, to which post I was advanced through the interest of my very good friend and acquaintance, Lord Pliant; whom I had the honour to serve many years in the capacity of valet-de-chambre. But, sir, though formerly a servant, I am a gentleman born, and have had the honour of an university iddication.

Gul. Sir, I make no doubt of it; you have the appearance of a man of consequence: may I crave your name and family?

Capt. My name, sir, is Le Brush. I am commonly called Brush, but Le Brush is the name my family was arriginally, nay, even so lately as Harry the Eight, known by: a name, sir, given by way of distinction to one of my auntsisters, that was general under All-afraid the Great, for so victoriously sweeping away hole armies of the enemy. Our family had all their estates confiscated in the broils between the Yorkshire and Lancashire line; so that their predecessors have been a little out of repair to the present time, and the name regenerated into plain Brush.

Gul. Sir, as your family hath been* so long reduced how came you by the education you talk of?

Capt. Sir, I was taught to read and write free-gratis for nothing, at a charity-school; and attended Lord Pliant to the university; where, you know, there are many opportunities for a man of talons to improve himself.

Gul. Right, sir; such opportunities, that I have frequently known a valet return from thence full as wise as his master.

Capt. Egad! sir, I see very plainly you're a gentleman, that knows what's what.

Gul. And pray, Captain, what were your favourite studies at college?

Capt. Logic and poetry; the only two studies fit

for a gentleman: as the first will teach you to cheat the devil, and the other to charm the ladies.

Gul. I should be glad to have a little conference with you on the latter; for I am a bit of a dabbler in it.

Capt. Then, seriously, as a friend, I would dissuade you to look out d—d sharp, or, upon my soul, you'll catch a Tartar! for I have not met with anybody that was fit to hold the candle to me in poetry, for a long series of time. But, sir, as I am in haste, we had better refer the dispute, at present. Any other time I am at your service for a confab of a few hours. I shall run through my business with as brief prolixity as possible.—At a country town, where I was recruiting, I had the good fortune to pick up a maiden lady, pretty well stricken in years, with a fortune of three thousand pounds in the stocks. Now, sir, as the interest of the money, and my present pay, will scarcely be sufficient to maintain me, (for you know, sir, a soldier and a gentleman is anonymous characters, and a man in my office must live up to his dignity,) I say, sir, as the interest of the money is d—d low, I have a desire to purchase a cornetcy, or a company of foot, that I may be better able to live like a gentleman.

Gul. Posts of that kind frequently fall under my disposal. I think it a prudent and honourable intention in you; as, in case of mortality, the provision for your lady will be larger.

Capt. Pooh! d—n the old hag! I don't care if the devil had her! I have been married above two months, and was as tired of her in the first fortnight, as a modern man of quality after a twelvemonths' cohabitation. I have, for these five weeks past, done everything in my power to break her heart; but, egad! it is made of such tough stuff, such penetrable stuff, (as my friend Shakspeare calls it,) that I believe I sha'n't be able to defect the business, d—e! In short, my disappointment has thrown me into such a devilish dilemma, that the devil fetch me, if I know, for the blood and soul of me, how to execrate myself out of it! For I want to be rid of her, most cursedly, that's certain!

Gul. There are ways, many ways, Captain, by which such a business may be brought about.

Capt. True, sir; my sergeant, Tom Spatterdash, who is a d—d cute dog, as any in the coprocan system—You don't know Tom, do you, sir?

Gul. I can't say I have the honour of his acquaintance.

Capt. Oh! the most drollest, comicallest fellow in the whole universe, egad! As I was a saying, Tom offered me, for ten guineas, to give her a dose; but, no, no; d—e, thinks I to myself, I'll not poison the old beldam, neither; it will be the more fashionable way to break her heart.

Gul. Sir, as you are a gentleman, I would beg leave to ask why you are so desirous of parting with a woman, who has been so great a benefactress to you? I should be afraid your patron and his lady would resent such behaviour. Will you be kind enough to answer my question with truth.

Capt. Truth, sir, is, to be sure, a most amiable thing, and what every gentleman ought to make use of, as Mr.—what's his name?—one of the old Roman philosophers,—Pythagorus, I believe,—ay, 'quire Pythagorus it was, who used to say, "Socrates is my friend, Pluto is my friend; but truth is more my friend." So say I; Lord Plant is my friend, Lady Plant is my friend; but truth is more my friend. And though some persons will affirm that truth ought not to be spoken at all times, yet no philosopher, nor nobody else, would ever venture to affirm, but that truth ought to be spoken at some times; which being granted,—I say, sir, which being granted, it must follow, ne-

cessarily follow, sir, that though truth ought not to be spoken at all times, occasions, and ~~series~~, yet seasonable truths may be occasionally spoken at all times; but this, sir, is the very profundity of logic, and, consequently, out of the reach of every capacity; wherefore, I shall descend into the spear of common sense, to be the better understood.

Gul. Sir, I must acknowledge that your arguments are very sublime and logical; but yet they are no answer to my question. Perhaps I have been too rude to press you on the occasion; there may be some lady in the case, who—

Capt. Egad! sir, you're in the right! I had not been married above ten days, when I fell most consumedly in love with a niece of my wife's; a girl of fifteen, with a d—d large fortune: a most exquisit creature, upon my soul! In short, she is the hole tote of my desires. As that there black fellar in the play—Othello Moor, I think they call him, says—"Perdition catch my soul but I do love her; and when I love her not, chaos is come again!"

Gul. Pray, Captain, who is that Chaos?

Capt. "And when I love her not, chaos is come again!" Oh! a d—d fine sentiment—~~as ever~~ was uttered! the most sentimental sentiment in the world!

Gul. But, Captain, I ask who is that Chaos?

Capt. Chaos! Lard bless you! you partend you don't know; a man of your years and understanding, too! Fie, fie! Mr. Gulwell, none of your tricks upon travellers!

Gul. Sir, I seldom ask the meaning of a word I understand.

Capt. Then you must know, chaos is a—my dear, it is a—a—a—(*A side.*) Zounds! what shall I say? The devil chaos him!—It is a—I can't find words to express myself properly.—It is impossible to divine it literally; but chaos—when a man speaks of chaos in—in a general way, it is as much as to say—chaos—chaos—I can't divine it otherwise, for the blood and soul of me!

Gul. You have not divined it at all; at least, not to my satisfaction. I suppose, by the connexion, it signifies dislike.

Capt. Right, sir; it is a—a—kind of dislike; but not, as one may say, a—a—an absolute dislike.—But, sir, to proceed in my story: if I could but break my wife's heart, I should assuredly marry my niece in less than a month after her decease. A separate maintenance won't do, or Mrs. Le Brush should have it with all my soul; but, if we part, you know, all hopes of breaking her heart are over. She has offered to separate, if I would give her two hundred pounds in ready rhino, and annually allow her for life, an annual provision of fifty pounds per annum, every year.

Gul. Which you've refused, I suppose!

Capt. Refused! most certainly, sir. I was almost petrified with astonishment at the egregious impudence of her demand. I shall not consent to allow her a shilling more than fifteen a year. She may live comfortably, very comfortably on it, in the North.

Gul. Truly, sir, I think fifteen pounds a year a very genteel allowance; especially as she brought you so small a trifle as three thousand!

Capt. I think so too, egad! But these old devils have no conscience at all, d—e! Well, sir, you'll give me an answer as soon as possible. You may hear of me at Mrs. Dresden's, a milliner, under the Peaches in Common Garden.

Gul. (*Writing.*) Very well, sir. I'll talk with a principal about your affair, this evening.

Capt. There, sir. (*Gives him money.*) You'll take care to beat him down as low as possible.

Gul. You may depend on my best endeavours, most noble Captain.—[*Exit Captain Le Brush.*]

seconded! I should have said. Why, this fellow's a greater rascal than myself! But what can be expected from a coxcomb of his stamp!—More company?

Enter an Irishman.

Irish. My dear honey, I am come to see if you have commiseration enough in your bowels to a poor Irishman, to get him a plaish.

Gul. What sort of a place are you fit for?

Irish. Upon my shalvashion, joy, d'ye see? I am fit for any plaish alive! I have strength and bonesh enough in this carcass of mine, to do all the work in the world.

Gul. Have you ever been in service?

Irish. In shervish! No, to be sure I have not!—Yes, by St. Patrick, ever since I was so big as a potato!

Gul. With whom did you last live?

Irish. With 'squire Maclellan, of Killybegs.

Gul. Killybegs! Where the deuce is that?

Irish. Why, where the devil should it be but in Ireland, my dear honey?

Gul. But what part of Ireland? what province? what county?

Irish. It is in the provinsh of Donegal, in the county of Ulster. It is an inland sea-port town, where they catch the best pickled herrings in England. By my fet! he was the best man of a maister between Derry and Youghall. Arrah! I shall never live so well with nobody else, unless I go back to live with him again!

Gul. As he was so good a master, how came you to leave him?

Irish. Leave him, joy! because he wanted to make a bug and a fool of me. When I went to go to plough and harrow, he would insist on my yoking the dear creatures, the mulesh, by the necks, instead of the tailsh.

Gul. The tails! Why, is that the Irish custom in ploughing?

Irish. Ay, upon my conscience, it is, joy! and the best custom, that ever was born in the world. I'll give you a reason for it, honey: you know, when the trashes are fastened to the tail, all the rest of the body is free; and when all the carcass but the tail goes along, the tail must follow of course: besides, honey, all the world knows that the strength of every human creature lies in the tail. Arrah! he wanted to bodder me with his d—English tricks! but the devil burn me, if honest Paddy would not have left twenty places, if he had been in them, all at once, sooner than be put out of the way of his country.

Gul. You were certainly in the right; I commend your spirit. But, pray, how have you lived since you came to London?

Irish. Lived, honey! as a great many live in London—nobody knows how. By my shoul! I have only picked up five thirteens for these four weeks and a half!

Gul. (*Aside.*) A special raw-boned fellow this! he will do for America: I'll send word to my nephew Trappum.—Would you like to go abroad, friend?

Irish. Ay, my dear honey! any way in England, or in Scotland; but I do not like, d'yeesee, to live out of my native kingdom.

Gul. Oh! it's only a very short voyage; a little round the Land's End. A gentleman has taken a very considerable farm in the west; and if I could prevail on him to hire you, you would have the sole management of it. 'Twould be the making of you. You can write, I suppose?

Irish. Yes, upon my conscience, that I can very well—may mark, honey, that's all. But that's nothing, my dear; I could get anybody to write for me, if they did but know how.

Gul. That's true. Well, I shall see the gentle-

man this evening, and have a little close talk with him about you.

Irish. Upon my shoul, the most shivilest person, d'ye see, that ever I met with, since I was an Irishman. (*Aside.*)

Gul. Where do you lodge, friend?

Irish. At the Harp and Spinning Wheel, in Farthing-fields; Wapping; in a room of my own, that I hire at nine-pence a week.

Gul. Your name?

Irish. Patrick O'Carrol.

Gul. O'Carrol! Give me your hand; we must be cousins. My great-grandmother was an O'Carrol!

Irish. Was she, by St. Patrick? Then we must be cousins, sure enough! Where was she born?

Gul. At what do you call the place, where 'squire O'Carrol lives?

Irish. What, Provost O'Carrol?

Gul. Ay, the Provost.

Irish. Oh! you're a soft lad! you don't know it was Ballishanny?

Gul. Right; that is the very place! Well, cousin, I should like to be better acquainted with you.

Irish. And so should poor Paddy, by my fet! You cannot conceive how my heart dances in the inside of my bowels, to see a relation in this part of the world, where I expected to see nobody at all. Do, honey, put your head here to feel. Fet! joy, it beats, and beats, and beats, and jumps about in my belly, like a brustled pea in a fire-shovel. Arrah! I knew you to be better than half an Irishman, by your shivility to strangers.

Gul. Ay, I wish I were wholly so; but it was my misfortune to be born in England.

Irish. Upon my conscience, that was almost poor Paddy's misfortune, too! I was begot in England; but, as good luck would have it, I went over to Ireland to be born.

Gul. Well, cousin, if you will call on me tomorrow morning, I hope I shall be able to give you joy of your place.

Irish. I shall, my dear cousin. Arrah! now, if I were but my father, who has been dead these seven years, I should be making a song upon you for this shivility.

Gul. Your father? What was he?

Irish. A true Irish poet, my dear; he could neither read nor write. By my fet! honey, he wrote many an excellent new song. I have one of his upon Moggy Maclellan, a young virgin in Sligo, who he fell in love with, after she had two love-begots at one time to 'squire Concannon.

Gul. I should be glad to see it, if you have it on you.

Irish. Oh! yes, my dear creature, I always carry it upon me: it is in my head, honey; you shall see it in a minute, if you will give me leave to sing it.

Gul. With all my heart, cousin.

Irish. The devil burn me, now, honey, if I can think of the right tune, because it never had any tune at all. However, it will go to Larry Groghan.

Gul. By all means, let's have it.

AIR.—*Irishman.*

My sweet pretty Mog, you're as soft as a bog,

And as wild as a kitten, as wild as a kitten:

Those eyes in your face—oh! pity my case!

Poor Paddy have smitten, poor Paddy have smitten.

Far softer than silk, and as fair as new milk,

Your tily-white hand is, your tily-white hand is:

Your shape's like a pail, from your head to your tail,

You're straight as a wand is, you're straight as a wand is.

*Your lips red as cherries, and your curling hair is
As black as the devil, as black as the devil;
Your breath is as sweet, too, as any potato,
Or orange from Seville, or orange from Seville.
When dress'd in your bodice, you trip like a goddess,
So nimble, so frisky; so nimble, so frisky;
A kiss on your cheek ('tis so soft and so sleek)
Would warm me like whisky, would warm me like
whisky.*

*I grunt and I pine, like a pig or a swine,
Because you're so cruel, because you're so cruel;
No rest I can take, and asleep or awake,
I dream of my jewel, I dream of my jewel.
Your hate, then, give over, nor Paddy, your lover,
So cruelly handle, so cruelly handle;
Or Paddy must die, like a pig in a sty,
Or snuff of a candle, or snuff of a candle.*

Gul. I thank you very kindly; it is a most admirable song. Well, you will be here at nine to-morrow?

Irish. You may be certain of my coming, my dear cushin.

Gul. But, harkye! be sure not to mention a word of this affair to any person whatsoever. I would not have it get wind, lest anybody should be applying to the gentleman.

Irish. Oh! let Paddy alone for that, my dear creature; I am too cunning to mention it to nobody but my own shelf. Well, your servant, my dear cushin. *[Exit.]*

Gul. Your servant, your servant! We must have this fellow indented as soon as possible: he will fetch a rare price in the plantations.

Enter MRS. DOGGEREL and a Girl.

Heyday! what whimsical figure is this? she appears to be of the family of the Slammekins.—
(Aside.)

Mrs. D. Mr. Office-keeper,—I forget your name, though I have seen it so often in print.

Gul. Gulwell, madam. Pray, be seated.

Mrs. D. I come, Mr. Gulwell, to inquire after a person that can write short-hand: I want an amanuensis.

Gul. An amanuensis, madam?

Mrs. D. Yes, sir; an amanuensis to take down my ideas: they flow upon me in such torrents, that I cannot commit them to paper, a tenth part so fast as I could wish. My name, sir, is not altogether unknown in the literary world. You have, undoubtedly, heard of the celebrated Mrs. Slatterella Doggerel, the dramatic poetess?—Eh! have not you?

Gul. Oh! yes, madam, ten thousand times!—*(Aside.)* Though the devil fetch me, if ever I heard of the name before!

Mrs. D. I have written Mr.—a—a—What's your name, sir?

Gul. Gulwell, mamma, is the gentleman's name.

Mrs. D. Ay, ay, oh!—I have written, Mr. Gulwell, no less than nine tragedies, eight comedies, seven tragi-comedies, six farces, five operas, four masques, three oratorios, two mock-tragedies, and one trag-comi-operatio-magico-farlico-pastoral-dramatic romance, making, in the whole, as Scrub says, five and forty.

Girl. Yes, sir, five and forty.

Gul. And pray, madam, how many of them have been brought upon the stage?

Mrs. D. Not one, sir; but that is no diminution of their merit; for while the stage is under the direction of people that scribble themselves, it is no wonder they are so backward in producing the works of others. As what-do-you-call-'em says in the play, "Who the devil cares for any man that has more wit than himself?" Eh! Mr. Culwell!

Gul. Very true, madam. But suppose we should beat about for a patron among the great!

Mrs. D. A patron, quotha! Why, the very word, applied as an encourager of literary merit, is almost obsolete. You might as soon find a real patriot, as a real patron. Our great men are too much engaged in the trifles and follies of the age, to give themselves any concern about dramatic genius. Indeed, if I could submit to write a treatise on the science of gaming, a new history of peerage, or an essay on improving the breed of running-horses, perhaps some of our right honourable jockies might vouchsafe to give me a recommendation to their brother jockies of the theatrical turf.

Gul. Madam, I am of opinion, that a well-written pamphlet in favour of the ministry, could not fail of procuring you a patron.

Mrs. D. And so you would have me sacrifice my conscience to interest, you strange creature, you?

Gul. Conscience, madam! What have authors, that write for bread, to do with conscience? A learned professor in the law, though he has amassed even a ministerial fortune at the bar, will, for a few guineas, prostitute his eloquence, by pleading in a bad cause; then why should not a poor devil of an author, against his conscience, brandish his pen in a political squabble, to keep himself from starving.

Mrs. D. But what author of true genius could ever stoop to write a parcel of dull stuff about inns and outs? No, no; depend on't, the most certain way to get my pieces on the stage, will be to go on the stage myself. Many ricketty, dramatic brats have been allowed to crawl on the stage, which would never have made their theatrical appearance, if they had not been of theatrical parentage.

Gul. Madam, your observation is very just.

Mrs. D. But, pray, what do you think of my person? With a large hoop, instead of this trollopee, should I not make a tolerably elegant figure in tragedy, nay, not to say magnificent one?

Gul. The most elegant and magnificent in the world.

Mrs. D. I once played Belvidera with some of my city acquaintances, and got such prodigious applause, that Mr. Alderman Loveturtle came waddling up to me, with a—"Madam, you have played the part so finely, that though I love good eating and drinking better than anything in the world, I would mortify upon bread and water a whole month, for the pleasure of seeing you play it again."

Gul. Madam, you are an excellent mimic.

Mrs. D. And what has raised the reputation of some performers so much as mimicry? But I'll give you a speech out of Belvidera's mad scene.

Gul. Madam, you will oblige me greatly.

Girl. My mamma speaks it delightfully, I assure you, sir.

Mrs. D. Take my oath, Melpomene; I must have my hair about my ears; there is no playing a mad scene without dishevelled hair.

"Ha! look there!

*My husband bloody, and his friend too!—vanish'd!
Here they went down:—Oh! I'll dig, dig the den up!
Ho! Jaffer! Jaffer!"*

Girl. Pray, don't cry, mamma; don't cry. *(Weeps)*

Mrs. D. Pray, Mr. Gulliver, lend me your hand to help me up. Well, what do you think of this acting?

Gul. I'm astonish'd at it. Why don't you apply to the managers?

Girl. My mamma did apply to one of them.

Mrs. D. Yes, and spoke that very speech.

Gul. And what did he say? Was he not in raptures.

Mrs. D. So far from it, that he did nothing all the while but titter, and he! he! he!

Gul. Yes, he did nothing but he! he! he!

Gul. Titter, and he! he! he!

(They all force a laugh.)

Mrs. D. Yes, yes; I shall breed her up myself. With her own capabilities and my instructions, I don't doubt but she will make all our tragedy heroines turn pale; she will eclipse them all, I warrant her; I have already taught her the part of Sappho, in my two-act tragedy, of that name. Give the gentleman a speech, Malpomené.

Gul. Yes, mamma. Where shall I begin?

Mrs. D. At "Oh! Phaon, Phaon!" You are to observe, sir, that all my tragedies are written in heroics; I hate your blank verse; it is but one remove from prose, and consequently not sublime enough for tragedy. Now, begin, Melly.

Gul. "Oh! Phaon, Phaon! could my eyes impart,
The swelling throes and tumults of my heart—"

Mrs. D. "The swelling throes and tumults of my heart!" Child, you are too languid by ten thousand degrees. Your sister, Calliope, would speak it abundantly better. Nay, little Clio, that is not quite three years old, could not speak it worse. Give it more energy, child. Set yourself a heaving like a tragedienne out of breath. It should be spoken thus: "The swelling throes and tumults of my heart."

Gul. "The swelling throes and tumults of my heart,
Thou never wouldst thy Sappho's love desert."

Mrs. D. There's a pathetic speech for you!

Gul. Very pathetic indeed. And this little dear hath spoken it like an angel.

Mrs. D. I'll now give you a touch of the pom-pous. "By hell and vengeance—" I forgot to tell you it is the turnkey's soliloquy in my tragedy of Betty Canning.

"By hell and vengeance, Canning shall be mine!
Her, but with life, I never can resign.
Should Ætna bar my passage to the dame,
Heidldong I'd plunge into the sulphurous flame;
Or, like the Titans, wage a war with Jove,
Rather than lose the object of my love."

Gul. Madam, this must have a fine effect. It will certainly bring the house down, whenever it is played.

Mrs. D. You sensible creature, I must embrace you for the kind expression. Yes, yes, it must have a fine effect, or it never would have had a run of fifty nights. I assure you, it was played no less than fifty nights by Mr. Flockton's company.

Gul. Flockton's company! Pray, who is Flockton?

Mrs. D. He is master of the best company of puppets in England.

Gul. So, then, your piece has been played by wooden actors? Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. D. Wooden actors! and why this sarcasm on wooden actors? Pray, sir, let me ask you, what piece is, now-a-days, played without wooden actors? Well, Mr.—a—Calpepper—

Gul. Lud! mamma, what a queer name is that! They call him Gulwell.

Mrs. D. My dear, I knew his name begun with either Gul or Cull—I ask your pardon, sir; I am so frequently enveloped in thought that I even forget my own name; I hope, therefore, you will not take it amiss that I should not remember yours.

Gul. No apology, madam.

Mrs. D. Well, Mr.—a—Gullocatcher, if you

hear of an ammannensis, pray give me the most early intelligence.

Gul. But I hope, madam, I shall not offend you in asking you how he is to be paid?

Mrs. D. Paid! Why, I really did not think of this—Let me see: suppose—no, this won't do—hum—ay—He shall have a tenth part of the profit of my future productions: he shall ~~the~~ them.

Gul. Madam, I feel for your young muses, and can dissemble with you no longer. Take my advice: go immediately home, and burn all your pieces; for I am certain you will never make a shilling of them, unless you sell them for waste paper.

Mrs. D. Waste paper! Heaven and earth! such excellent compositions go for waste paper!

Gul. Waste paper, indeed! I should not have thought of waste paper!

Gul. Burn them all immediately. Give me your solemn promise to leave off scribbling; and if any place, worthy your acceptance, fall in my way, I will endeavour to fix you in it.

Mrs. D. What! sacrifice immortality for a place? I must tell you, sir, you're an envious, impertinent, self-sufficient puppy, to presume to advise me, who have a million times your understanding.

Gul. Yes, a million times your understanding!

Mrs. D. Waste paper! Oh, ye gods! if I had the wealth of Cræsus, I would give it all to be revenged on this affronting savage! *[Exit.]*

Gul. Ah! you're a naughty creature to vex my poor mamma in this manner! *[Exit.]*

Gul. So, this comes of my plain dealing! I am rightly served for endeavouring to wash the black-amoor white.

Enter Mrs. DOGGEREL and Gul.

Mrs. D. I have returned to tell you, that I will have ample vengeance for this indignity. I will immediately set about writing a farce, to be called the Register Office, in which I will expose your tricks, your frauds, your cheats, your impositions, your chicaneries! I'll do for you! I'll make you repent the hour wherein you had the impudence and ill-nature to advise me to burn all my pieces! By all the gods! I'll write such a piece against you—

*Then like thy fate superior will I sit,
And see thee scorn'd and laugh'd at by the pit;
I, with my friends, will in the gallery go,
And tread thee sinking to the shades below.*

[Exit.]

Gul. "And tread thee sinking to the shades below!" *[Exit.]*

Gul. The woman takes it mightily in dudgeon!

Enter an Irishman.

Irish. My dear cushin, after I went away before, I forgot to pay for your shivility; therefore, I am going to come back again to be out of your debt.

Gul. Never mind it, cousin; any other time.

Irish. Arrah! I am a person of more honour than to continue in nobody's debt, when I owe him nothing. You kidnapping rascal, you was going to send me into the other world, to be turned into a black negro. I had gone, sure enough, but for Maccarrell O'Neil, whom I overtook, as we run against one another in your English St. Patrick's church-yard—St. Paul's. Besides, if I should be taken sick, and die of a consumption to-night, you might tell me to my face, the next time I see you, that I stole out of the world on purpose to cheat you. There, my dear cushin!

[Overturns the desks, &c. beats Gulwell off, and exit.]

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY R. B. SHERIDAN.



Act IV.—Scene 3.

CHARACTERS.

SIR PETER TEAZLE
SIR OLIVER SURFACE
SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE
SIR HARRY BUMPER
JOSEPH SURFACE

CHARLES SURFACE
CRABTREE
ROWLEY
CARELLS
MOSGS

SNAKE
LADY TEAZLE
LADY SNEERWELL
MRS. CANDOUR
MARIA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Lady Sneerwell's House.*

LADY SNEERWELL and SNAKE discovered
drinking chocolate.

Lady S. The paragraphs, you say, Mr. Snake, were all inserted?

Snake. They were, madam; and as I copied them myself in a feigned hand, there can be no suspicion whence they came.

Lady S. Did you circulate the report of Lady Brittle's intrigue with Captain Boastall?

Snake. That's in as fine a train as your ladyship could wish. In the common course of things, I think it must reach Mrs. Clackitt's ears within four and twenty hours; and then, you know, the business is as good as done.

Lady S. Why, truly, Mrs. Clackitt has a very pretty talent, and a great deal of industry.

Snake. True, madam, and has been tolerably successful in her day. To my knowledge, she has been the cause of six matches being broken off, and three sons being disinherited; of four forced elopements, as many close confinements, nine separate maintenances, and two divorces. Nay, I have more than once traced her causing a *tête-à-tête* in the Town and Country Magazine, when the parties, perhaps; had never seen each other's face before in the course of their lives.

Lady S. She certainly has talents, but her manner is gross.

Snake. 'Tis very true. She generally designs well, has a free tongue, and a bold invention; but her colouring is too dark, and her outlines often extravagant. She wants that delicacy of mellowness of sneer, which distinguish your ladyship's scandal.

Lady S. Ah! You are partial, Snake.

Snake. Not in the least, every body allows that Lady Sneerwell can do more with a word or a look than many can with the most laboured detail, even when they happen to have a little truth on their side to support it.

Lady S. Yes, my dear Snake; and I am no hypocrite to deny the satisfaction I reap from the success of my efforts: (*They rise.*) Wounded myself, in the early part of my life, by the envenomed tongue of slander, I confess I have since known no pleasure equal to the reducing others to the level of my own reputation.

Snake. Nothing can be more natural. But, Lady Sneerwell, there is one affair in which you have lately employed me, wherein, I confess, I am at a loss to guess your motives.

Lady S. I conceive you mean with respect to my neighbour, Sir Peter Teazle, and his family?

Snake. I do. Here are two young men, to whom Sir Peter has acted as a kind of guardian since their father's death, the eldest possessing the most

amiable character, and universally well spoken of; the youngest, the most dissipated and extravagant young fellow in the kingdom, without friends or character; the former an avowed admirer of your ladyship, and apparently your favourite; the latter attached to Maria, Sir Peter's ward, and confessedly beloved by her. Now, for the face of these circumstances, it is utterly unaccountable to me, why you, the widow of a city knight, with a good jointure, should not close with the passion of a man of such character and expectations as Mr. Surface; and more so why you should be so uncommonly earnest to destroy the mutual attachment subsisting between his brother Charles and Maria.

Lady S. Then at once to unravel this mystery, I must inform you, that love has no share whatever in the intercourse between Mr. Surface and me.

Snake. No!

Lady S. His real attachment is to Maria, or her fortune; but finding in his brother a favoured rival, he has been obliged to mask his pretensions, and profit by my assistance.

Snake. Yet still I am more puzzled why you should interest yourself in his success.

Lady S. He's a simpleton! how dull you are! Cannot you surmise the weakness which I hitherto, through shame, have concealed even from you! Must I confess, that Charles, that libertine, that extravagant, that bankrupt in fortune and reputation, that he it is for whom I'm thus anxious and malicious, and to gain whom I would sacrifice every thing!

Snake. Now, indeed, your conduct appears consistent: but how came you and Mr. Surface so confidential?

Lady S. For our mutual interest. I have found him out a long time since. I know him to be artful, selfish, and malicious: in short, a sentimental knave; while, with Sir Peter, and indeed with all his acquaintance, he passes for a youthful miracle of prudence, good sense, and benevolence.

Snake. Yes: yet Sir Peter vows he has not his equal in England; and above all, he praises him as a man of sentiment.

Lady S. True; and with the assistance of his sentiment and hypocrisy, he has brought him entirely into his interest with regard to Maria; while poor Charles has no friend in the house, though, I fear, he has a powerful one in Maria's heart, against whom we must direct our schemes.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mr. Surface.

Lady S. Shew him up. [*Exit Servant.*] He generally calls about this time. I don't wonder at people giving him to me for a lover.

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE.

Joseph. My dear Lady Sneerwell, how do you do to day! Mr. Snake, your most obedient.

Lady S. Snake has just been rallying me on our mutual attachment; but I have informed him of our real views. You know how useful he has been to us; and, believe me, the confidence is not ill placed.

Joseph. Madam, it is impossible for me to suspect a man of Mr. Snake's sensibility and discernment.

Lady S. Well, well, no compliments now; but tell me when you saw your mistress, Maria; or what is more material to me, your brother.

Joseph. I have not seen either since I left you; but I can inform you that they never meet. Some of your stories have taken a good effect on Maria.

Lady S. Ah! my dear Snake! the merit of this belongs to you: but do your brother's distresses increase?

Joseph. Every hour. I am told he has had another execution in the house yesterday. In short, his dissipation and extravagance exceed anything I ever heard of.

Lady S. Poor Charles!

Joseph. True, madam; notwithstanding his vices, one cannot help feeling for him. Poor Charles! I'm sure I wish it were in my power to be of any essential service to him; for the man who does not feel for the distresses of a friend, even though merited by his own misconduct, deserves—

Lady S. Oh, lud! you are going to be moral, and forget that you are among friends.

Joseph. Egad, that's true! I'll keep that sentiment till I see Sir Peter; however, it is certainly a charity to rescue Maria from such a libertine, who, if he is to be reclaimed, can be so only by one of your ladyship's superior accomplishments and understanding.

Snake. I believe, Lady Sneerwell, here's company coming. I'll go and copy the letter I mentioned to you. Mr. Surface, your most obedient.

Joseph. (*To Snake.*)—Your very devoted. [*Exit Snake.*] Lady Sneerwell, I am very sorry you have put any further confidence in that fellow.

Lady S. Why so?

Joseph. I have lately detected him in frequent conference with old Rowley, who was formerly my father's steward, and has never, you know, been a friend of mine.

Lady S. And do you think he would betray us?

Joseph. Nothing more likely: take my word for't, Lady Sneerwell, that fellow hasn't virtue enough to be faithful even to his own villany. Ah! Maria!

Enter MARIA.

Lady S. Maria, my dear, how do you do? What's the matter?

Maria. Oh! there is that disagreeable lover of mine, Sir Benjamin Backbite, has just called at my guardroom, with his odious uncle, Crabtree; so I slipped out, and ran hither to avoid them.

Lady S. Is that all?

Joseph. If my brother Charles had been of the party, madam, perhaps you would not have been so much alarmed.

Lady S. Nay, now you are severe; for I dare swear the truth of the matter is, Maria heard you were here. But, my dear, what has Sir Benjamin done, that you should avoid him so?

Maria. Oh! he has done nothing; but 'tis for what he has said: his conversation is a perpetual libel on all his acquaintance.

Joseph. Ay, and the worst of it is, there is no advantage in not knowing him; for he'll abuse a stranger just as soon as his best friend; and his uncle Crabtree is as bad.

Lady S. Nay, but we should make allowance. Sir Benjamin is a wit and a poet.

Maria. For my part, I own, madam, wit loses its respect with me, when I see it in company with malice. What do you think, Mr. Surface?

Joseph. Certainly, madam; to smile at the jest which plants a thorn in another's breast is to become a principal in the mischief.

Lady S. Psha! there's no possibility of being witty without a little ill-nature: the malice of a good thing is the barb that makes it stick. What's your opinion, Mr. Surface?

Joseph. To be sure, madam; that conversation, where the spirit of railery is suppressed, will ever appear tedious and insipid.

Maria. Well, I'll not debate how far scandal may be allowable; but in a man, I am sure, it is always contemptible. We have pride, envy, rivalry, and a thousand little motives to depreciate each other; but the male slanderer must have the cowardice of a woman before he can traduce one.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Madam, Mrs. Candour is below, and if your ladyship's at leisure, will leave her carriage.

Lady S. Beg her to walk in. [*Exit Servant.*] Now, Maria; however, here is a character to your taste; for though Mrs. Candour is a little talkative, every body allows her to be the best natured and best sort of woman—

Maria. Yes; with a very gross affectation of good nature and benevolence, she does more mischief than the direct malice of old Crabtree.

Joseph. I'faith, that's true, Lady Sneerwell: whenever I hear the current running against the characters of my friends, I never think them in such danger as when Candour undertakes their defence.

Lady S. Hush! here she is!

Enter MRS. CANDOUR.

Mrs. C. My dear Lady Sneerwell, how have you been this century? Mr. Surface, what news do you hear? though indeed it is no matter, for I think one hears nothing else but scandal.

Joseph. Just so, indeed, ma'am.

Mrs. C. (To Maria.) Oh, Maria! child, what! is the whole affair off between you and Charles? His extravagance, I presume; the town talks of nothing else.

Maria. I am very sorry, ma'am, the town has so little to do.

Mrs. C. True, true, child; but there's no stopping people's tongues. I own I was hurt to hear it, as I indeed was to learn, from the same quarter, that your guardian, Sir Peter, and Lady Teazle, have not agreed lately as well as could be wished.

Maria. 'Tis strangely impertinent for people to busy themselves so.

Mrs. C. Very true, child; but what's to be done? People will talk, there's no preventing it. Why, it was but yesterday I was told that Miss Gadabout had eloped with Sir Filigree Flirt. But, lord! there's no minding what one hears; though, to be sure, I had this from very good authority.

Maria. Such reports are highly scandalous.

Mrs. C. So they are, child; shameful, shameful! But the world is so censorious, no character escapes. Lord, now, who would have suspected your friend, Miss Prim, of an indiscretion? Yet such is the ill-nature of people, that they say her uncle stopped her last week, just as she was stepping into the York mail with her dancing-master.

Maria. I'll answer for't, there are no grounds for that report.

Mrs. C. Ay, no foundation in the world, I dare swear; no more, probably, than for the story circulated last month, of Mrs. Festino's affair with Colonel Cassino; though, to be sure, that matter was never rightly cleared up.

Joseph. The licence of invention some people take is monstrous, indeed.

Maria. 'Tis so; but, in my opinion, those who report such things are equally culpable.

Mrs. C. To be sure they are; tale-bearers are as bad as tale-makers: 'tis an old observation, and a very true one: but what's to be done, as I said before? how will you prevent people from talking? To-day, Mrs. Clackitt assured me, Mr. and Mrs. Honeymoon were at last become mere man and wife, like the rest of their acquaintance. She, likewise, hinted that a certain widow, in the next street, had got rid of her dropsy, and recovered her shape in a most surprising manner. And at the same time, Miss Tattle, who was by, affirmed, that Lord Buffalo had discovered his lady at a house of no extraordinary fame; and that Sir Harry Bouquet and Tom Saunter were to measure swords on a similar provocation. But, lord! do you think I would

report these things? No, no! tale-bearers, as I said before, are just as bad as the tale-makers.

Joseph. Ah! Mrs. Candour, if every body had your forbearance and good-nature!

Mrs. C. I confess, Mr. Surface, I cannot bear to hear people attacked behind their backs; and when ugly circumstances come out against our acquaintance, I own I always love to think the best. (*Lady Sneerwell and Maria retire.*) By-the-by, I hope 'tis not true that your brother is absolutely ruined?

Joseph. I am afraid his circumstances are very bad, indeed, ma'am.

Mrs. C. Ah! I heard so. But you must tell him to keep up his spirits; every body almost is in the same way. Lord Spindle, Sir Thomas Splint, and Mr. Nickit—all up, I hear, within this week; so if Charles be undone, he'll find half his acquaintance ruined, too; and that, you know, is a consolation.

Joseph. Doubtless, ma'am; a very great one.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mr. Crabtree and Sir Benjamin Backbite.

[*Exit.*]

Lady S. So, Maria, you see your lover pursues you; positively, you shan't escape.

Enter CRABTREE and SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE.

Crab. Lady Sneerwell, I kiss your hand! Mrs. Candour, I don't believe you are acquainted with my nephew, Sir Benjamin Backbite? Egad! ma'am, he has a pretty wit, and is a pretty poet, too; isn't he, Lady Sneerwell?

Sir B. Oh, fie, uncle!

Crab. Nay, egad! it is true; I back him at a rebus or a charade against the best rhymist in the kingdom. Has your ladyship heard the epigram he wrote last week on Lady Frizzle's feather catching fire? Do, Benjamin, repeat it, or the charade you made last night extempore at Mrs. Drowzie's conversation. Come now; your first is the name of a fish, your second a great naval commander, and—

Sir B. Uncle, now—pr'ythee—

Crab. I'faith, ma'am, 'twould surprise you to hear how ready he is at these things.

Lady S. I wonder, Sir Benjamin, you never publish anything.

Sir B. To say the truth, ma'am, 'tis very vulgar to print; and as my little productions are mostly satires and lampoons on particular people, I find they circulate more by giving copies in confidence to the friends of the parties. However, I have some love elegies, which, when favoured with this lady's smiles, I mean to give the public.

Crab. 'Fore heaven, ma'am, they'll immortalize you! you will be handed down to posterity, like Petrarch's Laura, or Waller's Sacharissa.

Sir B. Yes, madam, I think you will like them, when you shall see them on a beautiful quarto page, where a neat rivulet of text shall murmur through a meadow of margin. 'Fore gad! they will be the most elegant things of their kind!

Crab. But, ladies, have you heard the news?

Mrs. C. What, sir, do you mean the report of—

Crab. No, ma'am, that's not it—Miss Nicely is going to be married to her own footman.

Mrs. C. Impossible!

Crab. Ask Sir Benjamin.

Sir B. 'Tis very true, ma'am; every thing is fixed, and the wedding liveries bespoken.

Crab. Yes; and they do say there were very pressing reasons for it.

Lady S. Why, I have heard something of this before.

Mrs. C. It can't be; and I wonder any one should believe such a story, of so prudent a lady as Miss Nicely.

Sir B. Oh, lud! ma'am, that's the very reason 'twas believed at once. She has always been so

cautious and so reserved, that everybody was sure there was some reason for it at bottom.

Mrs. C. Why, to be sure, a tale of scandal is as fatal to the credit of a prudent lady of her stamp, as a fever is generally to those of the strongest constitutions. But there is a sort of puffy sickly reputation, that is always ailing, yet will outlive the robust characters of a hundred prudes.

Sir B. True, madam; there are true valetudinarians in reputation as well as constitution; who, being conscious of their weak part, avoid the least breath of air, and supply their want of stamina by care and circumspection.

Mrs. C. Well, but this may be all a mistake. You know, Sir Benjamin, very trifling circumstances often give rise to the most injurious tales.

Crab. That they do, I'll be sworn, ma'am. Did you ever hear how Miss Piper came to lose her lover and her character last summer at Tunbridge? — *Sir Benjamin*, you remember it.

Sir B. Oh! to be sure; the most whimsical of circumstances.

Lady S. How was it, pray?

Crab. Why, one evening, at Miss Ponto's assembly, the conversation happened to turn on the breeding Nova Scotia sheep in this country. Says a young lady in company, I have known instances of it; for Miss Letitia Piper, a first cousin of mine, had a Nova Scotia sheep that produced her twins. What! cries the lady dowager Dundizzy, (who you know is as deaf as a post,) has Miss Piper had twins? This mistake, as you may imagine, threw the whole company into a fit of laughter. However, 'twas the next day every where reported, and in a few days believed by the whole town, that Miss Letitia Piper had actually been brought to bed of a fine boy and girl; and, in less than a week, there were some people who could name the father, and the farm-house where the babies were put to nurse.

Lady S. Strange, indeed!

Crab. Matter of fact, I assure you. Oh, lud! Mr. Surface, pray is it true, that your uncle, Sir Oliver, is coming home?

Joseph. Not that I know of, indeed, sir.

Crab. He has been in the East Indies a long time. You can scarcely remember him, I believe? Sad comfort, whenever he returns, to hear how your brother has gone on!

Joseph. Charles has been imprudent, sir, to be sure; but I hope no busy people have already prejudiced Sir Oliver against him. He may reform.

Sir B. To be sure he may: for my part, I never believed him to be so utterly void of principal as people say; and though he has lost all his friends, I am told nobody is better spoken of by the Jews.

Crab. That's true, egad! nephew. If the Old Jewry were a ward, I believe Charles would be an alderman: no man more popular there, 'fore gad! I hear he pays as many annuities as the Irish tontine; and that whenever he is sick, they have prayers for the recovery of his health in all the synagogues.

Sir B. Yet no man lives in greater splendour. They tell me, when he entertains his friends, he will sit down to dinner with a dozen of his own securities; have a score of tradesmen waiting in the ante-chamber, and an officer behind every guest's chair.

Joseph. This may be entertainment to you, gentlemen, but you pay very little regard to the feelings of a brother.

Maria. Their malice is intolerable. Lady Sneerwell, I must wish you a good morning! I'm not very well. [Exit.]

Mrs. C. Oh, dear! she changes colour very much.

Lady S. Do, Mrs. Candour, follow her: she may want your assistance.

Mrs. C. That I will, with all my soul, ma'am. Poor dear girl, who knows what her situation may be. [Exit.]

Lady S. 'Twas nothing but that she could not bear to hear Charles reflected on, notwithstanding their difference.

Sir B. The young lady's penchant is obvious.

Crab. But, Benjamin, you must not give up the pursuit for that: follow her, and put her into good humour. Repeat her some of your own verses. Come, I'll assist you.

Sir B. Mr. Surface, I did not mean to hurt you; but depend on't, your brother is utterly undone.

Crab. Oh, lud! ay, undone as ever man was.— Can't raise a guinea!

Sir B. And every thing sold, I'm told, that was moveable.

Crab. I have seen one that was at his house. Not a thing left but some empty bottles that were overlooked, and the family pictures, which I believe are framed in the wainscot!

Sir B. And I'm very sorry, also, to hear some bad stories against him.

Crab. Oh! he has done many mean things, that's certain.

Sir B. But, however, as he's your brother—

Crab. We'll tell you all another opportunity.

[Exit with Sir Benjamin.]

Lady S. Ha, ha! 'tis very hard for them to leave a subject they have not quite run down.

Joseph. And I believe the abuse was no more acceptable to your ladyship than Maria.

Lady S. I doubt her affections are farther engaged than we imagine. But the family are to be here this evening, so you may as well dine where you are, and we shall have an opportunity of observing farther; in the meantime, I'll go and plot mischief, and you shall study sentiment. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—Sir Peter's House.

Enter SIR PETER.

Sir P. When an old bachelor marries a young wife, what is he to expect? 'Tis now six months since Lady Teazle made me the happiest of men; and I have been the most miserable dog ever since! We tiffed a little going to church, and came to a quarrel before the bells had done ringing. I was more than once nearly choked with gall during the honey-moon, and had lost all comfort of life before my friends had done wishing me joy. Yet I chose with caution; a girl bred wholly in the country, who never knew luxury beyond one silk gown, nor dissipation above the annual gala of a race-ball. Yet now she plays her part in all the extravagant fopperies of the fashion and the town, with as ready a grace as if she had never seen a bush or a grass-plot out of Grosvenor Square! I am sneered at by all my acquaintance, and paragraphed in the newspapers. She dissipates my fortune, and contradicts all my humours; yet, the worst of it is, I doubt I love her, or I should never bear all this. However, I'll never be weak enough to own it.

Enter ROWLEY.

Row. Oh! Sir Peter, your servant: how is it with you, sir?

Sir P. Very bad, master Rowley, very bad! I meet with nothing but crosses and vexations.

Row. What can have happened since yesterday?

Sir P. A good question to a married man!

Row. Nay, I'm sure, Sir Peter, your lady cannot be the cause of your uneasiness.

Sir P. Why, has anybody told you she is dead?

Row. Come, come, Sir Peter; you love her, notwithstanding your tempers don't exactly agree.

Sir P. But the fault is entirely hers, master Rowley. I am, myself, the sweetest tempered man alive, and hate a teasing temper: and so I tell her a hundred times a day.

Row. Indeed!

Sir P. Ay; and what is very extraordinary, in all our disputes she is always in the wrong! But Lady Sneerwell, and the set she meets at her house, encourage the perverseness of her disposition. Then, to complete my vexation, Maria, my ward, whom I ought to have the power of a father over, is determined to turn rebel, too, and absolutely refuses the man whom I have long resolved on for her husband: meaning, I suppose, to bestow herself on his prodigal brother.

Row. You know, sir, I have always taken the liberty to differ with you on the subject of these two young gentlemen. I only wish you may be deceived in your opinion of the elder. For Charles, my life on't! he will retrieve his errors yet. Their worthy father, once my honoured master, was, at his years, nearly as wild a spark; yet, when he died, he did not leave a more benevolent heart to lament his loss.

Sir P. You are wrong, master Rowley. On their father's death, you know, I acted as a kind of guardian to them both, till their uncle Sir Oliver's liberality gave them an early independence: of course, no person could have more opportunities of judging of their hearts, and I was never mistaken in my life. Joseph is indeed a model for the young men of the age. He is a man of sentiment, and acts up to the sentiments he professes; but for the other, take my word for't, if he had any grain of virtue by descent, he has dissipated it with the rest of his inheritance. Ah! my old friend, Sir Oliver, will be deeply mortified when he finds how part of his bounty has been misapplied.

Row. I am sorry to find you so violent against the young man, because this may be the most critical period of his fortune. I came hither with news that will surprise you.

Sir P. What! let me hear.

Row. Sir Oliver is arrived, and at this moment in town.

Sir P. How! you astonish me! I thought you did not expect him this month.

Row. I did not; but his passage has been remarkably quick.

Sir P. Egad! I shall rejoice to see my old friend. 'Tis sixteen years since we met. We have had many a day together. But does he still enjoin us not to inform his nephews of his arrival?

Row. Most strictly. He means, before it is known, to make some trial of their dispositions.

Sir P. Ah! there needs no art to discover their merits: however, he shall have his way. But, pray, does he know I am married?

Row. Yes, and will soon wish you joy.

Sir P. What, as we drink health to a friend in a consumption. Ah! Oliver will laugh at me. We used to rail at matrimony together: but he has been steady to his text. Well, he must be at my house, though! I'll instantly give orders for his reception. But, master Rowley, don't drop a word that Lady Teazle and I ever disagree.

Row. By no means.

Sir P. For I should never be able to stand Noll's jokes; so I'd have him think, Lord forgive me! that we are a very happy couple.

Row. I understand you: but then you must be very careful not to differ while he is in the house with you.

Sir P. Egad! and so we must; and that's impossible. Ah! master Rowley, when an old bachelor marries a young wife, he deserves—no—the crime carries its punishment along with it. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT II.—SCENE I.—*Sir Peter's House.*

Enter SIR PETER and LADY TEAZLE.

Sir P. Lady Teazle, Lady Teazle, I'll not bear it!

Lady T. Sir Peter, Sir Peter, you may bear it or not, as you please; but I ought to have my own way in every thing; and what's more, I will, too. What! though I was educated in the country, I know very well that women of fashion in London are accountable to nobody after they are married.

Sir P. Very well, ma'am, very well! so, a husband is to have no influence, no authority?

Lady T. Authority! No, to be sure: if you wanted authority over me, you should have adopted me, and not married me: I am sure you were old enough.

Sir P. Old enough! ay, there it is. Well, well, Lady Teazle, though my life may be made unhappy by your temper, I'll not be ruined by your extravagance.

Lady T. My extravagance! I'm sure I'm not more extravagant than a woman of fashion ought to be.

Sir P. No, no, madam, you shall throw away no more mums on such unmeaning luxury. 'Slife! to spend as much to furnish your dressing-room with flowers in winter as would suffice to turn the Pantheon into a green-house, and give a *fête champêtre* at Christmas.

Lady T. Lord, Sir Peter, am I to blame, because flowers are dear in cold weather? You should find fault with the climate, and not with me. For my part, I'm sure, I wish it were spring all the year round, and that roses grew under our feet!

Sir P. Oons! madam, if you had been born to this, I shouldn't wonder at your talking thus; but you forget what your situation was when I married you.

Lady T. No, no, I don't; 'twas a very disagreeable one, or I should never have married you.

Sir P. Yes, yes, madam, you were then in some what an humbler style: the daughter of a plain country squire. Recollect, Lady Teazle, when I first saw you sitting at your tambour, in a pretty figured linen gown, with a bunch of keys at your side; your hair combed smooth over a roll, and your apartment hung round with fruits in worsted, of your own working.

Lady T. Oh, yes! I remember it very well, and a curious life I led. My daily occupation to inspect the dairy, superintend the poultry, make extracts from the family receipt-book, and comb my aunt Deborah's lap-dog.

Sir P. Yes, yes, ma'am, 'twas so, indeed.

Lady T. And then, you know, my evening amusements! To draw patterns for ruffles, which I had not materials to make up; to play Pope Joan with the curate; to read a novel to my aunt; or to be stuck down to an old spinet to strum my father to sleep after a fox-chase.

Sir P. I am glad you have got so good a memory. Yes, madam, these were the recreations I took you from; but now you must have your coach, vis-à-vis, and three powdered footmen before your chair; and, in the summer, a pair of white cats to draw you to Kensington Gardens. No recollection, I suppose, when you were content to ride double, behind the butler, on a dock'd coach-horse.

Lady T. No; I swear I never did that: I deny the butler and the coach-horse.

Sir P. This, madam, was your situation; and what have I done for you? I have made you a woman of fashion, of fortune, of rank; in short, I have made you my wife.

Lady T. Well, then, and there is but one thing more you can make me to add to the obligation, and that is—

Sir P. My widow, I suppose?

Lady T. Hem! hem!

Sir P. I thank you, madam; but don't flatter yourself; for though your ill conduct may disturb my peace of mind, it shall never break my heart

I promise you: however, I am equally obliged to you for the hint.

Lady T. Then why will you endeavour to make yourself so disagreeable to me, and thwart me in every little elegant expense?

Sir P. 'Slife! madam, I say, had you any of these little elegant expenses when you married me?

Lady T. Lud, Sir Peter! would you have me out of the fashion?

Sir P. The fashion, indeed! What had you to do with the fashion before you married me?

Lady T. For my part, I should think you would like to have your wife thought a woman of taste.

Sir P. Ay, there again; taste! zounds, madam, you had no taste when you married me.

Lady T. That's very true, indeed, Sir Peter; and after having married you, I should never pretend to taste again, I allow. But now, 'Sir Peter, since we have finished our daily jangle, I presume I may go to my engagement at Lady Sneerwell's.

Sir P. Ay, there's another precious circumstance; a charming set of acquaintance you have made there.

Lady T. Nay, Sir Peter, they are all people of rank and fortune, and remarkably tenacious of reputation.

Sir P. Yes, egad, they are tenacious of reputation with a vengeance: for they don't choose anybody should have a character but themselves! Such a crew! Ah! many a wretch has rid on a hurdle who has done less mischief than these utterers of forged tales, coiners of scandal, and clippers of reputation.

Lady T. What! would you restrain the freedom of speech?

Sir P. Ah! they have made you just as bad as any one of the society.

Lady T. Why, I believe I do bear a part with a tolerable grace.

Sir P. Grace, indeed!

Lady T. But I vow I bear no malice against the people I abuse. When I say an ill-natured thing, 'tis out of pure good humour; and I take it for granted, they deal exactly in the same manner with me. But, Sir Peter, you know you promised to come to Lady Sneerwell's, too.

Sir P. Well, well, I'll call in just to look after my own character.

Lady T. Then, indeed, you must make haste after me, or you'll be too late. So, good b'ye. [Exit.]

Sir P. So, I have gained much by my intended expostulations: yet, with what a charming air she contradicts every thing I say, and how pleasingly she shews her contempt for my authority! Well, though I can't make her love me, there is great satisfaction in quarrelling with her; and I think she never appears to such advantage as when she is doing everything in her power to plague me. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—Lady Sneerwell's House.—Company sitting at the back of the stage at card tables.

LADY SNEERWELL, MRS. CANDOUR, CRABTREE, SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE, and JOSEPH SURFACE, discovered; Servants attending with tea, &c.

Lady S. Nay, positively, we will hear it.

Joseph. Yes, yes; the epigram, by all means.

Sir B. O plague on't, uncle, 'tis mere nonsense.

Crab. No, no; 'fore Gad, very clever for an extempore!

Sir B. But, ladies, you should be acquainted with the circumstance. You must know, that one day last week, as Lady Betty Curricie was taking the dust in Hyde Park, in a sort of duodecimo phetion, she desired me to write some verses on her ponies; upon which I took out my pocket-book, and in one moment, produced the following:

Sure never were seen two such beautiful ponies;
Other horses are clowns, but these macaronies:
To give them this title I'm sure is not wrong,
Their legs are so slim, and their tails are so long.

Crab. There, ladies, done in the smack of a whip, and on horseback, too.

Joseph. A very Phœbus, mounted, indeed, Sir Benjamin!

Sir B. Oh, dear, sir! trifles, trifles.

Enter MARIA and LADY TEAZLE.

Mrs. C. I must have a copy. [Peter?

Lady S. Lady Teazle, I hope we shall see Sir

Lady T. I believe he'll wait on your ladyship presently.

Lady S. Maria, my dear, you look grave. Come, you shall sit down to piquet with Mr. Surface.

Maria. I take very little pleasure in cards; however, I'll do as your ladyship pleases.

Lady T. I am surprised Mr. Surface should sit down with her; I thought he would have embraced this opportunity of speaking to me, before Sir Peter came. (Aside.)

Mrs. C. Now, I'll die, but you are so scandalous, I'll forswear your society.

Lady T. What's the matter, Mrs. Candour?

Mrs. C. They'll not allow our friend, Miss Vermillion, to be handsome.

Lady S. Oh! surely, she is a pretty woman.

Crab. I am very glad you think so, ma'am.

Mrs. C. She has a charming fresh colour.

Lady T. Yes, when it is fresh put on.

Mrs. C. Oh, fie! I'll swear her colour is natural: I have seen it come and go.

Lady T. I dare swear you have, ma'am: it goes off at night, and comes again in the morning.

Mrs. C. Ha, ha, ha! how I hate to hear you talk so! But surely, now, her sister is, or was, very handsome.

Crab. Who? Mrs. Evergreen? O lord! she's six and fifty if she's an hour!

Mrs. C. Now, positively, you wrong her; fifty-two or fifty-three is the utmost; and I don't think she looks more.

Sir B. Ah! there's no judging by her looks, unless one could see her face.

Lady S. Well, well; if Mrs. Evergreen does take some pains to repair the ravages of time, you must allow she effects it with great ingenuity; and surely that's better than the careless manner in which the widow Ochre caulks her wrinkles.

Sir B. Nay, now, Lady Sneerwell, you are severe upon the widow. Come, come, 'tis not that she paints so ill; but when she has finished her face, she joins it on so badly to her neck, that she looks like a mended statue, in which the connoisseur may see at once that the head is modern, though the trunk's antique.

Crab. Ha, ha, ha! Well said, nephew!

Mrs. C. Ha, ha, ha! Well, you may make me laugh; but I vow I hate you for it. What do you think of Miss Simper?

Sir B. Why, she has very pretty teeth.

Lady T. Yes, and on that account, when she is neither speaking or laughing, (which very seldom happens,) she never absolutely shuts her mouth, but leaves it always on a jar, as it were—thus. (Shews her teeth.)

Mrs. C. How can you be so ill-natured?

Lady T. Nay, I allow even that's better than the pain Mrs. Prim takes to conceal her losses in front. She draws her mouth till it positively resembles the aperture of a poor box, and all her words appear to slide out edgewise, as it were; thus—How do you do, madam! Yes, madam. (Mimics.)

Lady S. Very well, Lady Teazle; I see you can be a little severe.

Lady T. In defence of a friend it is but jus-

SCENE 1.]

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL.

tice. But here comes Sir Peter to spoil our pleasantry.

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

Sir P. Ladies, your most obedient. Mercy on me! here is the whole set! a character dead at every word, I suppose. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. C. I am rejoiced you are come, Sir Peter. They have been so censorious; they'll allow good qualities to nobody.

Sir P. That must be very distressing to you, indeed, Mrs. Candour.

Mrs. C. Not even good nature to our friend Mrs. Parsy.

Lady T. What, the fat dowager who was at Mrs. Quadrille's last night?

Mrs. C. Nay, but her bulk is her misfortune: and when she takes such pains to get rid of it, you ought not to reflect on her.

Lady S. That's very true, indeed.

Lady T. Yes, I know she almost lives on acids and small whey; laces herself by pullies; and often in the hottest noon in summer, you may see her on a little squat pony, with her hair plaited up behind like a drummer's, and puffing round the ring on a full trot.

Mrs. C. I thank you, Lady Teazle, for defending her.

Sir P. Yes, a good defence, truly!

Mrs. C. But, Sir Benjamin is as censorious as Miss Sallow.

Crab. Yes, and she is a curious being to pretend to be censorious: an awkward gawky, without any one good point under heaven.

Mrs. C. Positively, you shall not be so very severe. Miss Sallow is a near relation of mine by marriage, and as for her person, great allowance is to be made; for, let me tell you, a woman labours under many disadvantages who tries to pass for a girl at six and thirty.

Lady N. Though, surely, she is handsome still; and for the weakness in her eyes, considering how much she reads by candlelight, it is not to be wondered at.

Mrs. C. True; and then as to her manner; upon my word, I think it is particularly graceful, considering she never had the least education; for you know her mother was a Welsh milliner, and her father a sugar-baker at Bristol.

Sir B. Ah! you are both of you too good-natured!

Sir P. Yes, d—d good-natured! This their own relation! mercy on me! (*Aside.*)

Crab. Oh, to be sure: she has herself the oddest countenance that ever was seen; 'tis a collection of features from all the different countries of the globe.

Sir B. So she has, indeed—an Irish front—

Crab. Caledonian locks—

Sir B. Dutch nose—

Crab. Austrian lips—

Sir B. Complexion of a Spaniard—

Crab. And teeth à la Chinois—

Sir B. In short, her face resembles a table d'hôte at Spa, where no two guests are of a nation—

Crab. Or a congress at the close of a general war, wherein all the members, even to her eyes, appear to have a different interest, and her nose and chin are the only parties likely to join issue.

Mrs. C. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir P. Mercy on my life! a person they dine with twice a week. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. C. Nay, but I vow you shall not carry the laugh off so; for, give me leave to say, that Mrs. Ogle—

Sir P. Madam, madam, I beg your pardon; there's no stopping these good gentlemen's tongues. But when I tell you, Mrs. Candour, that the lady they are abusing is a particular friend of mine, I hope you'll not take her part.

Lady S. Ha, ha, ha! Well said, Sir Peter! but you are a cruel creature; too phlegmatic yourself for a jest, and too peevish to allow wit in others.

Sir P. Ah! madam, true wit is more nearly allied to good-nature, than your ladyship is aware of.

Lady T. True, Sir Peter; I believe they are as near akin that they can never be united.

Sir B. Or rather, suppose them man and wife because one so seldom sees them together.

Lady T. But Sir Peter is such an enemy to scandal, I believe he would have it put down by parliament.

Sir P. 'Fore heaven, madam, if they were to consider the sporting with reputation of as much importance as poaching on manors, and pass an act for preservation of fame, as well as game, I believe many would thank them for the bill.

Lady S. Oh, lud! Sir Peter, would you deprive us of our privileges?

Sir P. Ay, madam; and then no person should be permitted to kill characters and run down reputations, but qualified old maids and disappointed widows.

Lady S. Go, you monster!

Mrs. C. But, surely, you would not be quite so severe on those who only report what they hear?

Sir P. Yes, madam, I would have law merchants for them, too; and in all cases of scandalous currency whenever the drawer of the lie was not to be found the injured parties should have a right to come on any of the indorsers. (*Servant enters, and whispers to Sir Peter.*)

Crab. Well, for my part, I believe there never was a scandalous tale without some foundation.

Lady S. Come, ladies, shall we sit down to card in the next room?

Sir P. (*To Serv.*) I'll be with them directly. I'll get away unperceived. (*Apart.*) (*Exit Serv.*)

Lady S. Sir Peter, you are not going to leave us

Sir P. Your ladyship must excuse me; I'm called away by particular business. But I leave my character behind me. • (*Exit*)

Sir B. Well—certainly, Lady Teazle, that sort of yours is a strange being. I could tell you some stories of him would make you laugh heartily, if he were not your husband.

Lady T. Oh! pray don't mind that;—why don't you?—come, do let's hear them. (*Joins the rest of the company going into the next room.*)

Joseph. Maria, I see you have no satisfaction in this society.

Maria. How is it possible I should? If to raise malicious smiles at the infirmities or misfortunes of those who have never injured us, be the province of wit or humour, heaven grant me a double portion of dulness!

Joseph. Yet they appear more ill-natured than they are,—they have no malice at heart.

Maria. Then is their conduct still more contemptible; for, in my opinion, nothing could excuse the intemperance of their tongues, but a natural and uncontrollable bitterness of mind.

Joseph. But can you, Maria, feel thus for others and be unkind to me alone? Is hope to be denied the tenderest passion?

Maria. Why will you distress me by renewing this subject?

Joseph. Ah, Maria! you would not treat me thus and oppose your guardian, Sir Peter's will, but that I see that profligate Charles is still a favourite rival.

Maria. Ungenerously urged! But whatever my sentiments are for that unfortunate young man, be assured I shall not feel more bound to give him up because his distresses have lost him the regard even of a brother.

Joseph. Nay, but Maria, do not leave me with a frown: by all that's honest, I swear—Gad's life

here's Lady Teazle!—(Aside.)—You must not—no, you shall not—for, though I have the greatest regard for Lady Teazle!

Maria. Lady Teazle!

Joseph. Yet, were Sir Peter to suspect—

Enter LADY TEAZLE.

Lady T. What is this, pray? (Aside.) Does he take her for me?—Child, you are wanted in the next room. [Exit Maria.]—What is all this, pray?

Joseph. Oh! the most unlucky circumstance in nature! Maria has somehow suspected the tender concern I have for your happiness, and threatened to acquaint Sir Peter with her suspicions, and I was just endeavouring to reason with her when you came in.

Lady T. Indeed! but you seemed to adopt a very tender method of reasoning—do you usually argue on your knees?

Joseph. O, she's a child, and I thought a little bombast—But, Lady Teazle, when are you to give me your judgment on my library, as you promised?

Lady T. No, no; I begin to think it would be imprudent, and you know I admit you as a lover no farther than fashion requires.

Joseph. True—a mere platonic cicisbeo—what every London wife is entitled to

Lady T. Certainly, one must not be out of the fashion. However, I have so many of my country prejudices left, that, though Sir Peter's ill-humour may vex me ever so, it never shall provoke me to—

Joseph. The only revenge in your power. Well—I applaud your moderation.

Lady T. Go—you are an insinuating wretch. But we shall be missed; let us join the company.

Joseph. But we had best not return together.

Lady T. Well—don't stay; for Maria shan't come to hear any more of your reasoning, I promise you. [Exit.]

Joseph. A curious dilemma, truly, my politics have run me into! I wanted, at first, only to ingratiate myself with Lady Teazle, that she might not be my enemy with Maria; and I have, I don't know how, become her serious lover. Sincerely, I begin to wish I had never made such a point of gaining so very good a character, for it has led me into so many d-d rogueries, that I doubt I shall be exposed at last. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—Sir Peter Teazle's.

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE and ROWLEY.

Sir O. Ha, ha, ha! So, my old friend is married, eh?—a young wife out of the country. Ha, ha, ha! That he should have stood bluff to old bachelor so long, and sink into a husband at last.

Row. But you must not rally him on the subject, Sir Oliver: 'tis a tender point, I assure you, though he has been married only seven months.

Sir O. Then he has been just half a year on the stool of repentance!—Poor Peter!—But you say he has entirely given up Charles—never sees him?

Row. His prejudice against him is astonishing, and I am sure, greatly increased by a jealousy of him with Lady Teazle, which he has been industriously led into by a scandalous society in the neighbourhood, who have contributed not a little to Charles's ill name. Whereas, the truth is I believe, if the lady be partial to either of them, his brother is the favourite.

Sir O. Ay, I know there are a set of malicious, prating prudent gossips, both male and female, who murder characters to kill time; and will rob a young fellow of his good name, before he has years to know the value of it. But I am not to be prejudiced against my nephew by such, I promise you. No, no,—if Charles has done nothing false or mean, I shall compound for his extravagance.

Row. Then, my life on't, you will reclaim him. Ah, sir! it gives me new life to find that your heart

is not turned against him; and that the son of my good old master has one friend, however, left.

Sir O. What, shall I forget, Master Rowley, when I was at his years myself? Egad, my brother and I were neither of us very prudent youths; and yet, I believe, you have not seen many better men than your old master was.

Row. Sir, 'tis this reflection gives me assurance that Charles may yet be a credit to his family.—But here comes Sir Peter.

Sir O. Egad, so he does. Mercy on me!—he's greatly altered—and seems to have a settled married look! One may read husband in his face at this distance.

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

Sir P. Ha! Sir Oliver—my old friend! Welcome to England a thousand times!

Sir O. Thank you, thank you, Sir Peter! and I faith, I am glad to find you well, believe me.

Sir P. Oh! 'tis a long time since we met—fifteen years, I doubt, Sir Oliver, and many a cross accident in the time.

Sir O. Ay, I have had my share. But, what! I find you are married, eh, my old boy?—Well, well, it can't be helped—and so—I wish you joy with all my heart.

Sir P. Thank you, thank you, Sir Oliver. Yes, I have entered into—the happy state; but we'll not talk of that now.

Sir O. True, true, Sir Peter: old friends should not begin on grievances at first meeting—no, no, no.

Row. (Apart.) Take care, pray, sir.—

Sir O. Well, so one of my nephews is a wild rogue, I find, eh?

Sir P. Wild! Ah! my old friend, I grieve for your disappointment there; he's a lost young man, indeed. However, his brother will make you amends; Joseph is, indeed, what a youth should be. Every body in the world speaks well of him.

Sir O. I am sorry to hear it; he has too good a character to be an honest fellow. Every body speaks well of him! Psha! then he has bowed as low to knaves and fools as to the honest dignity of genius and virtue.

Sir P. What, Sir Oliver! do you blame him for not making enemies?

Sir O. Yes, if he have merit enough to deserve them.

Sir P. Well, well; you'll be convinced when you know him. 'Tis edification to hear him converse; he professes the noblest sentiments.

Sir O. Oh! plague of his sentiments! if he salute me with a scrap of morality in his mouth, I shall be sick directly.—But, however don't mistake me, Sir Peter; I don't mean to defend Charles's errors: but, before I form my judgment of either of them, I intend to make a trial of their hearts: and my friend Rowley and I have planned something for the purpose.

Row. And Sir Peter shall own for once he has been mistaken.

Sir P. Oh! my life on Joseph's honour.

Sir O. Well, come, give us a bottle of good wine, and we'll drink the lad's health, and tell you our scheme.

Sir P. Allons, then!

Sir O. And don't, Sir Peter, be so severe against your old friend's son. Ods my life! I am not sorry that he has run out of the course a little: for my part, I hate to see prudence clinging to the green suckers of youth; 'tis like ivy round a sapling, and spoils the growth of the tree. [Exeunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Sir Peter Teazle's.

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE, SIR PETER TEAZLE, and ROWLEY.

Sir P. Well, then, we will see this fellow

first, and have our wine afterwards: but how is this, master Rowley? I don't see the jet of your scheme.

Row. Why, sir, this Mr. Stanley, whom I was speaking of, is nearly related to them by their mother. He was once a merchant in Dublin, but has been ruined by a series of undeserved misfortunes. He has applied, by letter, since his confinement, both to Mr. Surface and Charles; from the former he has received nothing but evasive promises of future service, while Charles has done all that his extravagance has left him power to do; and he is, at this time, endeavouring to raise a sum of money, part of which, in the midst of his own distresses, I know he intends for the service of poor Stanley.

Sir O. Ah! he is my brother's son.

Sir P. Well, but how is Sir Oliver personally to—

Row. Why, sir, I will inform Charles and his brother, that Stanley has obtained permission to apply personally to his friends, and as they have neither of them ever seen him, let Sir Oliver assume his character, and he will have a fair opportunity of judging, at least, of the benevolence of their dispositions; and, believe me, sir, you will find in the youngest brother, one who, in the midst of folly and dissipation, is still, as our immortal bard expresses it, "A heart to pity, and a hand open as day, for melting charity."

Sir P. Psha! What signifies his having an open hand or purse either, when he has nothing left to give? Well, well; make the trial, if you please. But where is the fellow whom you brought Sir Oliver to examine, relative to Charles's affairs?

Row. Below, waiting his commands, and no one can give him better intelligence. This, Sir Oliver, is a friendly Jew, who, to do him justice, has done everything in his power to bring your nephew to a proper sense of his extravagance.

Sir P. Pray, let us have him in.

Row. Desire Mr. Moses to walk-up stairs.

Sir P. But, pray, why should you suppose he will speak the truth?

Row. Oh! I have convinced him that he has no chance of recovering certain sums advanced to Charles, but through the bounty of Sir Oliver, who he knows is arrived; so that you may depend on his fidelity to his own interests. I have also another evidence in my power, one Snake, whom I detected in a matter little short of forgery; and shall shortly produce to remove some of your prejudices, Sir Peter, relative to Charles and Lady Teazle.

Sir P. I have heard too much on that subject.

Row. Here comes the honest Israelite.

Enter MOSES.

This is Sir Oliver.

Sir O. Sir, I understand you have lately had great dealings with my nephew, Charles.

Moses. Yes, Sir Oliver, I have done all I could for him; but he was ruined before he came to me for assistance.

Sir O. That was unlucky, truly; for you have had no opportunity of shewing your talents.

Moses. None at all; I hadn't the pleasure of knowing his distresses till he was some thousands worse than nothing.

Sir O. Unfortunate, indeed! But I suppose you have done all in your power for him, honest Moses?

Moses. Yes, he knows that; this very evening I was to have brought him a gentleman from the city, who does not know him, and will, I believe, advance him some money.

Sir P. What! one, Charles never had money from before?

Moses. Yes; Mr. Premium, of Crutched Friars, formerly a broker.

Sir P. Egad! Sir Oliver, a thought strikes me. Charles, you say, does not know Mr. Premium?

Moses. Not at all.

Sir P. Now then, Sir Oliver, you may have a better opportunity of satisfying yourself than by an old romancing tale of a poor relation: go with my friend Moses, and represent Premium; and then, I'll answer for it, you'll see your nephew in all his glory.

Sir O. Egad! I like this idea better than the other, and I may visit Joseph afterwards as old Stanley.

Sir P. True; so you may.

Row. Well, this is taking Charles rather at a disadvantage, to be sure; however, Moses, you understand Sir Peter, and will be faithful?

Moses. You may depend upon me. (*Looks at his watch.*) This is near the time I was to have gone.

Sir O. I'll accompany you as soon as you please, Moses. But, hold! I have forgot one thing: how the plague shall I be able to pass for a Jew?

Moses. There's no need: the principal is Christian.

Sir O. Is he? I'm very sorry to hear it. But then again, a'n't I rather too smartly dressed to look like a money-lender?

Sir P. Not at all; 'twould not be out of character, if you went in your own carriage: would it, Moses?

Moses. Not in the least.

Sir O. Well, but how must I talk? there's certainly some cant of usury and mode of treating that I ought to know.

Sir P. Oh! there's not much to learn. The great point, as I take it, is to be exorbitant enough in your demands. Eh! Moses?

Moses. Yes, that's a very great point.

Sir O. I'll answer for't, I'll not be wanting in that. I'll ask him eight or ten per cent. on the loan, at least.

Moses. If you ask him no more than that, you'll be discovered immediately.

Sir O. Eh! what the plague! how much, then?

Moses. That depends upon the circumstances. If he appear not very anxious for the supply, you should require only forty or fifty per cent.; but if you find him in great distress, and want the monies very bad, you may ask double.

Sir P. A good, honest trade you're learning, Sir Oliver.

Sir O. Truly, I think so; and not unprofitable.

Moses. Then, you know, you haven't the monies yourself, but are forced to borrow them for him or a friend.

Sir O. Oh! I borrow it of a friend, do I?

Moses. Yes; and your friend is an unconscionable dog: but you can't help that.

Sir O. My friend an unconscionable dog, is he?

Moses. Yes; and he himself has not the monies but him, but is forced to sell stock at a great loss.

Sir O. He is forced to sell stock at a great loss is he? Well, that's very kind of him.

Sir P. I faith! Sir Oliver—Mr. Premium, I mean you'll soon be master of the trade.

Sir O. Moses shall give me farther instructions as we go together.

Sir P. You will not have much time, for your nephew lives hard by.

Sir O. Oh! never fear: my tutor appears so able that though Charles lived in the next street, it must be my own fault if I am not a complete rogue before I turn the corner. [*Exit with Moses*]

Sir P. So, now, I think Sir Oliver will be convinced: you are partial, Rowley, and would have prepared Charles for the other plot.

Row. No, upon my word, Sir Peter.

Sir P. Well, go bring me this Snake, and I'll hear what he has to say presently. I see Maria, and want to speak with her. [*Exit Rowley.*] I should be glad to be convinced my suspicions of Lady Teazle and Charles were unjust. I have never yet opened my mind on this subject to my friend Joseph; I am determined I will do it; he will give me his opinion sincerely.

Enter MARIA.

So, child, has Mr. Surface returned with you?

Maria. No, sir; he was engaged.

Sir P. Well, Maria, do you not reflect, the more you converse with that amiable young man, what return his partiality for you deserves?

Maria. Indeed, Sir Peter, your frequent importunity on this subject distresses me extremely; you compel me to declare, that I know no man who has ever paid me a particular attention, whom I would not prefer to Mr. Surface.

Sir P. So; here's perverseness! No, no, Maria; 'tis Charles only whom you would prefer. 'Tis evident his vices and follies have won your heart.

Maria. This is unkind, sir. You know I have obeyed you in neither seeing nor corresponding with him: I have heard enough to convince me that he is unworthy my regard. Yet I cannot think it culpable, if, while my understanding severely condemns his vices, my heart suggests some pity for his distresses.

Sir P. Well, well; pity him as much as you please, but give your heart and hand to a worthy object.

Maria. Never to his brother.

Sir P. Go, perverse and obstinate! but take care, madam; you've never yet known what the authority of a guardian is: don't compel me to inform you of it.

Maria. I can only say, you shall not have just reason. 'Tis true, by my father's will, I am for a short period bound to regard you as his substitute; but must cease to think you so, when you would compel me to be miserable. [*Exit.*]

Sir P. Was ever man so crossed as I am? Everything conspiring to fret me! I had not been involved in matrimony a fortnight, before her father, a hale and hearty man, died; on purpose, I believe, for the pleasure of plaguing me with the care of his daughter. (*Lady T. sings without.*) But here comes my helpmate! She appears in great good-humour. How happy I should be if I could tease her into loving me, though but a little.

Enter LADY TEAZLE.

Lady T. Lud! Sir Peter, I hope you haven't been quarrelling with Maria? It is not using me well to be ill-humoured when I am not by.

Sir P. Ah! Lady Teazle, you might have the power to make me good-humoured at all times.

Lady T. I am sure I wish I had; for I want you to be in a charming sweet temper at this moment. Do be good-humoured now, and let me have two hundred pounds, will you?

Sir P. Two hundred pounds! What, a'n't I to be in a good-humour without paying for it? But speak to me thus, and, i'faith! there's nothing I could refuse you. You shall have it; (*gives notes*) but seal me a bond for the re-payment.

Lady T. Oh! no: there, my note of hand will do as well.

Sir P. And you shall no longer reproach me with not giving you an independent settlement. I mean absurdly to surprise you: but shall we always live thus? oh!

Lady T. If you please. I'm sure I don't care how soon we leave off quarrelling, provided you'll own you were tired first.

Sir P. Well, then, let our future contest be, who shall be most obliging.

Lady T. I assure you, Sir Peter, good-nature becomes you; you look now as you did before we were married, when you used to walk with me under the elms, and tell me stories of what a gallant you were in your youth, and chuck me under the chin, you would; and ask me if I thought I could love an old fellow, who would deny me nothing—didn't you?

Sir P. Yes, yes; and you were as kind and attentive—

Lady T. Ay, so I was; and would always take your part, when my acquaintance used to abuse you, and turn you into ridicule.

Sir P. Indeed!

Lady T. Ay, and when my cousin Sophy has called you a stiff, peevish, old bachelor, and laughed at me for thinking of marrying one who might be my father, I have always defended you, and said, I didn't think you so ugly by any means.

Sir P. Thank you.

Lady T. And I dared say you'd make a very good sort of a husband.

Sir P. And you prophesied right; and we shall now be the happiest couple—

Lady T. And never differ again?

Sir P. No, never: though at the same time, indeed, my dear Lady Teazle, you must watch your temper very seriously; for in all our little quarrels, my dear, if you recollect, my love, you always begin first.

Lady T. I beg your pardon, my dear Sir Peter: indeed, you always gave the provocation.

Sir P. Now see, my angel! take care: contradicting isn't the way to keep friends.

Lady T. Then don't you begin it, my love.

Sir P. There, now; you—you are going on. You don't perceive, my life, that you are just doing the very thing which you know always makes me angry.

Lady T. Nay, you know, if you will be angry without any reason, my dear—

Sir P. There! now you want to quarrel again.

Lady T. No, I am sure I don't: but you will be so peevish—

Sir P. There now! who begins first?

Lady T. Why, you, to be sure. I said nothing: but there's no bearing your temper.

Sir P. No, no, madam; the fault's in your own temper.

Lady T. Ay, you are just what my cousin Sophy said you would be.

Sir P. Your cousin Sophy is a forward, impertinent gipsy.

Lady T. You are a great bear, I'm sure, to abuse my relations.

Sir P. Now may all the plagues of marriage be doubled on me, if ever I try to be friends with you any more!

Lady T. So much the better

Sir P. No, no, madam; 'tis evident you never cared a pin for me, and I was a madman to marry you: a pert, rural coquette, that had refused half the honest squires in the neighbourhood.

Lady T. And I am sure I was a fool to marry you: an old, dangling bachelor, who was single at fifty, only because he never could meet with any one who would have him.

Sir P. Ay, ay, madam; but you were pleased enough to listen to me: you never had such an offer before.

Lady T. No! didn't I refuse Sir Tivy Terrier, who, everybody said, would have been a better match? for his estate is just as good as your's, and he has broken his neck since we have been married.

Sir P. I have done with you, madam. You are an unfeeling, ungrateful—but there's an end of everything. I believe you capable of everything that is

bad. Yes, madam, I now believe the reports relative to you and Charles, madam. Yes, madam, you and Charles are—not without grounds—

Lady T. Take care, Sir Peter; you had better not insinuate any such thing. I'll not be suspected without cause, I promise you.

Sir P. Very well, madam; very well. A separate maintenance as soon as you please. Yes, madam, or a divorce. I'll make an example of myself for the benefit of all old bachelors.

Lady T. Agreed, agreed! And now, my dear Sir Peter, we are of a mind once more, we may be the happiest couple—and never differ again, you know. Ha, ha, ha! Well, you are going to be in a passion, I see, and I shall only interrupt you—so, bye, bye!

[*Exit.*]

Sir P. Plagues and tortures! Can't I make her angry either? Oh! I am the most miserable fellow! but I'll not bear her presuming to keep her temper; she may break my heart, but she sha'n't keep her temper.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*Charles Surface's House.*

Enter TRIP, SIR OLIVER SURFACE, and MOSSES.

Trip. Here, Master Moses, if you'll stay a moment, I'll try whether—what's the gentleman's name?

[*name?*]

Sir O. (*Aside to Moses.*) Mr. Moses, what is my

Moses. Mr. Premium.

Trip. Premium! very well.

[*Exit.*]

Sir O. To judge by the servants, one wouldn't believe the master was ruined. But, what! sure, this was my brother's house?

Moses. Yes, sir; Mr. Charles bought it of Mr. Joseph, with the furniture, pictures, &c. just as the old gentleman left it. Sir Peter thought it a piece of extravagance in him.

Sir O. In my mind, the other's economy in selling it to him was more reprehensible by half.

Re-enter TRIP.

Trip. My master says you must wait, gentlemen: he has company, and can't speak with you yet.

Sir O. If he knew who it was wanted to see him, perhaps he would not send such a message.

Trip. Yes, yes, sir; he knows you are here: I did not forget little Premium; no, no, no.

Sir O. Very well; and I pray, sir, what may be your name?

Trip. Trip, sir; my name is Trip, at your service.

Sir O. Well, then, Mr. Trip, you have a pleasant sort of place here, I guess?

Trip. Why, yes, here are three or four of us pass our time agreeably enough; but then our wages are sometimes a little in arrear; and not very great, either: but fifty pounds a year, and find our own bags and bouquets.

Sir O. Bags and bouquets! halters and bastinadoes! (*Aside.*)

Trip. And, apropos, Moses, have you been able to get me that little bill discounted?

Sir O. Wants to raise money, too! mercy on me! Has his distresses, too, I warrant, like a lord; and affects creditors and duns. (*Aside.*)

Moses. 'Twas not to be done, indeed, Mr. Trip. (*Gives Trip the note.*)

Trip. Good luck! you surprise me. My friend Brush has indorsed it, and I thought when he put his name at the back of a bill 'twas the same as cash.

Moses. No; 'twouldn't do.

Trip. A small sum—but twenty pounds. Harkye! Moses, do you think you couldn't get it me by way of annuity?

Sir O. An annuity! Ha, ha! A footman raise money by way of annuity! Well done, luxury, egad! (*Aside.*)

Moses. Well, but you must insure your place.

Trip. Oh! with all my heart! I'll insure my place, and my life, too, if you please.

Sir O. It's more than I would your neck. (*Aside.*)

Moses. But, is there nothing you could deposit?

Trip. Why, nothing capital of my master's wardrobe has dropped lately; but I could give you a mortgage on some of his winter clothes, with equity of redemption before November; or you shall have the reversion of the French velvet, or a post-obit on the blue and silver: these, I should think, Moses, with a few pair of point ruffles, as a collateral security—(*Bell rings.*)—Egad! I heard the bell. I believe, gentlemen, I can now introduce you. Don't forget the annuity, little Moses. This way, gentlemen. I'll insure my place, you know.

Sir O. If the man be a shadow of the master, this is the temple of dissipation, indeed. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*An antique Hall.*

CHARLES SURFACE, CARELESS, SIR HARRY, &c. discovered at a table, with wine.

Charles. Fore heaven! 'tis true: there's the great degeneracy of the age. Many of our acquaintance have taste, spirit, and politeness; but, plague on't! they won't drink wine.

Care. It is so, indeed, Charles; they give into all the substantial luxuries of the table, and abstain from nothing but wine and wit. Oh! certainly, society suffers by it intolerably: for now, instead of the social spirit of raillery that used to mantle over a glass of bright Burgundy, their conversation is become just like the Spa water they drink, which has all the pertness and flatulency of champagne, without its spirit or flavour.

Sir H. But what are they to do who love play better than wine?

Care. True: there's Sir Harry diets himself for gaming, and is now under a hazard regimen.

Charles. Then he'll have the worst of it. What! you wouldn't train a horse for the course by keeping him from corn? For my part, egad! I am never so successful as when I am a little merry: let me throw on a bottle of champagne, and I never lose.

All. Eh! what?

Charles. At least, I never feel my losses, which is exactly the same thing.

Care. Ay, that I believe.

Charles. And then, what man can pretend to be a believer in love, who is an abjurer of wine? 'Tis the test by which the lover knows his own heart. Fill a dozen bumpers to a dozen beauties, and she that floats at the top is the mad that has bewitched you.

Care. Now then, Charles, be honest, and give us your real favourite.

Charles. Why, I have withheld her only in compassion to you. If I toast her, you must give a round of her peers, which is impossible—on earth.

Care. Oh! then we'll find some canonized vestals, or heathen goddesses that will do, I warrant.

Charles. Here then, bumpers, you rogues! bumpers! Maria, Maria!

Sir H. Maria who?

Charles. Oh! d— the surname! 'tis too formal to be registered in love's calendar:—Maria!

All. Maria! (*They drink.*)

Charles. But now, Sir Harry, beware! we must have beauty superlative.

Care. Nay, never staidy, Sir Harry; we'll stand to the toast, though your mistress should want an eye; and you know you have a song will excuse you.

Sir H. Egad! so I have: and I'll give him the song, instead of the lady.

SONG.—SIR HARRY BUMPER.

*Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen;
Here's to the widow of fifty;
Here's to the flaunting, extravagant quean;
And here's to the housewife that's thrifty.*

Chorus. *Let the toast pass;
Drink to the lass;*

I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.

*Here's to the charmer whose dimples we prize;
Now to the maid who has none, sir:*

*Here's to the girl with a pair of blue eyes,
And here's to the nymph with but one, sir.*

Chorus. *Let the toast pass, &c.*

Here's to the maid with a bosom of snow;

Now to her that's as brown as a berry:

*Here's to the wife with a face full of woe,
And now to the damsel that's merry.*

Chorus. *Let the toast pass, &c.*

*For let 'em be clumsy, or let 'em be slim,
Young or ancient, I care not a feather;
So fill up your glasses, nay, fill to the brim,
And let us e'en toast them together.*

Chorus. *Let the toast pass, &c.*

All. Bravo, Bravo!

Enter TRIP, and whispers Charles Surface.

Charles. Gentlemen, you must excuse me a little. Careless, take the chair, will you. (*Comes forward.*)

Care. Nay, pray thee, Charles, what now? This is one of your peerless beauties, I suppose, has dropped in by chance?

Charles. No, faith! To tell you the truth, 'tis a Jew and a broker, who are come by appointment.

Care. Oh! d— it! let's have the Jew in.

Sir H. Ay, and the broker, too, by all means.

Care. Yes, yes; the Jew and the broker.

Charles. Egad! with all my heart. Trip, bid the gentlemen walk in. (*Exit Trip.*) Though there's one of them a stranger, I can assure you.

Care. Charles, let us give them some generous Burgundy, and, perhaps, they'll grow concientious.

Charles. Oh! hang 'em! no: wine does but draw forth a man's natural qualities; and to make them drink would only be to whet their knavery.

Enter TRIP, with MOSES and SIR OLIVER SURFACE.

So, honest Moses, walk in; walk in, pray, Mr. Premium—that's the gentleman's name; isn't it, Moses?

Moses. Yes, sir.

Charles. Set chairs, Trip; sit down, Mr. Premium. Glasses, Trip. Sit down, Moses. Come, Mr. Premium, I'll give you a sentiment: here's Success to usury! Moses, fill the gentleman a bumper.

Moses. "Success to usury!"

Care. Right, Moses: usury is prudence and industry, and deserves to succeed.

Sir O. Then, here's—all the success it deserves!

Care. No, no; that won't do. Mr. Premium, you have demurred at the toast, and must drink it in a pint bumper.

Sir H. A pint bumper, at least.

Moses. Oh! pray, sir, consider—Mr. Premium's a gentleman.

And therefore loves good wine.

Sir H. Give Moses a quart glass: this is mighty, and high contempt for the chair.

Charles. No, hang it! you sha'n't; he's a stranger.

Care. Plague on 'em, then! if they won't drink, we'll not sit down with them. Come, Harry, the

dice are in the next room. Charles, you'll join us when you have finished your business with the gentlemen?

Charles. I will, I will. [*Exeunt all the Gentlemen.*] Careless!

Care. Well.

Charles. Perhaps I may want you.

Care. Oh! you know I am always ready: word, note, or bond, 'tis all the same to me. [*Exit.*]

Moses. Sir, this is Mr. Premium, a gentleman of the strictest honour and secrecy; and always performs what he undertakes. Mr. Premium, this is—

Charles. Psha! have done. Sir, my friend Moses is a very honest fellow, but a little slow at expression: he'll be an hour giving us our titles. Mr. Premium, the plain state of the matter is this: I am an extravagant young fellow who want money to borrow; you I take to be a prudent old fellow, who has got money to lend. I am blockhead enough to give fifty percent. sooner than not have it; and you, I presume, are rogue enough to take a hundred, if you can get it. Now, sir, you see, we are acquainted at once, and may proceed to business without farther ceremony.

Sir O. Exceedingly frank, upon my word. I see, sir, you are not a man of many compliments.

Charles. Oh! no, sir; plain dealing in business I always think best.

Sir O. I like you the better for it: however, you are mistaken in one thing; I have no money to lend, but I believe I could procure some of a friend; but then, he's an unconscionable dog; isn't he, Moses? And must sell stock to accommodate you; mustn't he, Moses?

Moses. Yes, indeed. You know I always speak the truth, and scorn to tell a lie.

Charles. Right. People that speak truth, generally do: but these are trifles, Mr. Premium. What! I know money isn't to be bought without paying for't.

Sir O. Well, but what security could you give? You have no land, I suppose?

Charles. Not a mole-hill, nor a twig, but what's in the bough-pots out of the window.

Sir O. Nor any stock, I presume!

Charles. Nothing but live stock; and that's only a few pointers and ponies. But pray, Mr. Premium, are you acquainted at all with any of my connexions?

Sir O. Why, to say truth, I am.

Charles. Then you must know that I have a devilish rich uncle in the East Indies, Sir Oliver Surface, from whom I have the greatest expectations.

Sir O. That you have a wealthy uncle I have heard; but how your expectations will turn out, is more, I believe, than you can tell.

Charles. Oh! no, there can be no doubt. They tell me I'm a prodigious favourite, and that he talks of leaving me everything.

Sir O. Indeed! this is the first I've heard of it.

Charles. Yes, yes; 'tis just so. Moses knows 'tis true, don't you, Moses?

Sir O. Egad! they'll persuade me presently I'm at Bengal. [*Aside.*]

Charles. Now I propose, Mr. Premium, if it be agreeable to you, a post-obit on Sir Oliver's life: though, at the same time, the old fellow has been so liberal to me, that I give you my word, I should be very sorry to hear anything had happened to him.

Sir O. Not more than I should, I assure you. But the bond you mention happens to be just the worst security you could offer me; for I might live to a hundred, and never see the principal.

Charles. Oh! yes, you would: the moment Sir

Oliver dies, you know, you would come on me for the money.

Sir O. Then I believe I should be the most unwelcome dun you ever had in your life.

Charles. What! I suppose you're afraid that Sir Oliver is too good a life.

Sir O. No, indeed, I am not; though I have heard he is as hale and healthy as any man of his years in Christendom.

Charles. There again now, you are misinformed. No, no; the climate has hurt him considerably, poor uncle Oliver! Yes, yes; he breaks apace, I'm told; and is so much altered lately, that his nearest relations would not know him.

Sir O. No! Ha, ha, ha! So much altered lately, that his nearest relations would not know him!

Charles. Ha, ha! You're glad to hear that, little Premium.

Sir O. No, no, I am not.

Charles. Yes, yes, you are. Ha, ha, ha! You know that mends your chance.

Sir O. But I'm told Sir Oliver is coming over: nay, some say he is actually arrived.

Charles. Psha! Sure, I must know better than you whether he's come or not. No, no; rely on't, he's at this moment at Calcutta; isn't he, Moses?

Moses. Oh! yes, certainly.

Sir O. Very true, as you say, you must know better than I; though I have it from pretty good authority; haven't I, Moses?

Moses. Yes, most undoubtedly.

Sir O. But, sir, as I understand you want a few hundreds immediately, is there nothing you could dispose of?

Charles. How do you mean?

Sir O. For instance, now, I have heard that your father left behind him a great quantity of mazy old plate?

Charles. Oh lud! that's gone long ago. Moses can tell you how better than I can.

Sir O. Good luck! all the family race cups and corporation bowls. (Aside.) Then it was also supposed that his library was one of the most valuable and complete.

Charles. Yes, yes, so it was; vastly too much so for a private gentleman. For my part, I was always of a communicative disposition, so I thought it a shame to keep so much knowledge to myself.

Sir O. Mercy upon me! Learning that had run in the family like an heir-loom! (Aside.) Pray, what are become of the books?

Charles. You must inquire of the auctioneer, Master Premium, for I don't believe even Moses can direct you.

Moses. I know nothing of books.

Sir O. So, so; nothing of the family property left, I suppose?

Charles. Not much, indeed; unless you have a mind to the family pictures. I have got a room-full of ancestors above, and if you have a taste for old paintings, egad! you shall have 'em a bargain.

Sir O. Eh! what the devil! Sure, you wouldn't sell your forefathers, would you?

Charles. Every man of them, to the best bidder.

Sir O. What, your great uncles and aunts?

Charles. Ay, and my great grandfathers and grandmothers, too.

Sir O. Now I give him up. (Aside.) What the plague, have you no bowels for your own kindred? Od's life! do you take me for Slylock in the play, that you would raise money of me on your own flesh and blood!

Charles. Nay, my little broker, don't be angry: what need you care if you have your money's worth?

Sir O. Well, I'll be the purchaser: I think I can

dispose of the family canvas. Oh! I'll never forgive him this; never. (Aside.)

Enter CARELESS.

Care. Come, Charles, what keeps you?

Charles. I can't come yet: i'faith! we are going to have a sale above stairs; here's little Premium will buy all my ancestors.

Care. Oh! burn your ancestors!

Charles. No; he may do that afterwards, if he please. Stay, Careless, we want you: egad! you shall be auctioneer: so come along with us.

Care. Oh! have with you, if that's the case. I can handle a hammer as well as a dice-box. Going, going!

Sir O. Oh! the profligates! (Aside.)

Charles. Come, Moses, you shall be appraiser, if we want one. Gad's life! little Premium, you don't seem to like the business?

Sir O. Oh! yes, I do, vastly. Ha, ha, ha! Yes, yes; I think it a rare joke to sell one's family by auction. Ha, ha, ha! Oh! the prodigal! (Aside.)

Charles. To be sure! when a man wants money, where the plague should he get assistance, if he can't make free with his own relations?

Sir O. (Aside.) I'll never forgive him; never, never. [Exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Picture-room at Charles Surface's.

Enter CHARLES SURFACE, SIR OLIVER SURFACE, MOSES, and CARELESS.

Charles. Walk in, gentlemen; pray, walk in; here they are, the family of the Surfaces, up to the conquest.

Sir O. And, in my opinion, a goodly collection.

Charles. Ay, ay, these are done in the true spirit of portrait-painting: no *volontier grace* or expression. Not like the *works* of your modern Raphaels, who give you the strongest resemblance, yet contrive to make your portrait independent of you; so that you may sink the original, and not hurt the picture. No, no; the merit of these is the inveterate likeness: all stiff and awkward as the originals, and like nothing in human nature besides.

Sir O. Ah! we shall never see such figures of men again.

Charles. I hope not. Well, you see, Master Premium, what a domestic character I am; here I sit of an evening surrounded by my family. But, come, get to your pulpit, Mr. Auctioneer; here's an old gouty chair of my grandfather's will answer the purpose.

Care. Ay, ay; this will do. But, Charles, I have not a hammer; and what's an auctioneer without his hammer?

Charles. Egad! that's true: (taking pedigree down) what parchment have we here! Oh! our genealogy in full. Here, Careless, you shall have no common bit of mahogany; here's the family tree for you, you rogue; this shall be your hammer, and now you may knock down my ancestors with their own pedigree.

Sir O. What an unnatural rogue! an *ex post facto* parricide! (Aside.)

Care. Yes, yes; here's a list of your generation, indeed; i'faith! Charles, this is the most convenient thing you could have found for the business, for 'twill not only serve as a hammer, but a *pedigree* into the bargain. Come, begin: a-going, a-going, a-going!

Charles. Bravo, Careless! Well, here's my great-nephew, Sir Richard Raveline, a marvellous good general in his day, I assure you. He served in all the Duke of Marlborough's wars, and got that cut over his eye at the battle of Malplaquet. What say you,

Mr. Premium? look at him: there's a hero, not cut out of his feathers, as your modern clipped captains are, but enveloped in wig and regimentals, as a general should be. What do you bid?

Sir O. (Apart to Moses.) Bid him speak.

Moses. Mr. Premium would have you speak.

Charles. Why, then, he shall have him for ten pounds; and I'm sure that's not dear for a staff-officer.

Sir O. Heaven deliver me! his famous uncle Richard for ten pounds! *(Aside.)* Very well, sir, I take him at that.

Charles. Careless, knock down my uncle Richard. Here, now, is a maiden sister of his, my great aunt Deborah; done by Kneller in his best manner, and esteemed a very formidable likeness. There she is, you see, a shepherdess feeding her flock. You shall have her for five pounds ten: the sheep are worth the money.

Sir O. Ah! poor Deborah! a woman who set such a value on herself! *(Aside.)* Five pounds ten: she's mine.

Charles. Knock down my aunt Deborah, Careless! This, now, is a grandfather of my mother's, a learned judge, well known on the western circuit. What do you rate him at, Moses?

Moses. Four guineas.

Charles. Four guineas! Gad's life! you don't bid me the price of his wig. Mr. Premium, you have more respect for the woolsack; do let us knock his lordship down at fifteen.

Sir O. By all means.

Care. Gone!

Charles. And there are two brothers of his, William and Walter Blunt, Esquires, both members of parliament, and noted speakers; and what's very extraordinary, I believe, this is the first time they were ever bought or sold.

Sir O. That is very extraordinary, indeed. I'll take them at your own price, for the honour of parliament.

Care. Well, little Premium! I'll knock them down at forty.

Charles. Here's a jolly fellow—I don't know what relation, but he was mayor of Norwich: take him at eight pounds.

Sir O. No, no; six will do for the mayor.

Charles. Come, make it guineas, and I throw the two aldermen there into the bargain.

Sir O. They're mine.

Charles. Careless, knock down the mayor and aldermen. But, plague on't! we shall be all day retailing in this manner; do let us deal wholesale: what say you, little Premium? Give me three hundred pounds, and take all that remains, on each side, in a lump.

Care. Ay, ay, that will be the best way.

Sir O. Well, well; anything to accommodate you; they are mine. But there is one portrait which you have always passed over.

Care. What, that ill-looking little fellow over the settles?

Sir O. Yes, sir, I mean that; though I don't think him so ill-looking a little fellow, by any means.

Charles. What, that? Oh! that's my uncle Oliver; 'twas done before he went to India.

Care. Your uncle Oliver! 'Gad! then, you'll love his friends, Charles. That, now, to me, is as stern a looking rogue as ever I saw; and a forgiving eye, and disinheriting countenance! an inveterate depend on't. Don't you think, little Premium?

(Slapping him on the shoulder.)

Sir O. Upon my soul, sir, I do not; I think it as good a looking face as any in the room, dead or alive; but suppose uncle Oliver goes with the rest to the hammer?

Charles. No, hang it! I'll not part with poor

Noll. The old fellow has been very good to me, and, egad! I'll keep his picture while I've a room to put it in.

Sir O. (Aside.) The rogue's my nephew after all. But, sir, I have somehow taken a fancy to that picture.

Charles. I am sorry for it, for you certainly will not have it. Oons! haven't you got enough of them?

Sir O. I forgive him everything. *(Aside.)* But, sir, when I take a whim in my head I don't value money. I'll give you as much for that as for all the rest.

Charles. Don't tease me, master broker; I tell you I'll not part with it, and there's an end of it.

Sir O. How like his father the dog is! *(Aside.)* Well, well, I have done.—I did not perceive it before, but I think I never saw such a resemblance.

(Aside.)—Here is a draught for your sum.

Charles. Why, 'tis for eight hundred pounds.

Sir O. You will not let Sir Oliver go?

Charles. Zounds! no; I tell you once more.

Sir O. Then never mind the difference; we'll balance that another time; but give me your hand on the bargain; you are an honest fellow, Charles.—I beg pardon, sir, for being so free. Come, Moses.

Charles. Egad! this is a whimsical old fellow! But, harkye! Premium, you'll prepare lodgings for these gentlemen?

Sir O. Yes, yes; I'll send for them in a day or two.

Charles. But, hold! do now send a genteel conveyance for them; for I assure you, they were most of them used to ride in their own carriages.

Sir O. I will, I will—for all but Oliver.

Charles. Ay, all but the little nabob.

Sir O. You're fixed on that?

Charles. Peremptorily.

Sir O. A dear, extravagant rogue! *(Aside.)* Good day! Come, Moses. Let me hear now who dares call him profligate.

Care. Why, this is the oddest genius of the sort I ever met with.

Charles. Egad! he's the prince of brokers, I think. I wonder how the devil Moses got acquainted with so honest a fellow. But, hark! here's Rowley; do, Careless, say I'll join the company in a few moments.

Care. I will: don't let that old blockhead persuade you to squander any of that money on old musty debts, or any such nonsense, for tradesmen, Charles, are the most extravagant fellows.

Charles. Very true; and paying them is only encouraging them. Ay, ay; never fear. *[Exit Careless.]* So! this was an odd old fellow, indeed. Let me see: two-thirds of this five hundred and thirty odd pounds are mine by right. 'Fore heaven! I find one's ancestors are more valuable relations than I took them for. Ladies and gentlemen, your most obedient and very grateful servant.

Enter ROWLEY

Ha! old Rowley, egad! you are just come in time to take leave of your old acquaintance.

Row. Yes, I heard they were a going. But I wonder you can have such spirits under so many distresses.

Charles. Why, there's the point: my distresses are so many, that I can't afford to part with my spirits; but I shall be rich and splenetic, all in good time. However, I suppose you are surprised that I am not more sorrowful at parting with so many near relations; to be sure, 'tis very affecting; but you see they never move a muscle, so why should I?

Row. There's no making you serious a moment.

Charles. Yes, 'faith! I am so now. Here, my

honest Rowley, here, get me this changed directly, and take a hundred pounds of it immediately to old Stanley.

Row. A hundred pounds! Consider only—

Charles. Gad's life! don't talk about it: poor Stanley's wants are pressing, and if you don't make haste, we shall have some one call that has a better right to the money.

Row. Ah! there's the point: I never will cease dunning you with the old proverb—

Charles. "Be just before you're generous." Why, so I would if I could; but Justice is an old hobbling beldame, and I can't get her to keep pace with Generosity for the soul of me.

Row. Yet, Charles, believe me, one hour's reflection—

Charles. Ay, ay; it's very true; but, harkye! Rowley, while I have, by heaven, I'll give; so, d— your economy, and away to old Stanley with the money. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE III.—A Saloon.

Enter MOSES and SIR OLIVER SURFACE.

Moses. Well, sir, I think as Sir Peter said, you have seen Mr. Charles in high glory; 'tis great pity he's so extravagant—

Sir O. But he would not sell my picture.

Moses. And loves wine and women so much—

Sir O. But he would not sell my picture.

Moses. And games so deep.

Sir O. But he wouldn't sell my picture. Oh! here's Rowley.

Enter ROWLEY.

Row. So, Sir Oliver, I find you have made a purchase.

Sir O. Yes, yes; our young rake has parted with his ancestors like old tapestry.

Row. And here he has commissioned me to redeliver you part of the purchase-money; I mean, though, in your necessitous character of old Stanley.

Moses. Ah! there is the pity of all; he is so d—d charitable.

Row. And I left a hosier and two tailors in the hall, who, I'm sure, won't be paid, and this hundred would satisfy them.

Sir O. Well, well; I'll pay his debts, and his benevolence, too. But now I am no more a broker, and you shall introduce me to the elder brother as old Stanley.

Row. Not yet awhile; Sir Peter, I know, means to call there about this time.

Enter TRIP.

Trip. Oh! gentlemen, I beg pardon for not showing you out: this way. *Moses, a word.*

[Exit with MOSES.]

Sir O. There's a fellow for you: would you believe it, that puppy intercepted the Jew on our coming, and wanted to raise money before he got to his master.

Row. Indeed!

Sir O. Yes, they are now planning an annuity business. Ah! master Rowley, in my days servants were content with the follies of their masters, when they were worn a little threadbare; but now, they have their vices, like their birth-day clothes, with the gloss on. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE III.—A Library.

JOSEPH SURFACE and a Servant discovered.

Joseph. No letter from Lady Teazle?

Serv. No, sir.

Joseph. I am surprised she has not sent, if she be prevented from coming. Sir Peter certainly does not suspect me. Yet, I wish I may not lose the heiress, through the scrape I have drawn myself into with the wife; however, Charles's imprudence and bad character are great points in my favour. *(A knocking heard.)*

Serv. Sir, I believe that must be Lady Teazle.

Joseph. Hold! See whether it is or not before you go to the door. I have a particular message for you, if it should be my brother.

Serv. 'Tis her ladyship, sir; she always leaves her chair at the milliner's in the next street.

Joseph. Stay, stay; draw that screen before the window: that will do; my opposite neighbour is a lady of a curious temper. *[Exit Serv.]* I have a difficult hand to play in this affair. Lady Teazle has lately suspected my views on Maria; but she must by no means be let into that secret; at least, till I have her more in my power.

Enter LADY TEAZLE.

Lady T. What sentiment in soliloquy now? Have you been very impatient? Oh, lud! don't pretend to look grave. I vow I couldn't come before.

Joseph. Oh! madam, punctuality is a species of constancy very unfashionable in a lady of quality. *(Places chairs: they sit.)*

Lady T. Upon my word, you ought to pity me. Do you know, Sir Peter is grown so ill-natured to me of late, and so jealous of Charles, too—that's the best of the story, isn't it?

Joseph. I am glad my scandalous friends keep that up. *(Aside.)*

Lady T. I am sure I wish he would let Maria marry him; and then, perhaps, he would be convinced: don't you, Mr. Surface?

Joseph. Indeed I do not. *(Aside.)* Oh! certainly I do; for then, my dear Lady Teazle would also be convinced how wrong her suspicions were of my having any design on the silly girl.

Lady T. Well, well, I'm inclined to believe you. But isn't it provoking, to have the most ill-natured things said of one? And there's my friend, Lady Sneerwell, has circulated I don't know how many scandalous tales of me, and all without any foundation, too; that's what vexes me.

Joseph. Ay, madam; to be sure, that is the provoking circumstance—without foundation; yes, yes, there's the mortification, indeed; ~~and~~ ^{then} a scandalous story is believed against one, there certainly is no comfort like the consciousness of having deserved it.

Lady T. No, to be sure, then I'd forgive their malice; but to attack me, who am really so innocent, and who never say an ill-natured thing of anybody—that is, of any friend; and then, Sir Peter, too, to have him so peevish, and so suspicious, when I know the integrity of my own heart—indeed, 'tis monstrous!

Joseph. But, my dear Lady Teazle, 'tis your own fault, if you suffer it. When a husband entertains a groundless suspicion of his wife, and withdraws his confidence from her, the original compact is broken, and she owes it to the honour of her sex to endeavour to outwit him.

Lady T. Indeed! so that if he suspect me without cause, it follows, that the best way of curing his jealousy is to give him reason for't.

Joseph. Undoubtedly: for your husband should never be deceived in you; and in that case it becomes you to be frail, in compliment to his discernment.

Lady T. To be sure, what you say is very reasonable; and when the consciousness of my innocence—

Joseph. My dear madam, there is the great mistake: 'tis this very conscious innocence that is of the greatest prejudice to you. What is it that makes you negligent of forms, and careless of the world's opinion? why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you thoughtless in your conduct, and apt to run into a thousand little imprudences? why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you impatient of Sir Peter's temper, and un-

rageous at his suspicions? why, the consciousness of your innocence.

Lady T. 'Tis very true.

Joseph. Now, my dear Lady Teazle, if you would but once make a trifling *faux pas*, you can't conceive how cautious you would grow, and how ready to humour and agree with your husband.

Lady T. Do you think so? o

Joseph. Oh! I am sure on't; and then you would find all scandal would cease at once; for, in short, your character is, at present, like a person in a plethora, absolutely dying from too much health.

Lady T. So, so; then I perceive your prescription is, that I must sin in my own defence, and part with my virtue to preserve my reputation.

Joseph. Exactly so, upon my credit, ma'am.

Lady T. Well, certainly, this is the oddest doctrine, and the newest recipe for avoiding calumny.

Joseph. An infallible one, believe me. Prudence, like experience, must be paid for.

Lady T. Why, if my understanding were once convinced—

Joseph. Oh! certainly, madam, your understanding should be convinced. Yes, yes; heaven forbid I should persuade you to do anything you thought wrong. No, no; I have too much honour to desire it.

Lady T. Don't you think we may as well leave honour out of the argument?

Joseph. Ah! the ill effects of your country education, I see, still remain with you.

Lady T. I doubt they do, indeed; and I will fairly own to you, that if I could be persuaded to do wrong, it would be by Sir Peter's ill usage, sooner than your honourable logic, after all.

Joseph. Then, by this hand, (*takes her hand*) which he is unworthy of—

Enter Servant.

'Death! you blockhead! what do you want?

Serv. I beg your pardon, sir; but I thought you would not chide Sir Peter to come up without announcing him.

Joseph. Sir Peter! Odds! the devil!

Lady T. Sir Peter! Oh, lud! I'm ruined, I'm ruined!

Serv. Sir, 'twasn't I let him in.

Lady T. Oh! I'm quite undone! What will become of me! Now, Mr. Logic—Oh! mercy, sir, he's on the stairs—I'll get behind here—and if ever I'm so imprudent again—(*Goes behind the screen.*)

Joseph. Give me that book. (*Sits.*)

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

Sir P. Ay, ever improving himself. Mr. Surface, Mr. Surface—(*Taps Joseph on the shoulder.*)

Joseph. Oh! my dear Sir Peter, I beg your pardon. I have been dozing over a stupid book. Well, I am much obliged to you for this call. You haven't been here, I believe, since I fitted up this room. Books, you know, are the only things I am a coxcomb in.

Sir P. 'Tis very neat, indeed. Well, well, that's proper; and you can make even your screen a source of knowledge; hang, I perceive with maps! (*Walks towards the screen.*)

Joseph. (*Turning him from it.*) Oh! yes, I find great use in that screen.

Sir P. I dare say you must, certainly, when you want to find anything in a hurry.

Joseph. (*Aside.*) Ay, or to hide anything in a hurry, either.

Sir P. Well, I have a little private business—

Joseph. You need not stay. [*To Servant, who calls.*] There's a chair, Sir Peter; I beg—

Sir P. Well, now we are alone, there is a sub-

ject, my dear friend, on which I wish to unburthen my mind to you; a point of the greatest moment to my peace; in short, my good friend, Lady Teazle's conduct of late has made me very unhappy.

Joseph. Indeed! I am very sorry to hear it.

Sir P. Yes, 'tis but too plain she has not the least regard for me; but what's worse, I have pretty good authority to suppose she has formed an attachment to another.

Joseph. Indeed! you astonish me.

Sir P. Yes; and, between ourselves, I think I've discovered the person.

Joseph. How! you alarm me exceedingly.

Sir P. Ay, my dear friend, I knew you would sympathise with me.

Joseph. Yes, believe me, Sir Peter, such a discovery would hurt me just as much as it would you.

Sir P. I am convinced of it. Ah! it is a happiness to have a friend whom we can trust even with one's family secrets. But have you no guess who I mean?

Joseph. I haven't the most distant idea. It can't be Sir Benjamin Backbite?

Sir P. Oh! no. What say you to Charles?

Joseph. My brother! impossible!

Sir P. Oh! my dear friend, the goodness of your own heart misleads you. You judge of others by yourself.

Joseph. Certainly, Sir Peter; the heart that is conscious of its own integrity is ever slow to credit another's treachery.

Sir P. True; but your brother has no sentiment; you never hear him talk so.

Joseph. Yet, I can't but think Lady Teazle herself has too much principle.

Sir P. Ay, but what is principle against the flattery of a handsome, lively young fellow?

Joseph. That's very true.

Sir P. And then, you know, the difference of our ages makes it very improbable that she should have any very great affection for me; and if she were to be frail, and I were to make it public, why, the town would only laugh at me; the foolish old bachelor, who had married a girl.

Joseph. That's true, to be sure; they would laugh.

Sir P. Laugh! ay, and make ballads, and paragraphs, and the devil knows what, of me.

Joseph. No, you must never make it public.

Sir P. But then, again, that the nephew of my old friend, Sir Oliver, should be the person to attempt such a wrong, hurts me more nearly.

Joseph. Ay, there's the point. When ingratitude bars the dart of injury, the wound has double danger in it.

Sir P. Ay; I, that was, in a manner, left his guardian; in whose house he'd been so often entertained; who never in my life denied him—any advice.

Joseph. Oh! 'tis not to be credited. There may be a man capable of such baseness, to be sure; but, for my part, till you can give me positive proofs, I cannot but doubt it. However, if it should be proved on him, he is no longer a brother of mine; I disclaim kindred with him: for the man who can break through the laws of hospitality, and tempt the wife of his friend, deserves to be branded as the pest of society.

Sir P. What a difference there is between you! what noble sentiments!

Joseph. Yet, I cannot suspect Lady Teazle's honour.

Sir P. I am sure I wish to think well of her, and to remove all ground of quarrel between us. She has lately reproached me more than once with having made no settlement on her; and, in our last quarrel, she almost hinted that she should not break her heart

if I were dead. Now, as we seem to differ in our ideas of expense, I have resolved she shall have her own way, and be her own mistress, in that respect, for the future; and if I were to die, she will find I have not been inattentive to her interest while living. Here, my friend, are the drafts of two deeds, which I wish to have your opinion on. By one, she'll enjoy eight hundred a year independent while I live; and, by the other, the bulk of my fortune after my death.

Joseph. This conduct, Sir Peter, is, indeed, truly generous. I wish it mayn't corrupt my pupils. *(Aside.)*

Sir P. Yes, I am determined she shall have no cause to complain; though I would not have her acquainted with the latter instance of my affection, yet awhile.

Joseph. (Aside.) Nor I, if I could help it.

Sir P. And now, my dear friend, if you please, we will talk over the situation of your hopes with Maria.

Joseph. Oh! no, Sir Peter; another time, if you please.

Sir P. I am sensibly chagrined at the little progress you seem to make in her affections.

Joseph. I beg you'll not mention it, sir. What are my disappointments, when your happiness is in debate? 'Sdeath! I shall be ruined every way. *(Aside.)*

Sir P. And though you are so averse to my acquainting Lady Teazle with your passion, I'm sure she's not your enemy in the affair.

Joseph. Pray, Sir Peter, now oblige me. I am really too much affected by the subject we have been speaking of, to bestow a thought on my own concerns. The man who is entrusted with his friend's distresses can never—

Enter Servant.

Well, sir?

Serv. Your brother, sir, is speaking to a gentleman in the street, and says he knows you are within.

Joseph. 'Sdeath! blockhead! I'm not within; I'm out for the day.

Sir P. Stay—hold! a thought has struck me: you shall be at home.

Joseph. Well, well, let him up. *[Exit Servant.]* He'll interrupt Sir Peter, however. *(Aside.)*

Sir P. Now, my good friend, oblige me, I entreat you. Before Charles comes, let me conceal myself somewhere; then, do you tax him on the point we've been talking, and his answer may satisfy me at once.

Joseph. Oh, fie! Sir Peter, would you have me join in so mean a trick? To trepan my brother, too?

Sir P. Nay, you tell me you are sure he is innocent; if so, you do him the greatest service by giving him an opportunity to clear himself, and you will set my heart at rest. Come, you shall not refuse me; here behind this screen will be—Eh! what the devil! there seems to be one listener here already; I'll swear I saw a peccotot.

Joseph. Ha, ha, ha! Well, this is ridiculous enough. I'll tell you, Sir Peter: though I hold a man of intrigue to be a most despicable character, yet, you know, it does not follow that one is to be an absolute Joseph, either. Harkye! 'tis a little French milliner; a silly rogue that plagues me; and having some character to lose, on your coming, sir, she ran behind that screen.

Sir P. Ah! Joseph, Joseph! Did I ever think that you—But, egad! she has overheard all I have been saying of my wife.

Joseph. Oh! 'twill never go any farther, you may depend upon it.

Sir P. No! then, 'faith! let her hear it out. Here's a closet will do as well.

Joseph. Well, go in there.

Sir P. Sly rogue, sly rogue! *(Goes into closet.)*

Joseph. A narrow escape, indeed! and a curious situation I'm in, to part man and wife in this manner.

Lady T. (Peeping.) Couldn't I steal off?

Joseph. Keep close, my angel!

Sir P. (Peeping out.) Joseph, tax him home.

Joseph. Back, my dear friend!

Lady T. Couldn't you look Sir Peter in?

Joseph. Be still, my life!

Sir P. You're sure the little milliner won't blab?

Joseph. Indeed, my dear Sir Peter. 'Fore gad! I wish I had a key to the door.

Enter CHARLES SURFACE.

Charles. Hallo! brother, what has been the matter? Your fellow would not let me up at first. What, have you had a Jew or a wench with you?

Joseph. Neither, brother, assure you.

Charles. But what has made Sir Peter steal off? I thought he had been with you.

Joseph. He was, brother; but hearing you were coming, he did not choose to stay.

Charles. What, was the old gentleman afraid I wanted to borrow money of him?

Joseph. No sir; but I am sorry to find, Charles, that you have lately given that worthy man grounds for great uneasiness.

Charles. Yes, they tell me I do that to a great many worthy men—But how so, pray?

Joseph. To be plain with you, brother—he thinks you are endeavouring to gain Lady Teazle's affections from him.

Charles. Who, I? Oh, lad! not I, upon my word.—Ha, ha, ha, ha! So, the old fellow has found out that he has got a young wife, has he?

Joseph. This is no subject to jest on, brother. He who can laugh—

Charles. True, true, as you were going to say—then, seriously, I never had the least idea of what you charge me with, upon my honour.

Joseph. Well, it will give Sir Peter great satisfaction to hear this. *(Aloud.)*

Charles. To be sure, I once thought the lady seemed to have taken a fancy to me; but, upon my soul, I never gave her the least encouragement;—besides, you know my attachment to Maria.

Joseph. But, sure, brother, even if Lady Teazle had betrayed the fondest partiality for you—

Charles. Why, look'ee, Joseph, I hope I shall never deliberately do a dishonourable action; but if a pretty woman were purposely to throw herself in my way—and that pretty woman married to a man old enough to be her father—

Joseph. Well—

Charles. Why I believe I should be obliged to—

Joseph. What?

Charles. To borrow a little of your morality, that's all. But, brother, do you know now that you surprise me exceedingly, by naming me with Lady Teazle; for, 'faith, I always understood you were her favourite.

Joseph. O, for shame, Charles! This retort is foolish.

Charles. Nay, I swear I have seen you exchange such significant glances—

Joseph. Nay, sir, this is no jest.

Charles. Egad, I'm serious. Don't you remember one day when I called here—

Joseph. Nay, pr'ythee, Charles—

Charles. And found you together—

Joseph. Zounds, sir! I insist—

Charles. And another time when your servant—
Joseph. Brother, brother, a word with you! Gad, I must stop him. *(Aside.)*

Charles. Informed, I say, that—

Joseph. Hush! I beg your pardon, but Sir Peter

has heard all we have been saying. I knew you would clear yourself, or I should not have consented.

Charles. How, Sir Peter! Where is he?

Joseph. Softly; there; (*Points to the closet.*)

Charles. O, fore heaven, I'll have him out. Sir Peter, come forth! (*Trying to get to the closet.*)

Joseph. No, no—(*Preventing him.*)

Charles. I say, Sir Peter, come into court—(*Crosses, pulls in Sir Peter.*)—What! my old guardian!—What! turn inquisitor, and take evidence incoog! Oh, fie! Oh, fie!

Sir P. Give me your hand, *Charles*—I believe I have suspected you wrongfully; but you mustn't be angry with *Joseph*—'twas my plan!

Charles. Indeed!

Sir P. But I acquit you. I promise you I don't think near so ill of you as I did: what I have heard has given me great satisfaction.

Charles. Egad, then, 'twas lucky you didn't hear any more—wasn't it, *Joseph*? (*Apart to Joseph.*)

Sir P. Ah! you would have retorted on him.

Charles. Ay, ay, that was a joke

Sir P. Yes, yes, I know his honour too well.

Charles. But you might as well have suspected him as me in this matter, for all that—mightn't he, *Joseph*? (*Apart to Joseph.*)

Sir P. Well, well, I believe you.

Joseph. Would they were both out of the room! (*Aside.*)

Sir P. And in future, perhaps, we may not be such strangers.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Lady Sneerwell is below, and says she will come up.

Joseph. Lady Sneerwell! Gads life! she must not come here! [*Exit Servant.*] Gentlemen, I beg pardon—I must wait on you down stairs: here is a person come on particular business

Charles. Well, you can see him in another room. Sir Peter, and I have not met a long time, and I have something to say to him.

Joseph. They must not be left together. (*Aside.*) I'll send Lady Sneerwell away, and return directly. Sir Peter, not a word of the French milliner. (*Apart to Sir Peter, and goes out.*)

Sir P. I! not for the world! (*Apart to Joseph.*) Ah! *Charles*, if you associated more with your brother, one might indeed hope for your reformation. He is a man of sentiment. Well, there is nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment!

Charles. Psha! he is too moral by half! and so apprehensive of his good name, as he calls it, that he would as soon let a priest into his house as a wench.

Sir P. No, no; come, come; you wrong him. No, no! *Joseph* is no rake, but he is no such saint either, in that respect. I have a great mind to tell him; we should have such a laugh at *Joseph*.—(*Aside.*)

Charles. Oh, hang him! he's a very anchorite, a young hermit.

Sir P. Harkye! you must not abuse him; he may chance to hear of it again, I promise you.

Charles. Why, you won't tell him?

Sir P. No; hut, this way.—(*Aside.*) Egad! I'll tell him. Harkye! have you a mind to have a good laugh at *Joseph*?

Charles. I should like it of all things.

Sir P. Then, i'faith, we will. (*Aside.*) I'll be quit with him for discovering me. He had a girl with him when I called. (*Whispers.*)

Charles. What! *Joseph*?—You jest.

Sir P. Hush!—a little French milliner; and the best of the jest is—she's in the room now.

Charles. The devil she is!

Sir P. Hush! I tell you! (*Points to screen.*)

Charles. Behind the screen! 'Slife! let us unvell.

Sir P. No, no; he's coming—you sha'n't, indeed.

Charles. Oh! egad, we'll have a peep at the little milliner! (*Endeavouring to get towards the screen, Sir P. preventing.*)

Sir P. Not for the world—*Joseph* will never forgive me.

Charles. I'll stand by you—

Sir P. Oda, here he is!

Just as Charles Surface throws down the screen, JOSEPH SURFACE enters.

Charles. Lady Teazle! by all that's wonderful!

Sir P. Lady Teazle! by all that's damnable!

Charles. Sir Peter, this is one of the smartest French milliners I ever saw. Egad! you seem all to have been diverting yourselves here at hide and seek, and I don't see who is out of the secret. Shall I beg your ladyship to inform me? Not a word!—Brother, will you be pleased to explain this matter? What, is morality dumb, too? *Sir Peter*, though I found you in the dark, perhaps you're not so now! All mute! Well, though I can make nothing of the affair, I suppose you perfectly understand one another, so I'll leave you to yourselves. (*Going.*) Brother, I'm sorry to find you have given that worthy man grounds for so much uneasiness. *Sir Peter*, there's nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment. [*Exit.*]

Joseph. Sir Peter, notwithstanding—I confess—that appearances are against me, if you will afford me your patience, I make no doubt, but I shall explain everything to your satisfaction.

Sir P. If you please, sir.

Joseph. The fact is, sir, that Lady Teazle knowing my pretensions to your ward Maria,—I say, sir, Lady Teazle being apprehensive of the jealousy of your temper, and knowing my friendship to the family,—she, sir, I say, called here, in order that I might explain these pretensions; but, on your coming, being apprehensive, as I said, of your jealousy, she withdrew; and this, you may depend on it, is the whole truth of the matter.

Sir P. A very clear account, upon my word; and I dare swear, the lady will vouch for it.

Lady T. For not one word of it, *Sir Peter*!

Sir P. How! don't you think it worth while to agree in the lie?

Lady T. There is not one syllable of truth in what that gentleman has told you!

Sir P. I believe you, upon my soul, ma'am!

Joseph. (*Aside.*) 'Sdeath! madam, will you betray me?

Lady T. Good Mr. Hypocrite, by your leave, I'll speak for myself.

Sir P. Ay, let her alone, sir; you'll find she'll make out a better story than you, without prompting.

Lady T. Hear me, *Sir Peter*: I came lither on no matter relating to your ward, and even ignorant of this gentleman's pretensions to her; but I came seduced by his insidious arguments, at least, to listen to his pretended passion, if not to sacrifice your honour to his baseness.

Sir P. Now, I believe the truth is coming, indeed!

Joseph. The woman's mad!

Lady T. No, sir; she has recovered her senses, and your own arts have furnished her with the means. *Sir Peter*, I do not expect you to credit me, but the tenderness you expressed for me, when I am sure you could not think I was a witness to it, has penetrated to my heart, that had I left the place without the shame of this discovery, my future life should have spoken the sincerity of my gratitude. As for that smooth-tongued hypocrite, who would have seduced the wife of his too credulous friend,

while he affected honourable addresses to his ward, I behold him now in a light so truly despicable, that I shall never again respect myself for having listened to him. *[Exit.]*

Joseph. Notwithstanding all this, Sir Peter, heaven knows—

Sir P. That you are a villain! and so I leave you to your conscience.

Joseph. You are too rash, Sir Peter; you shall hear me. The man who shuts out conviction—

Sir P. Oh! d—n your sentiments! *[Exeunt.]*

ACT V.—SCENE I.—*The Library.*

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE and Servant.

Joseph. Mr. Stanley! And why should you think I would see him? You must know he comes to ask something.

Serv. Sir, I should not have let him in; but that Mr. Rowley came to the door with him.

Joseph. Psha! blockhead! to suppose that I should now be in a temper to receive visits from, poor relations!—Well, why don't you show the fellow up?

Serv. I will, sir. Why, sir, it was not my fault that Sir Peter discovered my Lady—

Joseph. Go, fool!—*[Exit Serv.]*—Sure, Fortune never played a man of my policy such a trick before. My character with Sir Peter, my hopes with Maria, destroyed in a moment! I'm in a rare humour to listen to other people's distresses! I sha'n't be able to bestow even a benevolent sentiment on Stanley. So, here he comes, and Rowley with him. I must try to recover myself, and put a little charity into my face, however. *[Exit.]*

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE and ROWLEY.

Sir O. What, does he avoid us? That was he, was it not?

Row. It was, sir. But I doubt you are come a little too abruptly. His nerves are so weak, that the sight of a poor relation may be too much for him. I should have gone first to break it to him.

Sir O. Oh! plague of his nerves! Yet this is he whom Sir Peter extols as a man of the most benevolent way of thinking!

Row. As to his way of thinking, I cannot pretend to decide; for, to do him justice, he appears to have as much speculative benevolence as any private gentleman in the kingdom, though he is seldom so sensual as to indulge himself in the exercise of it.

Sir O. Yet he has a string of charitable sentiments, I suppose, at his fingers' ends.

Row. Or, rather, at his tongue's end, Sir Oliver; for I believe there is no sentiment he has such faith in as that "Charity begins at home."

Sir O. And his, I presume, is of that domestic sort which never stirs abroad at all.

Row. I doubt you'll find it so.—But he's coming. I mustn't seem to interrupt you; and, you know, immediately as you leave him, I come in to announce your arrival in your real character.

Sir O. True; and, afterwards, you'll meet me at Sir Peter's.

Row. Without losing a moment. *[Exit.]*

Sir O. I don't like the complaisance of his features.

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE.

Joseph. Sir, I beg you ten thousand pardons for keeping you a moment waiting. Mr. Stanley, I pre-

Sir O. At your service. *[same.]*

Joseph. Sir, I beg you will do me the honour to sit down; I entreat you, sir—

Sir O. Dear sir, there's no occasion.—Too civil by half! *(Aside.)*

Joseph. I have not the pleasure of knowing you, Mr. Stanley; but I am extremely happy to see you look so well. You were nearly related to my mother, Mr. Stanley, I think?

Sir O. I was, sir; so nearly, that my present poverty, I fear, may do discredit to her wealthy children, else I should not have presumed to trouble you.

Joseph. Dear sir, there needs no apology: he that is in distress, though a stranger, has a right to claim kindred with the wealthy. I am sure, I wish I were one of that class, and had it in my power to offer you even a small relief.

Sir O. If your uncle, Sir Oliver, were here, I should have a friend.

Joseph. I wish he were, sir, with all my heart; you should not want an advocate with him, believe me, sir.

Sir O. I should not need one; my distresses would recommend me. But I imagined his bounty would enable you to become the agent of his charity.

Joseph. My dear sir, you were strangely misinformed. Sir Oliver is a very worthy man; but avarice, Mr. Stanley, is the vice of age. I will tell you my good sir, in confidence, what he has done for me has been a mere nothing; though people, I know, have thought otherwise; and, for my part, I never chose to contradict the report.

Sir O. What! has he never transmitted you baulion, rupees, pagodas?

Joseph. Oh! dear sir, nothing of the kind. No, no; a few presents, now and then: china, shawls, congou tea, avadavats, and Indian crackers; little more, believe me.

Sir O. Here's gratitude for twelve thousand pounds!—Avadavats and Indian crackers! *(Aside.)*

Joseph. Then, my dear sir, you have heard, I doubt not, of the extravagance of my brother: there are very few would credit what I have done for that unfortunate young man.—

Sir O. Not I, for one. *(Aside.)*

Joseph. The sums I have lent him!—Indeed, I have been exceedingly to blame; it was an amiable weakness: however, I don't pretend to defend it: and now I feel it doubly culpable, since it has deprived me of the pleasure of serving you, Mr. Stanley, as my heart dictates.

Sir O. Dissembler! *(Aside.)*—Then, sir, you can't assist me?

Joseph. At present, it grieves me to say, I cannot; but, whenever I have the ability, you may depend upon hearing from me.

Sir O. I am extremely sorry—

Joseph. Not more than I, believe me: to pity, without the power to relieve, is still more painful than to ask, and be denied.

Sir O. Kind sir, your most obedient humble servant.

Joseph. You leave me deeply affected, Mr. Stanley.—William be ready to open the door.

Sir O. Oh! dear sir, no ceremony.

Joseph. Your very obedient.

Sir O. Sir, your most obsequious.

Joseph. You may depend upon hearing from me, whenever I can be of service.

Sir O. Sweet sir, you are too good!

Joseph. In the meantime, I wish you health and spirits.

Sir O. Your ever grateful and perpetual humble servant.

Joseph. Sir, yours as sincerely.

Sir O. Now I am satisfied!

Joseph. This is one bad effect of a good character: it invites application from the unfortunate, and there needs no small degree of address to gain the reputation of benevolence without incurring the expense. The silver ore of pure charity is an expensive article in the catalogue of a man's good quali-

ties; whereas, the sentimental French plate I use instead of it, makes just as good a shew, and pays no tax.

Enter ROWLEY.

Row. Mr. Surface, your servant; I was apprehensive of interrupting you, though my business demands attention, as this note will inform you.

Joseph. Always happy to see Mr. Rowley.—*(Aside.)* A rascal! *(Roars.)* Sir Oliver Surface!—My uncle arrived!

Row. He is, indeed; we have just parted with him, quite well, after a speedy voyage, and impatient to embrace his worthy nephew.

Joseph. I am astonished!—William, stop Mr. Stanley, if he be not gone.

Row. Oh! he's out of reach, I believe.

Joseph. Why did you not let me know this when you came in together?

Row. I thought you had particular business. But I must be gone to inform your brother, and appoint him here to meet your uncle. He will be with you in a quarter of an hour.

Joseph. So he says. Well, I am strangely overjoyed at his coming.—*(Aside.)* Never, to be sure, was anything so d—d unlucky.

Row. You will be delighted to see how well he looks.

Joseph. Oh! I am overjoyed to hear it.—*(Aside.)* Just at this time!

Row. I'll tell him how impatiently you expect him. *[Exit.]*

Joseph. Do, do! Pray, give my best duty and affection. Indeed, I cannot express the sensations I feel at the thought of seeing him. Certainly, his coming just at this time is the cruellest piece of ill-fortune! *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—*Sir Peter Teazle's.*

Enter Maid and MRS. CANDOUR.

Maid. Indeed, ma'am, my lady will see nobody at present.

Mrs. C. Did you tell her it was her friend, Mrs. Candour?

Maid. Yes, ma'am; but she begs you'll excuse her.

Mrs. C. Do go again; I shall be glad to see her, if it be only for a moment; for I am sure she must be in great distress. *[Exit Maid.]* Dear heart, how provoking! I'm not mistress of half the circumstances! We shall have the whole affair in the newspapers, with the names of the parties at length, before I have dropped the story at a dozen houses.—

Enter SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE.

Oh! dear Sir Benjamin, you have heard, I suppose—

Sir B. Of Lady Teazle and Mr. Surface?

Mrs. C. And Sir Peter's discovery.

Sir B. Oh! the strangest piece of business, to be sure!

Mrs. C. Well, I never was so surprised in my life. I am so sorry for all parties, indeed.

Sir B. Now, I don't pity Sir Peter at all; he was so extravagantly partial to Mr. Surface.

Mrs. C. Mr. Surface! Why, 'twas with Charles, Lady Teazle was detected.

Sir B. No such thing, I tell you; Mr. Surface is the gallant.

Mrs. C. No, no; Charles is the man. 'Twas Mr. Surface brought Sir Peter on purpose to discover them.

Sir B. I tell you I had it from one—

Mrs. C. And I have it from one—

Sir B. Who had it from one, who had it—

Mrs. C. From one immediately—But here comes Lady Sneerwell; perhaps, she knows the whole affair.

Enter LADY SNEERWELL.

Lady S. So, my dear Mrs. Candour, here's a sad affair of our friend Teazle.

Mrs. C. Ay, my dear friend, who would have thought—

Lady S. Well, there is no trusting appearances; though, indeed, she was always too lively for me.

Mrs. C. To be sure, her manners were a little too free; but then she was so young—

Lady S. And had, indeed, some good qualities.

Mrs. C. So she had, indeed. But have you heard the particulars?

Lady S. No; but everybody says that Mr. Surface—

Sir B. Ay, there; I told you Mr. Surface was the man.

Mrs. C. No, no; indeed the assignation was with Charles.

Lady S. With Charles! you alarm me, Mrs. Candour!

Mrs. C. Yes, yes; he was the lover. Mr. Surface, to do him justice, was only the informer.

Sir B. Well, I'll not dispute with you, Mrs. Candour; but, be it which it may, I hope that Sir Peter's wound will not—

Mrs. C. Sir Peter's wound! Oh, mercy! I didn't hear a word of their fighting.

Lady S. Nor I, a syllable.

Sir B. No! what, no mention of the duel?

Mrs. C. Not a word.

Sir B. Oh! yes, they fought before they left the room.

Lady S. Pray, let us hear.

Mrs. C. Ay, do oblige us with the duel.

Sir B. "Sir," says Sir Peter, immediately after the discovery, "you are a most ungrateful fellow."

Mrs. C. Ay, to Charles—

Sir B. No, no; to Mr. Surface. "A most ungrateful fellow; and old as I am, sir," says he, "I insist on immediate satisfaction."

Mrs. C. Ay, that must have been to Charles; for 'tis very unlikely Mr. Surface would fight in his own house.

Sir B. Gad's life, ma'am, not at all—"Giving me immediate satisfaction." On this, ma'am, Lady Teazle, seeing Sir Peter in such danger, ran out of the room in strong hysterics, and Charles after her, calling out for hartshorn and water; then, madam, they began to fight with swords—

Enter CRABTREE.

Crab. With pistols, nephew! I have it from undoubted authority.

Mrs. C. Oh! Mr. Crabtree, then it is all true!

Crab. Too true, indeed, madam; and Sir Peter is dangerously wounded—

Sir B. By a thrust in seagoon quite through his left side—

Crab. By a bullet lodged in the thorax.

Mrs. C. Mercy on me! Poor Sir Peter!

Crab. Yes, madam; though Charles would have avoided the matter, if he could.

Mrs. C. I told you who it was; I knew Charles was the person.

Sir B. My uncle, I see, knows nothing of the matter.

Crab. But Sir Peter taxed him with the basest ingratitude.

Sir B. That I told you, you know.

Crab. Do, nephew, let me speak!—And insisted on immediate—

Sir B. Satisfaction! Just as I said.

Crab. Ods life! nephew, allow others to know something, too!—A pair of pistols laid on the bureau, (for Mr. Surface, it seems, had come home the night before, late from Balhill, where he had been

to see the Montem with a friend, who has a son at Eton,) so, unluckily, the pistols were left charged.

Sir B. I read nothing of this.

Crab. Sir Peter forced Charles to take one; and they fired, it seems, pretty nearly together.—Charles's shot took effect, as I tell you, and Sir Peter's missed; but, what is very extraordinary, the ball struck against a little bronze Shakspeare that stood over the fire-place, grazed out of the window, at a right angle, and wounded the post-man, who was just coming to the door with a double letter from Northamptonshire.

Sir B. My uncle's account is more circumstantial, I confess; but I believe mine is the only true one, for all that.

Lady S. (Aside.) I am more interested in this affair than they imagine, and must have better information. [Exit.

Sir B. Ah! Lady Sneerwell's alarm is very easily accounted for.

Crab. Yes, they certainly do say—but that's neither here nor there.

Mrs. C. But, pray, where is Sir Peter at present?

Crab. Oh! they brought him home, and he's now in the house, though the servants are ordered to deny him.

Mrs. C. I believe so; and Lady Teazle, I suppose, attending him.

Crab. Yes, yes; and I saw one of the faculty enter just before me.

Sir B. Eh! who comes here?

Crab. Oh! this is he, the physician, depend on't.

Mrs. C. Oh! certainly: it must be the physician; and now we shall know.

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE.

Crab. Well, doctor, what hopes?

Mrs. C. Ay, doctor, how's your patient?

Sir B. Now, doctor, isn't it a wound with a small-sword?

Crab. A bullet lodged in the thorax, for a hundred.

Sir O. Doctor! a wound with a small sword! and a bullet in the thorax! Oons! are you mad, good people?

Sir B. Perhaps, sir, you are not a doctor?

Sir O. Truly, I have to thank you for my degree, if I be.

Crab. Only a friend of Sir Peter's, then, I presume. But, sir, you must have heard of his accident?

Sir O. Not a word!

Crab. Not of his being dangerously wounded?

Sir O. The devil he is!

Sir B. Run through the body—

Crab. Shot in the breast—

Sir B. By one Mr. Surface—

Crab. Ay, the younger.

Sir O. Eh! what the plague! you seem to differ strangely in your accounts; however, you agree that Sir Peter is dangerously wounded.

Sir B. Oh! yes, we agree in that.

Crab. Yes, yes; I believe there can be no doubt of that.

Sir O. Then, upon my word, for a person in that situation, he is the most imprudent man alive; for here he comes walking, as if nothing at all was the matter.—

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

Ods heart! Sir-Peter, you are come in good time, I promise you; for we had just given you over.

Sir B. Egad! uncle, this is the most sudden recovery.

Sir O. Why, man, what do you out of bed, with a small sword through your body, and a bullet lodged in your thorax?

Sir P. A small sword, and a bullet!

Sir O. Ay, these gentlemen would have killed you, without law or physic, and wanted to dub me a doctor, to make me an accomplice.

Sir P. Why, what is all this?

Sir B. We rejoice, Sir Peter, that the story of the duel is not true; and are sincerely sorry for your other misfortune.

Sir P. (Aside.) So, so! all over the town already.

Crab. Though, Sir Peter, you were certainly vastly to blame to marry at your years.

Sir P. Sir, what business is that of yours?

Mrs. C. Though, indeed, as Sir Peter made so good a husband, he's very much to be pitied.

Sir P. Plague on your pity, ma'am! I desire none of it.

Sir B. However, Sir Peter, you must not mind the laughing and jests you will meet with on the occasion.

Sir P. Sir, sir, I desire to be master in my own house.

Crab. 'Tis no uncommon case, that's one comfort.

Sir P. I insist on being left to myself. Without ceremony, I insist on your leaving my house.

Mrs. C. Well, well, we are going; and, depend on't, we'll make the best report of it we can.

Sir P. Leave my house!

Crab. And tell how hardly you've been treated—

Sir P. Leave my house!

Sir B. And how patiently you bear it.

[*Exeunt all but Sir P. and Sir O.*
Sir P. Leave my house!—Fiends! vipers! furies!—Oh! that their own venom would choke them!

Sir O. They are very provoking, indeed, Sir Peter.

Enter ROWLEY.

Row. I heard high words. What has ruffled you, sir?

Sir P. Psha! what signifies asking? Do I ever pass a day without my vexations?

Row. Well, I'm not inquisitive.

Sir O. Well, I am not inquisitive! I come only to tell you, that I have seen both my nephews in the manner we proposed.

Sir P. A precious couple they are!

Row. Yes, and Sir Oliver is convinced that your judgment was right, Sir Peter.

Sir O. Yes, I find Joseph is, indeed, the man, after all.

Row. Ay, as Sir Peter says, he is a man of sentiment.

Sir O. And acts up to the sentiments he professes.

Row. It certainly is edification to hear him talk!

Sir O. Oh! he's a model for the young men of the age!—But how's this, Sir Peter? You don't join us in your friend Joseph's praise, as I expected.

Sir P. Sir Oliver, we live in a d—d wicked world, and the fewer we praise the better.

Row. What! do you say so, Sir Peter, who were never mistaken in your life!

Sir P. Psha! Plague on you both! I see by your sneering, you have heard the whole affair. I shall go mad among you!

Row. Then, to fret you no longer, Sir Peter, we are indeed acquainted with it all. I met Lady Teazle coming from Mr. Surface's, so humble, that she deigned to request me to be her advocate with you.

Sir P. And does Sir Oliver know all this?

Sir O. Every circumstance.

Sir P. What of the closet and the screen, eh?
Sir O. Yes, yes; and the little French milliner.
 Oh! I have been vastly diverted with the story.

Sir P. 'Twas very pleasant.

Sir O. I never laughed more in my life, I assure you. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir P. Oh! vastly diverting! Ha, ha, ha!

Row. To be sure, Joseph with his sentiments—

Sir P. Yes, yes, his sentiments! Ha, ha, ha! Hypocritical villain!

Sir O. Ay, and that rogue Charles to pull Sir Peter out of the closet. Ha, ha!

Sir P. Ha, ha! 'Twas devilish entertaining, to be sure.

Sir O. Egad! Sir Peter, I should like to have seen your face when the screen was thrown down! Ha, ha, ha!

Sir P. Yes, yes; my face when the screen was thrown down. Ha, ha, ha! Oh! I must never show my head again!

Sir O. But, come, come; it isn't fair to laugh at you, neither, my old friend; though, upon my soul, I can't help it.

Sir P. Oh! pray, don't restrain your mirth on my account; it does not hurt me at all. I laugh at the whole affair myself. Yes, yes; I think being a standing jest for all one's acquaintance, a very happy situation. Oh! yes; and then of a morning, to read the paragraphs about Mr. S—, Lady T—, and Sir P—, will be so entertaining! I shall certainly leave town to-morrow, and never look mankind in the face again.

Row. Without affectation, Sir Peter, you may despise the ridicule of fools. But I see Lady Rowley going towards the next room; I am sure you must desire a reconciliation as earnestly as she does.

Sir O. Perhaps my being here prevents her coming to you. Well, I'll leave honest Rowley to mediate between you; but he must bring you all presently to Mr. Surface's, where I am now returning, if not to reclaim a libertine, at least to expose hypocrisy. [Exit.]

Sir P. Ah! I'll be present at your discovering yourself there with all my heart; though, 'tis a vile unlucky place for discoveries. She is not coming here, you see, Rowley.

Row. No; but she has left the door of that room open, you perceive. See, she is in tears.

Sir P. Certainly, a little mortification appears very becoming in a wife. Don't you think it will do her good to let her pine a little?

Row. Oh! this is ungenerous in you!

Sir P. Well, I know not what to think. You remember the letter I found of hers, evidently intended for Charles?

Row. A mere forgery, Sir Peter, laid in your way on purpose. This is one of the points which I intend Snake shall give you conviction of.

Sir P. I wish I were once satisfied of that. She looks this way. What a remarkably elegant turn of the head she has! Rowley, I'll go to her.

Row. Certainly.

Sir P. Though, when it is known that we are reconciled, people will laugh at me ten times more.

Row. Let them laugh, and retort their malice only by shewing them you are happy in spite of it.

Sir P. I faith, so I will! and, if I'm not mistaken, we may yet be the happiest couple in the county.

Row. Nay, Sir Peter, he who once lays aside suspicion—

Sir P. Hold! master Rowley, if you have any regard for me, never let me hear you utter anything like a sentiment; I have had enough of them to serve me the rest of my life. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—*The Library.*

Enter LADY SNEERWELL and JOSEPH SURFACE.

Lady S. Impossible! Will not Sir Peter imme-

diately be reconciled to Charles, and of consequence, no longer oppose his union with Maria? The thought is distraction to me.

Joseph. Can passion furnish a remedy?

Lady S. No, nor cunning, neither. Oh! I was a fool, an idiot, to league with such a blunderer!

Joseph. Sure, Lady Sneerwell, I am the greatest sufferer; yet you see I bear the accident with calmness. Well, I admit I have been to blame. I confess I deviated from the direct road of wrong; but I don't think we're so defeated, neither.

Lady S. No!

Joseph. You tell me you have made a trial of Snake, since we met, and that you still believe him faithful to us.

Lady S. I do believe so.

Joseph. And that he has undertaken, should it be necessary, to swear and prove, that Charles is, at this time, contracted by vows and honour to your ladyship, which some of his former letters to you will serve to support.

Lady S. This, indeed, might have assisted.

Joseph. Come, come; it is not too late, yet—
 (Knocking.) But, hark! this is probably my uncle, Sir Oliver. Retire to that room; we'll consult farther when he is gone.

Lady S. Well, but if he should find you out, too?

Joseph. Oh! I have no fear of that. Sir Peter will hold his tongue, for his own credit's sake; and you may depend on it, I shall soon discover Sir Oliver's weak side!

Lady S. I have no diffidence of your abilities! only be constant to one roguery at a time. [Exit.]

Joseph. I will. So, tis confounded hard, after such bad fortune, to be baited by one's confederate in evil. Well, at all events, my character is so much better than Charles's, that I certainly—Eh! what! this is not Sir Oliver, but old Stanley again. Plague on't! that he should return to tease me just now. I shall have Sir Oliver come and find him here, and—

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE.

Gad's life! Mr. Stanley, why have you come back to plague me at this time? You must not stay now, upon my word.

Sir O. Sir, I hear your uncle Oliver is expected here; and, although he has been so penurious to you, I'll try what he'll do for me.

Joseph. Sir, 'tis impossible for you to stay now, so I must beg—Come any other time, and I promise you shall be assisted.

Sir O. No; Sir Oliver and I must be acquainted.

Joseph. Zounds! sir, then I insist on your quitting the room directly.

Sir O. Nay, sir,—

Joseph. Sir, I insist on't! Here, William, shew this gentleman out. Since you compel me, sir,—not one moment—this is such insolence—(Pushing him out.)

Enter CHARLES SURFACE.

Charles. Heyday! what's the matter now? What the devil! have you got hold of my little broker here? Zounds! brother, don't hurt little Premium. What's the matter, my little fellow?

Joseph. So, he has been with you, too, has he?

Charles. To be sure, he has. Why, he's as honest a little—But, sure, Joseph, you have not been borrowing money, too, have you?

Joseph. Borrowing! No; but, brother, you know, we expect Sir Oliver here every—

Charles. Egad! that's true. Noll mustn't find the little broker here, to be sure!

Joseph. Yet Mr. Stanley insists—

Charles. Stanley! why, his name's Premium.

Joseph. No, sir, Stanley.

Charles. No, no, Premium.

Joseph. Well, no matter which—but—

Charles. Ay, ay; Stanley or Premium, 'tis the same thing, as you say; for I suppose he goes by half a hundred names, besides A.B. at the coffee-house.

Joseph. Death! here's Sir Oliver at the door. Now I beg, Mr. Stanley—

Charles. Ay, ay; and I beg, Mr. Premium—

Sir O. Gentlemen—

Joseph. Sir, by heaven, you shall go!

Charles. Ay, out with him, certainly!

Sir O. This violence—

Joseph. Sir, 'tis your own fault.

Charles. Out with him, to be sure. *(Both forcing Sir Oliver out.)*

Enter SIR PETER and LADY TEAZLE, MARIA, and ROWLEY.

Sir P. My old friend, Sir Oliver, eh! What, in the name of wonder—here are dutiful nephews; assault their uncle at a first visit!

Lady T. Indeed, Sir Oliver, 'twas well we came in to rescue you.

Row. Truly, it was; for I perceive, Sir Oliver, the character of old Stanley was no protection to you.

Sir O. Nor of Premium either: the necessities of the former could not extort a shilling from that benevolent gentleman; and with the other, I stood a chance of faring worse than my ancestors, and being knocked down without being bid for.

Joseph. Charles!

Charles. Joseph!

Joseph. 'Tis now complete!

Charles. Very!

Sir O. Sir Peter, my friend, and Rowley, too—look on that elder nephew of mine. You know what he has already received from my bounty; and you also know how gladly I would have regarded half my fortune as held in trust for him; judge, then, my disappointment in discovering him to be destitute of truth, charity, and gratitude.

Sir P. Sir Oliver, I should be more surprised at this declaration, if I had not myself found him to be selfish, treacherous, and hypocritical.

Lady T. And if the gentleman plead not guilty to these, pray, let him call me to his character.

Sir P. Then, I believe, we need add no more. If he know himself, he will consider it as the most perfect punishment, that he is known to the world.

Charles. *(Aside.)* If they talk this way to honesty, what will they say to me, by-and-by!

Sir O. As for that prodigal, his brother, there—

Charles. *(Aside.)* Ay, now comes my turn; the d—d family pictures will ruin me.

Joseph. Sir Oliver,—uncle, will you honour me with a hearing?

Charles. *(Aside.)* Now, if Joseph would make one of his long speeches, I might recollect myself a little.

Sir O. *(To Joseph.)* I suppose you would undertake to justify yourself?

Joseph. I trust I could.

Sir O. Nay, if you desert your roguery in its distress, and try to be justified, you have even less principle than I thought you had.—*(To Charles.)* Well, sir, you could justify yourself, I suppose?

Charles. Not that I know of, Sir Oliver.

Sir O. What, little Premium has been let too much in the secret, I suppose?

Charles. True, sir; but they were family secrets, and should not be mentioned again, you know.

Row. Come, Sir Oliver, I know you cannot speak of Charles's follies with anger.

Sir O. Odd's heart! no more I can; nor with gravity either. Sir Peter, do you know, the rogue bargained with me for all his ancestors; sold me

judges and generals by the foot, and malden aunts as cheap as broken china.

Charles. To be sure, Sir Oliver, I did make a little free with the family canvas, that's the truth on't. My ancestors may certainly rise up in judgment against me; there's no denying it; but believe me sincere when I tell you, (and, upon my soul, I would not say so if I was not) that if I do not appear mortified at the exposure of my follies, it is because I feel, at this moment, the warmest satisfaction in seeing you, my liberal benefactor.

Sir O. Charles, I believe you. Give me your hand again. The ill-looking little fellow over the settee has made your peace.

Charles. Then, sir, my gratitude to the original is still increased.

Lady T. Yet, I believe, Sir Oliver, here is one to whom Charles is still more anxious to be reconciled to.

Sir O. Oh! I have heard of his attachment there; and, with the young lady's pardon, if I construe rightly, that blush—

Sir P. Well, child, speak your sentiments.

Maria. Sir, I have little to say, but that I shall rejoice to hear that he is happy; for me, whatever claim I had to his attention, I willingly resign to one who has a better title.

Charles. How, Maria?

Sir P. Heyday! what's the mystery now?—While he appeared an incorrigible rake, you would give your hand to no one else; and now that he is likely to reform, I'll warrant you won't have him.

Maria. His own heart and Lady Sneerwell know the cause.

Charles. Lady Sneerwell!

Joseph. Brother, it is with great concern I am obliged to speak on this point; but my regard to justice compels me, and Lady Sneerwell's injuries can no longer be concealed. *(Opens a door.)*

Enter LADY SNEERWELL.

Sir P. So! Another French milliner! Egad! he has one in every room in the house, I suppose.

Lady S. Ungrateful Charles! Well may you be surprised, and feel for the indelicate situation your perfidy has forced me into.

Charles. Pray, uncle, is this another plot of yours? for, as I have life, I don't understand it.

Joseph. I believe, sir, there is but the evidence of one person more necessary to make it extremely clear.

Sir P. And that person, I imagine, is Mr. Snake. Rowley, you were perfectly right to bring him with us, and pray let him appear.

Row. Walk in, Mr. Snake.

Enter SNAKE.

I thought his testimony might be wanted. However, it happens unluckily, that he comes to confront Lady Sneerwell, not to support her.

Lady S. A villain! Treacherous to me at last! Speak, fellow! have you, too, conspired against me?

Snake. I beg your ladyship ten thousand pardons: you paid me extremely liberally for the lie in question; but I, unfortunately, have been offered double to speak the truth.

Sir P. Plot and counterplot! I wish your ladyship joy of your negotiation.

Lady S. The torments of shame and disappointment on you all!

Lady T. Hold! Lady Sneerwell, before you go, let me thank you for the trouble you and that gentleman have taken, in writing letters from me to Charles, and answering them yourself; and let me also request you to make my respects to the scan-

dulous college, of which you are president, and inform them, that Lady Teazle, licentiate, begs leave to return the diploma they granted her, as she leaves off practice, and kills characters no longer.

Lady S. You, too, madam,—provoking, insolent—May your husband live these fifty years.

[*Exit.*]

Sir P. Oons! what a fury!

Lady T. A malicious creature, indeed!

Sir P. What! Not for her last wish?

Lady T. Oh, no!

Sir O. Well, sir, and what have you to say now?

Joseph. Sir, I am so confounded, to find that *Lady Sneerwell* could be guilty of suborning *Mr. Snake* in this manner, to impose on us all, that I know not what to say: however, lest her revengeful spirit should prompt her to injure my brother, I had certainly better follow her directly. For the man who attempts to—

[*Exit.*]

Sir P. Moral to the last!

Sir O. Ay, and marry her, *Joseph*, if you can. Egad! you'll do very well together.

Row. I believe we have no more occasion for *Mr. Snake*, at present.

Snake. Before I go, I beg pardon once for all, for whatever uneasiness I have been the humble instrument of causing to the parties present.

Sir P. Well, well; you have made atonement by a good deed at last.

Snake. But I must request of the company, that it shall never be known.

Sir P. Eh! What the plague, are you ashamed of having done a right thing once in your life?

Snake. Ah! sir, consider, I live by the badness of my character; and if it were once known that I had been betrayed into an honest action, I should lose every friend I have in the world.

[*Exit.*]

Sir O. Well, well; we'll not traduce you by saying anything in your praise, never fear.

Lady T. See, *Sir Oliver*, there needs no persuasion now to reconcile your nephew and *Maria*.

Sir O. Ay, ay; that's as it should be; and, egad! we'll have the wedding to-morrow morning.

Charles. Thank you, dear uncle!

Sir P. What, you rogue, don't you ask the girl's consent first?

Charles. Oh! I have done that a long time—a minute ago, and she has looked yes.

Maria. For shame, *Charles*! I protest, *Sir Peter*, there has not been a word.

Sir O. Well, then, the fewer the better. May your love for each other never know abatement!

Sir P. And may you live as happily together as *Lady Teazle* and I intend to do!

Charles. Rowley, my old friend, I am sure you congratulate me; and I suspect that I owe you much.

Sir P. Ay, honest Rowley always said you would reform.

Charles. Why, as to reforming, *Sir Peter*, I'll make no promises, and that I take to be a proof that I intend to set about it; but here shall be my monitor, my gentle guide—Ah! can I leave the virtuous path those eyes illumine?

Though thou, dear maid, shouldst wave thy beauty's sway,

Thou still must rule, because I will obey:

An humble fugitive from folly view,

No sanctuary near but love and you;

(*To the Audience.*)

You can, indeed, each anxious fear remove,
For even Scandal dies, if you approve. [*Exeunt.*]

THE MERCHANT OF BRUGES;

OR, BEGGAR'S BUSH:

A PLAY, IN FIVE ACTS.—ALTERED FROM BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER,
BY DOUGLAS KINNAIRD.



Act III—Scene 1

CHARACTERS.

GOSWIN, OR FLORTZ
GIRARD, OR CLAUPE
WOLFORT
HUBERT

HEMSKIRKE
VANDUNK
MERCHANTS
HIGLEN

CLOWN
PRIG
SNAP
TIRRET

SAILOR
JACULIN
BERTHA
MARGARET

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The outside of the gate of Bruges. Public-house on one side, with the sign of the "Right beer." HIGGIN, PRIG, FERRET, and other Beggars discovered as having been drinking at a table.

GLEE AND CHORUS.

Well, brothers, our merry old king is dead;
What matters? we'll soon have another instead.

He would not have cried

Had you or I died.

Then mourn him no longer, but merrily sing.

Rest, rest to the bones of our merry old king.

Draw the can, brother,

Fill up another;

Drink till our eyes with tears shall swell;

Tears of brandy alone,

And the monarch that's gone

Shall be wept in the liquor he lov'd so well.

Hig. Well said, my masters, peace be to his rage!

His was a gold and silver reign, he, tyrant-like,
Did never force away your hens and bacon
When ye had ventur'd for't.

Prig. And in return

We've had him Christial burial, in good sooth,
That's more than follows on your soldier's end.
Fer. The chance was his.

Hig. Ay, marry, was't. But mark,
The chance that laid him low did make him king,
And yet may crown us, too.

Prig. So't be in right

Of our old custom and election—law.

Hig. True, Prig, 'tis fit we do observe the laws.

Here is the table doth exact from all

A strict obedience, or expulsion. First,

Be perfect in your crutches and your leign'd hurts,

Then your tora passports, with the learned ways

To stammer and be dumb, and blind and lame.

Prig. Ay, and shed tears to move compassion.

Fer. Are not the halting paces all set down?

Hig. All in the learned language. Brother—

Prig. Peace!

(Boors call from behind.)

To your postures.

Enter three or four Boors, with pipes.

1 Boor. What, ho! mine host with the big belly's beer!

Stark English beer! Well met, my merry souls.

What! your trade thrives, methinks, since Wolfort reigns

O'er prostrate Flanders, in despite of Brages!

Your state doth grow in numbers, marry, why?

He now thrives best who hath the least to lose.

Hig. Bless you, masters, we suffer with the times.

2 Boor. Come, landlord, beer.

Enter Landlord from the house, with beer.

Land. Here's o'the right sort. [Flores.]

1 Boor. Then here's to the right beer—the lost east
Where in old Clause?

He gives respect and countenance to beggary; [Joct.]

An' ye make him your king, I'd call myself his sub-

Hig. What, old solemnity, our grey-beard bishop?

Prig. See, here he comes! [Oh!]

Enter CLAUPE.

1 Boor. Good morrow, worthy Clause:

How fares it with ye, man?

Clause. Not better than the times

Give token of, but for old Bruges here,

Whose charitable sons still feed our wants,

We had long fled this bleeding land,

Where tyrants do make beggars of ye all. [more—]

1 Boor. There thou say'st well! Our nobles are no

Our cities ruin'd, and the great wealth of Flanders

Center'd in Bruges. She alone defends

Her rights and liberty 'gainst Wolfort's power.

Here's to her burgomaster, old Vandunk

(Beggars and Boors drunk to Vandunk.)

Clause. I will be with you straight, but first

must hence

Awhile into the town. We'll meet anon. [Exit.]

Hig. Let's forward then. Our doxies do repose

Under yon trees. Go some, and call them hither,
And then trudge gaily home to Beggar's Bush.

GLEE.

Men. *Come, daisies, come. The cheerful day
Is bright, and wind's are hush.*

Enter Women.

Women. *Then take thy staff, and troll the lay,
And trudge to Beggar's Bush.
Our welcome home, a blithe one, too,
The thrush's song shall be;
And never dwell a merrier crew
Beneath the greenwood tree.* [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*Presence-chamber of the Earl of Flanders.*
Enter HUBERT *disarmed and guarded, met by WOL-
FORT and train.* [arm'd him?]

Wolf. What, Hubert stealing from me? Who dis-
twas more than I commanded; take your sword,
I am best guarded with it in your hand;
I've set a use it nobly.

Hub. And will turn it
On my own bosom, ere it shall be drawn
Unworthily or rudely.

Wolf. Would you leave me
Without a farewell, Hubert? Fly a friend,
Unwearied in his study to advance you?
Who ever yet artiv'd to any grace,
Reward, or trust from me, but his approaches
Were by your fair reports of him prefer'd?
Nay, what is more, I've made myself your servant
In making you the master of those secrets, [me:
Which not the rack of conscience could draw from
Nor I, when I ask'd mercy, trust my pray'rs with.
Yea, after these assurances of love,
These ties and bonds of friendship, to forsake me!
Forsake me as an enemy! Come, you must
Give me a reason.

Hub. Sir, and so I will,
If I may do't in private; and you hear it.

Wolf. All leave the room. [Exeunt Guards, &c.]
You have your will; now speak,
And use the liberty of our first friendship.

Hub. Friendship! When you prov'd traitor first,
that vanish'd;
Nor do I owe you any thought but hate.
I know my slight hath forfeited my head,
And so I make you first to understand
What a strange monster you have made yourself:
I welcome it.

Wolf. To me this is strange language.

Hub. To you! Why, what are you?

Wolf. Your prince and master,
The earl of Flanders.

Hub. By a proper title!
Rais'd to it by cunning, circumvention, force,
Blood, and proscriptions.

Wolf. And in all this wisdom
Had I not reason,—when the protector, Gerrard,
Who underhand had by his ministers
Detracted my great actions, made my faith
And loyalty suspected? in which failing,
He sought my life by practice.

Hub. With what forehead
Do you speak this to me? Who, as I know't,
Must and will say, 'tis false.

Wolf. Ha! my guard there.

Hub. You bade me speak, and promis'd you would
Which I now say you shall: not a sound more;
For I, that am contemner of mine own,
Am master of your life; then here's a sword
Between you and all side: although you blind
The credulous beast, the multitude, you
Pass not these untruths on me.

Wolf. How! untruths?

Hub. Ay, and it is favourable language;
They'd been in a mean man lies and foul ones.
Were not these rumours,
Of mine own followers? who, being suborn'd,
Up and took their oaths they had been hir'd

By Gerrard to your murder: this once heard
And easily believ'd, your well-taught slaves
Snatch'd hastily their arms, and barbarously kill'd
Such as were servants, or thought friends, to Ger-
Vowing the like to him. [ard]

Wolf. Will you yet end?

Hub. But he with his son Florez, (the true heir
By right unto this country from his mother,)
Forsook the city, and by secret ways,
As you give out, and we would gladly have't,
Escap'd their fury; though 'tis more than fear'd
They fell among the rest. Your oracles since
So far transcend your former bloody ills,
As if, compar'd, they only would appear
Essays of mischief—do not stop your ears,
More are behind yet.

Wolf. Repeat them not.

Hub. A prince in nothing but your princely lusts
And boundless rapines.

Wolf. Hold, I beseech you;
Thou art to me in this a greater tyrant
Than e'er I was to any.

Hub. I end thus

The general grief. Now to my private wrong:
The loss of Gerrard's daughter, Jacoulin,
The hop'd for partner of my lawful bed,
Your cruelty hath frighted from mine arms.
Think you that I had reason now to leave you?
My life is irksome; here securely take it,
And do me but this fruit of all your friendship,
That I may die by you, and not your hangman. [have
Wolf. Oh! Hubert, these your words and reasons
As well drawn drops of blood from my griev'd heart,
As from mine eyes these tears! Can you but think
Where Gerrard is, or your lost love, or Florez,
Whom in his infancy—

Hub. You stole, and since
Have kept conceal'd, the better to maintain
The usurpation of his seat.

Wolf. By heav'n!

I stole him not, nor know I where he is,
Nor if he lives; soon after my return
From Brabant, whither I was sent to treat
About a future match with our young earl,
He was at that time missing, and remains
Unheard of to this hour; if you can find him,
I will resign the earldom.

Hub. Sir, do not abuse
My aptness to believe.

Wolf. Suspect not you

A faith that's built upon so true a sorrow.
Make your own terms, ask for them all conditions
My power can grant, or your suspicion prompt.
Hemskirke, the partner of my secret'st counsils,
Shall journey with you to this wish'd discovery.
I have of late receiv'd intelligence,
That some of Gerrard's friends are 'bout Bruges
To be found; which I did then interpret
The cause of that town's standing out against me.
But now am glad, it may direct your purpose
Of giving them their safety, and me peace.

Hub. Be constant to your promise, and you have it.

Wolf. Distrust me not: and prosperous be your
search. [Exit Hubert.]

Let me but have them once within my grasp,
Their blood shall write the warrant of my peace.

[Exit.]

SCENE III.—*A Street or Square in Bruges.*

Enter three Merchants.

1 Mer. 'Tis much that you deliver of this Goswin.

2 Mer. He bears himself with such a confidence
As if he were the master of the sea,
And not a wind upon the sailor's compass
But from one point or other were his factor,
To bring him in the best commodities
Merchants e'er ventur'd for.

3 Mer. 'Tis strange!

2 Mer. Yet does he still continue a good man;
To doubt him would be held an injury,
Or rather, malice, with the best that traffic;

Yet this in him deserves the least of wonder,
Compar'd with other his peculiar fashions :
Is there a virgin of good fame wants dower,
He is a father to her : or soldier
That in his country's service, from the war
Hath brought home only scars and want, his house
Receives him, and relieves him with that care
As if what he possess'd had been laid up
For such good uses, and he steward on't.

1 *Mer.* I would not wish a better man to deal with.

2 *Mer.* Ne'er doubt it; he's your man. See, here he comes!

Enter GOSWIN, speaking to a Servant.

Gos. From England, said ye! bid him be welcome to my house. [*Exit Servant.*]

2 *Mer.* Save you, master Goswin!

Gos. Good day to all! [*dities.*]

1 *Mer.* We bring you the refusal of more commo-

Gos. Are you the owner of the ship that last night put into the harbour?

1 *Mer.* Both of the ship and lading.

Gos. What's the freight?

3 *Mer.* Rich cloth of gold, brought from Cambal.

Gos. Some two hours hence I'll come aboard.

1 *Mer.* The gunner shall speak you welcome.

Gos. I'll not fail.

3 *Mer.* Good morrow! [*Exit with 1 Mer.*]

2 *Mer.* Have you bethought ye further, sir, On what I am to part with? [*prus.*]

Gos. I take it at your own rate, your wine of Cyprus for the rest, I cannot save in them.

2 *Mer.* Make me offer of something near the price That may assure me, you can deal for them.

Gos. And if I could, I would not do't with too much loss. [*cheap.*]

2 *Mer.* 'Tis a rich lading; you know they are so *Gos.* For which I were your chapman, but I am Already out of cash. [*Going.*]

2 *Mer.* I'll give you day. [*Following him.*]

Gos. Why, look you, there is now in prison And at your suit, a pirate; and past hope To live a week, if you should prosecute What you can prove against him: set him free, And you shall have your money to a stiver, And early payment.

2 *Mer.* This is above wonder! A merchant of your rank, that have at sea So many bottoms in the danger of These water thieves, should be a means to save 'em, And stay the hand of justice that is ready To fall on them.

Gos. You mistake me, If you think I would cherish in this captain The wrong he did to you, or any man. But I was lately with him, being assur'd A braver fellow never put from shore. I read his letters granted from this state. Since want of what he could not live without Compell'd him to the pirate act he did, I pity his misfortunes; and to work you To some compassion of them, I come up To your own price. Save him, the goods are mine; If not, seek elsewhere; I'll not deal for them.

2 *Mer.* Well, sir, for your love, I will once be led To change my purpose.

Gos. For your own profit rather.

2 *Mer.* I'll presently make means for his discharge. [*Exit.*]

Gos. Heaven grant my ships a safe return before The day of this great payment, as they are Expected hourly in port; my credit yet Stands good with all the world.—[*Enter GERRARD.*]

Ger. Bless my good master! The prayers of your poor headsmen ever shall Be sent up for you.

Gos. God o' mercy, Clause! There's something to put thee in mind hereafter To think of me.

Ger. May He that gave it you, Reward you for it with increase, good master!

Gos. I thrive the better for thy prayers.

Ger. I hope so;

For that I have fed upon your bounties, And by the fire of your bless'd charity warm'd me: And yet, good master, pardon that I'm bold To make one suit more to you.

Gos. What is't? say on.

Ger. 'Tis not for money, [*me.*]
Nor clothes, good master; but your good word for *Gos.* That thou shalt have, Clause; for I think thee honest. [*ble*]

Gos. To-morrow, then, dear master, take the trou- Of walking early unto Beggar's Bush; And, as you see me, among others, brethren In my affliction, when you are demanded Which you like best amongst us, point out me, And then pass by, as if you knew me not.

Gos. But what will that advantage thee?

Ger. Oh! much, sir;

'Twill give me the pre-eminence of the rest, Make me a king among 'em.

At your better leisure, I will inform you further of the good It may do to me.

Gos. 'Tis true! thou mak'st a wonder: Have you a king and commonwealth among you?

Ger. We have. And there are states are govern'd

Gos. Ambition among beggars! [*worse.*]

Ger. Many great ones

Do part with half their states to have the place, To cringe and beg in the first file, master. Shall I be so bound unto your furtherance In my petition?

Gos. That thou shalt not miss of, Nor any worldly care make me forget it. I will be early there. [*Exit.*]

Ger. Heaven guard my master! as it surely will, To wrest the bloody sword from Wolfort's grasp, And save himself the land he's born to rule. My friends, ere long, shall see their long-lost prince; And Flanders, to the latest ages shew, A merchant's still the tyrant's deadliest foe. [*Exit.*]

ACT II.—SCENE I.

HIGGIN, FERRET, PRIG, JACULIN, CLAUSE, SNAP, GINKES, and other Beggars discovered.

Hig. Come, princes of the ragged regiment; You o' the blood; what title e'er you bear, I speak to all that stand in fair election For the proud disdem of king of beggars. Higgen, your orator, doth beseech you All to stand forth, and put yourselves in rank, That the first single comer may at view Make a free choice.

Prig. First put a sentinel.

Hig. Thanks to my lord. The word's Fumbumbis. [*Exit Snap.*]

Fer. Well; pray, my masters all, that Ferret be chosen:

Y're like to have a merciful mild prince of me.

Prig. A very tyrant, I; an arrant tyrant, If e'er I come to reign; therefore, look to't, Except you do provide me mun enough, And beer to booze with. I must have my capons, And ducklings in the season, and fat chickens, Or straight I seize on all your privilege, Call in your crutches, wooden legs, false arms, All shall be escheated; and then, some one cold night I'll watch you, what old barn you go to roost in, And there I'll smother you all i'th' musty hay.

Hig. Whew! This is tyrant-like, indeed.

Enter SNAP, preceding HUBERT and HEMSKIRKE, in cloaks.

Snap. Fumbumbis!

Prig. To your postures. Arm.

Hub. Yonder's the town, I see it.

Hig. Bless your good worships!

Fer. One small piece of money.

Ginkes. Amongst us all, poor wretches!

Prig. Blind and lame!

Hig. Pitiful worships!

Snapp. One little stiver.
Prig. Here be seven of us.
Hig. Seven, good masters! Oh! remember seven!
 Seven blessings 'gainst seven deadly sins!
Prig. And seven sleepers.
Hems. There's, amongst you all.
Fer. Heaven reward you!
Hig. The prince of pity bless thee!
Hub. Do I see right? or is't my fancy?
 Sure, 'tis her face. Come hither, pretty maid.
Jac. What would you? Can you keep a secret?
 You look as though you could. I'll tell you. *Mush!*

SONG.—JACULIN.

*In ev'ry woodland, dale, and bowery,
 The fragrant roses blossom fair;
 But where's the youth shall call each flower,
 To braid a garland for my hair?
 Oh! he is far, far away,
 And he knows not where I stray;
 And should he e'er return
 To his love, I'll answer nay.
 My love in fight shall meet his doom,
 Or for some fairer maiden sigh;
 And with the rose's with'ring bloom,
 My hopeless, hopeless heart shall die.*

Hub. Her voice, too, says the same; but, for my
 I would not that her manners were so chang'd. [head,
 Hear me, thou honest fellow; what's this maiden,
 That lives amongst you here?

Snapp. Ao, ao, ao!
Hub. How! Nothing but signs? This is strange!
 I would fain have it her—but not her thus.

Hig. He is deaf and dumb. *(Stutters.)*
Hub. 'Slid! they did all speak plain enough when
 Dost thou know this same maid? [now.

Prig. She was born at the barn, yonder, *(stutters)*
 By Beggar's Bush. Her name is—

Hig. So was her mother's, too. *(Beggars retire.)*
Hub. I must be better informed than by this way.
 Here was another face, too, that I mark'd,
 Of the old man's; I will come here again.
 Protect us, our disguise now: pr'ythee, Hemskirke,
 If we be taken, how dost thou imagine
 This town will use us, that hath so long stood
 Out against Wolfort?

Hems. Even to hang us forth
 Upon their walls a sunning, to make crows' meat.
 If I were not assur'd o' the burgomaster,
 And had a pretty excuse to see a niece there,
 I should scarce venture.

Hub. Come, 'tis now too late
 To look back at the ports: good luck, and enter.
[Exit with Hems.]

Hig. A peery dog, I warrant him. [mean?
Gincks. *(To Clause.)* What could his question
Clause. I know not; yet 'twas time to fly, he grew
 Too close in his inquiries 'bout my daughter.

Hig. Hang them, for disturbing our
 Noble ceremonies. Shall we renew them?

Prig. Incontinently, noble brother.
Enter GOSWIN.

Hig. Oh! here a judge comes! *(Cry of "a judge!")*
Gos. What ails you, sirs? What means this out-
Hig. Master, [cry?

A sort of poor souls met, heav'n's tools, good master,
 Have had some little variance amongst ourselves
 Who should be honestest of us, and which lives
 Uprightest in his calling: now, 'cause we thought
 We ne'er should 'gree upon 't ourselves, because
 Indeed, 'tis hard to say, we all resolv'd to put it
 To him that should come next, and that's your mas-
 tership. [ter,

Which does your worship think is he? Sweet mas-
 Look on us all, and tell us: we are seven of us,
 Like to the seven wise masters, or the planets.

Gos. I should judge this, the man with the grey
 beard; *(Pointing to Clause.)*
 And if he be not, I would be were!
 There's something, too, amongst you,
 Keep you all honest.

[Exit.

Clause. Heav'n go with you!

Snapp. What is't?

Prig. A crown of gold.

Fer. For our new king—good luck! *[Clause!]*

Prig. King Clause! I bid, God save the first king
 After this golden token of a crown,
 Where's Higgen, with his gratulating speech
 In all our names?

Fer. Here he is, pumping for't. *[once more,*
Gincks. H' has cough'd the second time; 'tis but
 And then it comes.

Hig. Thou art chosen, venerable Clause,
 Our king and sov'reign; monarch o' th' maunders;
 And who is he that did not wish thee chosen,
 Now thou art chosen? Ask 'em; all will say so;
 Nay, swear't. 'Tis sworn so every day;
 The times do give it sanction. When t' other day
 We sat lamenting o'er our buried prince,
 Of famous memory, *(rest go with his rags!)*
 I then propos'd thou shortly wouldest be king,
 And now thou art so. By that beard, king Clause,
 Thou wert found out, and mark'd for sovereignty,
 Oh! happy prince, and beard! long may it grow,
 And thick, and fair, that who lives under it
 May live as safe as under Beggar's Bush.
 Of which this is the thing—that but the type.

(Coughs.)

Prig. On, good Higgen!

Hig. No impositions, taxes, grievances,
 Lie lurking in this beard: but under him
 Every man shall eat his own stol'n eggs and bacon
 In his own shade: he will have no purveyors
 For pigs, or poultry—

Clause. That we must have, my learned orator;
 It is our will; and every man to keep
 In his own path and circuit.

Hig. Do you hear?

You must hereafter maund in your own pads.
 He says.

Clause. Besides, to give good words.

Hig. Do you mark?

To cut bien whids, that is the second law.

Clause. And keep afoot the humble and the common
 Phrase of begging, lest men discover us.
 We love not heaps of laws, where few will serve.

All. Oh! gracious prince! Save, save the good
 king Clause!

Hig. A song to crown him.

GLEE AND CHORUS.

Cast our caps and cares away,

This is beggars' holyday;

At the crowning of our king,

Thus we ever dance and sing.

In the world look out and see,

Where so happy prince as he,

Where the nations live so free -

And so merry as do we?

Be it peace, or be it war,

Here at liberty we are.

And enjoy our ease and rest;

To the field we are not press'd;

Nor will any go to law

With the beggar for a straw:

All which happiness he brags,

He doth our unto his rags. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—A Room in Vandunke's house.

Enter VANDUNKE, HUBERT, HEMSKIRKE, and
MARGARET. *[friend,*

Vand. Captain, you're welcome; so is this your
 Most safely welcome; though our town stand out
 Against your master, you shall find good quarters.
 The truth is we love not him—Margaret, some wine.
 Let's talk a little treason, if we can
 Talk treason 'gainst the traitors; by your leave,
 We, here in Bruges, think he does us up;
 And, therefore, I am bold—

[Exit Margaret, and returns with wine.]

Hub. Sir, your boldness
 Haply becomes your tongue, but not our ears,
 While we are his servants.

Vand. Good! let's drink, then;
That will become us all.
Here's to you with a heart, my captain's friend,
With a good heart; and if this make us speak
Bold words anon, 'tis all under the rose,
Forgotten; drown all memory when we drink.

Hub. 'Tis freely spoken; noble burgomaster,
I'll do you right.

Hems. Nay, sir, mynheer Vandunke
Is a true statesman.

Vand. Fill my captain's cup; oh! that your out-
Master, Wolfort, had been an honest man!

Hub. Sir?

Vand. Under the rose—

Hems. Here's to you;
And how does my niece?

Almost a woman, I think; she was my errand.

Vand. Ay, a kind uncle you are—fill him his glass—
That in seven years could not find leisure—

Hems. No, 'tis not so much.

Vand. I'll bate you ne'er an hour on't.

It was before the Brabander 'gan his war,
For moonshine, i'the water there, his daughter
That ne'er was lost, yet you could not find time
To see a kinswoman; but she is worth the seeing, sir,
Now you are come: you ask if she were a woman?
She is a woman, sir—bring her forth, Margaret—
And a fine woman, and has suitors.

Hems. How! What suitors are they?

Vand. Bachelors; young burghers;
And one a gallant, the prince of merchants
We call him here in Bruges.

Hems. How! a merchant?

I thought, Vandunke, you had understood me better,
And my niece, too, so trusted to you by me,
Than to admit of such in name of suitors.

Vand. Such! he is such a such, as were she mine,
I'd give him thirty thousand crowns with her.

Hems. Sir, you may deal for your own wares, but
know,

That the same things, sir, fit not you and me. *[Exit.*

Vand. Why, give's some wine, then, that will fit us
Here's to you still, my captain's friend; but still [all;
I say, would Wolfort were an honest man!
Under the rose I speak it. But this merchant
Is a brave boy; he lives so, in the town here,
We know not what to think of him.
Your master is a traitor for all this,
Under the rose—here's to you—and usurps
The earldom from a better man.

Hub. Ay, marry, sir, where is this man?

Vand. Nay, soft! an' I could tell you,
'Tis ten to one I would not. Here's my hand—
I love not Wolfort—sit you still with that.
See, here my captain comes, and his fine niece,
And there my merchant—view him well.

Enter HEMSKIRKE, GERTRUDE, and GOSWIN.

Hems. You must

Not only know me for your uncle now,
But obey me: you, to go east yourself
Away upon a merchant? He upon't! one
That makes his trade with oaths and perjuries.

Gos. If it be me you speak of, as your eye
Seems to direct, I wish you would speak to me, sir.

Hems. Sir, I do say she is no merchandise.
Will that suffice you?

Gos. Merchandise! good sir,
Though you be kinsmen to her, take no leave thence
To use me with contempt. I ever thought
Your niece above all price.

Hems. And do so still;

Dost hear? her rate's at more than you are worth.

Gos. You do not know what is a gentleman's
Nor can you value him.

Hub. Well said, merchant.

Vand. Nay, let him alone.

Hems. A gentleman!

What, o' the woolpack, or the sugar-chest,
Or list of velvet? Which is't, pound or yard,
You read your gentry by?

Hub. Oh! Hemskirke, so!

Vand. Come, do not mind 'em: drink; he is no
Captain, I advise you.

Hems. If 'twere the blood
Of Charlemagne, as't may for aught I know,
Be some good butcher's issue here in Bruges.

Gos. How!

Hems. Nay, I'm not certain on't; of this I am:
If you once buy and sell, your gentry's gone.

Gos. Ha, ha, ha!

Hems. You're angry, though you laugh.

Gos. Now do I smile in pity and contempt
Of your poor argument: do not you, the lords
Of land, if you be any, sell the grass,
The corn, the straw, the milk, the cheese?

Vand. And butter?

Remember butter, do not leave out butter.

Gos. The beefs and muttons that your grounds are
stor'd with,

Beside the woods? Your empty honour, fetch'd
From the heralds A, B, C, and said o'er
With your court faces once an hour, shall ne'er
Make me mistake myself. Do not your lawyers
Sell all their practice, as your priests their prayers?
What is not bought and sold?

Hems. You now grow bold, sly.

Gos. I have been bred

Still with my honest freedom, and must use it.

Hems. Upon your equals, then.

Gos. Sir, he that will

Provoke me first, doth make himself my equal.

Hems. No more.

Gos. Yes, sir; this little—

'Tshall be aside: then after as you please.

You appear the uncle, sir, to her I love
More than mine eyes; and I have heard your scorn
With so much scoffing, and with so much shame,
As each striv'd which is greater: but believe me,
I suck'd not in this patience with my milk;
Cast no despites on my profession
For the civility and tameness of it.

A good man bears a contumely worse

Than he would do an injury.
I would approach your kinswoman
With all respect due to yourself and her.

Hems. Away, companion! handling her!

(Pulls him from her.)
Gos. Nay, I do love no blows, sir.

*(They fight; he gets Hemskirke's sword, and
throws it away.)*

Hub. Hold, sir!

Gert. Help, my Goswin!

Vand. Let 'em alone; my life for one.

Gos. Nay, come,

If you have will.

Hub. None to offend you, sir. *[yes, sir,*

Gos. He that had, thank himself! Not hand her?
And clasp her, and embrace her, and bear her
Through a whole race of uncles, arm'd;
And all their nephews, though they stood a wood
Of pikes, and wall of cannon. Kiss me, Gertrude;
Quake not, but kiss me.

Vand. Well said,

My merchant royal; fear no uncles; hang 'em,
Hang up all uncles!

Gos. Is this circle, love,
Thou art as safe as in a tower of brass;

Let such as do wrong fear.

Vand. Ay, that's good.

Let Wolfort look to that.

Gos. Sir, here she stands,
Your niece and my belov'd; one of these titles
She must apply to; if unto the last,
Not all the anger can be sent unto her,
In frown or voice, or other art, shall force her,
Had Hercules a hand in't. Come, my joy,
Say, thou art mine, aloud, love—and profess it.

Vand. Do, and I drink to it.

Gos. Pr'ythee, say so, love.

Gert. 'Twould take away the honour from

Do not you play the tyrant, sweet; they speak it.
Hems. I thank you, niece.

Gos. Sir, thank her for your life,
And fetch your sword within. [Exit with Gert,

Hub. A brave, clear spirit;
Hemskirke, you were to blame. A civil habit
Oft covers a good man; and you may meet
In person of a merchant, with a soul
As resolute and free, and always worthy
As else in any file of mankind. Pray you,
What meant you so to slight him?

Hems. 'Tis done now;
Ask me no more on't:
I was to blame, and I must suffer—(aside)—but yet
I'll be reveng'd. [Exit.

Hub. I'll to the woods
To find our much-wrong'd banish'd nobles,
And trace the lonely haunt where my lost love,
My Jaculin, laments her alter'd fortunes.
There I may chance to learn
Somewhat to help my inquiries further.
How now, brave burgomaster? [dunke.

Vand. I love not Wolfort, and my name's Van-

Hub. Come, go sleep within. [Wolfort—

Vand. Earl Florez is right heir; and this same
Under the rose I speak it—

Hub. Very hardly. [breath'd.

Vand. Usurps; and is a rank traitor as ever
And all that do uphold him. Let me go.

Hub. No.

Vand. Then hold up me. [Exit.

ACT III.—SCENE I.—A Wood.

Enter Goswin.

Gos. No wind blows fair yet! no return of mo-
Letters, nor anything to hold my hopes up! [nies,
Why, then, 'tis death that I fall! Fall miserably!
My credit I was built on sinking with me.
The raging north wind blows still stubbornly,
And on his boisterous rack rides my sad ruin.
To-morrow with the sun-set, sets my credit:
To prison row! Well, yet there's this hope left me,
I may sink fairly under this day's venture;
And so to-morrow's cross'd, and all its curses.
This is the place his challenge call'd me to;
Now let me fall before my too i'th' field,
And not at bar before my creditors.
He has kept his word. [Enter HEMSKIRKE.]

Now, sir, your sword's tongue only,
Loud as you dare—all other language—

Hems. Well, sir,

You shall not be long troubled: draw!

Gos. 'Tis done, sir; and now have at ye.

Hems. Now! [Enter Boors who attack Goswin.]

Gos. Betray'd to villains! Slaves, you shall buy
me dearly.

Enter GERRARD and Beggars.

Ger. Now upon 'em bravely, boys!

Down with the gentlemen.

Boors. Hold, hold! [em]

Ger. Down with 'em into the wood, and swinge

Conjure 'em soundly, boys! swinge 'em to jelly!

[Beggars beat off Hemskirke and Boors.

Blessings upon my master! thou art not hurt?

Gos. That heav'n, which sent thee to my aid,

Still nerv'd my arm.

Ger. And let my wandering steps,

To where conceal'd I heard you onward kneave

Tutor his ruffian band to thy undoing.

Ger. I thank ye, Clause. Pr'ythee, now leave me,

For, by my troth, I have nothing left to give thee.

Ger. Indeed, I do not ask, sir; only it grieves me

To see you look so sad. Now goodness keep you

From troubles in your mind!

Gos. If I were troubled, [me.

What could thy comfort do? Pr'ythee, Clause, leave

Ger. Why are ye sad?

Gos. Most true, I am so;

And such a sadness I have got will sink me! [ble

What would the knowledge do these good, so misera-

Thou canst not help thyself! canst thou work mis-

Ger. You do not know, sir, what I can do. [clasp

Tell me your cause of grief; I must not leave ye.

Gos. Hew! [goodness,

Ger. By what ye hold most precious, by heav'n's

As your fair birth may prosper, good sir, tell me;

My mind believes yet something's in my power

May ease you of this trouble.

Gos. I will tell thee:

For a hundred thousand crowns, upon my credit

Taken up of merchants to supply my traffic,

To-morrow, Clause—to-morrow, which must come,

In prison thou shalt find me, poor and broken.

Ger. I cannot blame your grief, sir.

Gos. Now, what say'st thou? [se.

Ger. I say, you should not shrink; for he that gath-

Can give you more. Are ye, good master, ty'd

Within the compass of a day?

Gos. Even to-morrow.

But why do I stand mocking of my misery!

Is't not enough that floods and friends forsake me?

Ger. Have ye no friends left?

None that have felt your bounty worth the duty?

Gos. Friendship! thou know'st it not.

Ger. It is a duty; and as a duty, from those men

have felt ye,

Should be return'd again; therefore, I'll do't.

Distrust not, but pull up your noble spirit;

For if the fortunes of ten thousand people

Can save ye, rest assur'd. You have forgot, sir,

The good you did; that was the pow'r you gave me.

You shall now know the king of beggars' treasure;

And let the winds blow as they list, the sea roar,

Yet here in safety you shall find your harbour.

Distrust me not, for if I live, I'll fit ye.

Gos. How fain I would believe thee!

Ger. If I fail, master, believe no man hereafter.

Gos. I will try thee; but he knows, that knows

Ger. Know me to-morrow: [all.

And if I know not how to cure ye, kill me!

So pass in peace, my best, my worthiest master. [Exit.

Gos. Still blow at thou there; and from all other

Do all my agents sleep, that nothing comes? [part

There's a conspiracy of friends and servants,

If not of elements, to ha' me break.

What should I think, unless the seas and sands

Had swallow'd up, or fire devour'd my ships,

I must ha' had some return.

Enter first Merchant,

1 Mer. Save you, sir!

Gos. Save you!

1 Mer. No news yet o' your ships?

Gos. Not any yet, sir.

1 Mer. 'Tis strange! [Exit.

Gos. 'Tis true, sir. What a voice was here now!

This was one passing bell; a thousand ravens

Sung in that man now, to presage my ruin!

Enter second Merchant.

2 Mer. Goswin, good day! these winds are very

Gos. They are so, sir—to hurt. [constant.

2 Mer. Ha' you had no letters

Lately from England, nor from Denmark?

Gos. Neither. [lands

2 Mer. This wind brings them. Nor no news over

Through Spain, from the Straits?

Gos. Not any.

2 Mer. I am sorry, sir. [Exit.

Gos. They talk me down; and, as 'tis said of val-

tures,

That scent a field fought, and do smell the carcases

By many hundred miles: so do these, my wrecks,

At greater distances. Then, heaven, thy will

Come on, and be! For base, deceitful fortune

Shall never say, she's out my throat in fear:

I am not broken yet; nor should I fall,

Methinks, with less than that; that ruins all. [Exit.

SCENE II.—Another part of the Wood.

Enter HUBERT, as a Huntsman.

Hub. Thus have I stol'n away disguis'd from Hems-

To try these people; for my heart yet tells me [kirke,

Some of these beggars are the men I look for. Appearing like myself, they have no reason (Though my intent be fair,) but still to avoid me. This is the wood they make their hidden home, A fit place for concealment; where, till fortune Crown me with that I seek, I'll live amongst 'em. They come: I'll couch awhile, and mark my time.

[Exit.

Enter HIGGEN, PRIG, FERRET, GINKES, and the rest, with the Boors in custody.

Hig. Come, bring him out, for here we sit in jux Each man take a cudgel, a good cudgel: [tice; And now attend our sentence. That you are rogues, And mischievous, base rascals—there's the point I take it, is confess'd. [now—

Prig. Deny it, if ye dare, knaves.

Boors. We are rogues, sir.

Hig. To amplify the matter, then; rogues ye are, And cudgell'd ye shall be, ere we leave ye.

Boors. Yes, sir.

Hig. Why did ye this?

Were you drunk when ye did it?

Boors. Yes, indeed, we were.

Prig. You shall be beaten sober.

Hig. Was it for want ye undertook it?

Boors. Yes, sir.

Hig. Ye shall be swing'd abundantly.

Has not the gentleman (pray, mark this point, Brother Prigg,) reliev'd you often?

Boors. 'Tis most true, sir.

Hig. And as ye are true rascals, Tell me but this: have ye not been drunk and often At his charge?

Boors. Often, often.

Hig. There's the point, then:

They have cast themselves, brother Prig. Proceed you now; I'm somewhat weary.

Prig. Can you do these things, You most abominable scurvy rascals, You turnip-eating rogues?

Boors. We're truly sorry.

[presently

Prig. To the proof, you knaves; to the proof, and give us a sign you feel compunction.

Every man up with his cudgel, and on his neighbour Bestow such aims, till we shall say sufficient.

Hig. You know your doom:

One, two, three, and about it.

[Boors beat each other off.

Prig. That fellow in the blue has true compunc- tion.

Enter GERRARD.

Ger. Call in the gentleman:

His cause I'll hear myself.

Enter HEMSKIRKE, handcuffed.

Prig. With all due reverence

We do resign, sir.

Ger. Go fetch that paper was found upon him.

But, soft! who have we here? [Exit Ferret.

Enter HUBERT.

Hub. Good ev'n, my honest friends!

Ger. Good ev'n, good fellow!

Hub. May a poor huntsman, with a merry heart, A voice shall make the forest ring about him, Get leave to live amongst ye? True as steel, boys; That knows all chases, and can watch all hours, Force ye the crafty reynard, climb the quick-sets, And rouse the lofty stag; and with my bell-horn Ring him a knell, that all the woods shall mourn him, Till in his funeral tears he fall before me.

Ger. Well spoke, my brave fellow.

Hub. (Aside.) What mak'st thou here here? Hemskirke, thou art not right, I fear.

Re-enter FERRET, with a paper.

Ger. Here is the paper.

Ger. Give it to me. You are sent here, sirrah, To discover certain gentlemen; a spy knave! And if you find 'em, if not by persuasion, To bring 'em back—by poison to dispatch 'em!

Hub. By poison! ha! (Aside.)

Ger. Here is another—Hubert. What is that Hu- Hub. You may perceive there— [bert, sir?

Ger. Here thou art commanded, when that Hubert Has done his best and worthiest services this way, To cut his throat; for here he's set down dangerous.

Hub. This is most impious! (Aside.)

Ger. Is not this true?

Hems. Yes. What are you the better? [dum;

Ger. You shall perceive, sir, ere you get your free- Keep him still bound; and, friend, we take thee to us, Into our company. Thou dar'st be true unto us?

Hig. Ay, and obedient, too?

Hub. As you had bred me.

Ger. Then take our hand; thou'rt now a servant to Welcome him all.

Hig. Stand off, stand off, I'll do't; [son, We bid you welcome three ways: first, for your per- Which is a promising person; next for your quality, Which is a decent and a gentle quality; Last, for the frequent means you have to feed us; You can steal, 'tis presum'd?

Hub. Yes, venison; an' if you want—

Hig. 'Tis well you understand that, for you Shall practise it daily, you can drink, too?

Hub. Soundly. [cook;

Hig. And ye dare know a woman from a weather-

Hub. If I handle her.

Ger. As earnest of thy faith and resolution With thou undertake to keep this rascal prisoner? One who basely contriv'd to undermine

A noble life, dear to the state and us. [wonder,

Hub. Sirs, I have kept wild dogs, and beasts for And made 'em tame, too. Give into my custody This roaring rascal, I shall hamper him.

Oh! he smells rank o'th' rascal.

Ger. Take him to thee; but if he 'scape—

Hub. Let me be even hang'd for him.

Come, sir, I'll tie you to the leash.

Hems. Away, rascal!

[soundly,

Hub. Be not so stubborn: I shall swinge ye As ye play tricks with me.

Ger. So, now away;

But ever have an eye, sir, to your prisoner.

Hub. He must blind both mine eyes, if he get from me. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—A Room in Gertrude's house.

Enter GOSWIN and GERTRUDE.

Gert. Indeed, you're welcome; I have heard your 'scape,

And, therefore, give her leave, that only loves you, To bid you welcome. what is't makes you sad? Why do you look so wild? Is't I offend you? Bestrew my heart, not willingly.

Gos. No, Gertrude. [far,

Gert. Is't the delay of that you long have look'd

A happy marriage?

Gos. No news yet.

Gert. Do you hear, sir?

Gos. Have I liv'd

In all the happiness that fortune could seat me?

In all men's fair opinions?

Gert. Do you love me?

Gos. And can the devil,

In one ten days—that devil chance, devour me?

Gert. You do not love me.

Gos. No star prosperous: all at a swoop!

Gert. Goswin, you will not look upon me.

Gos. Can men's prayers,

Shot up to heaven with such a zeal as mine are,

Fall back like lazy mists, and never prosper?

Gyes I must wear, and cold must be my comfort, Darkness, and want of meat—alas! she weeps, too, Which is the top of all my sorrow—Gertrude!

Gert. No, no, you will know me.

Gos. The time grows on still,

And like a tumbling wave, I see my ruin [slighting? Come rolling over me.

Gert. Tell me but how I have deserv'd your

Gos. For a hundred thousand crowns!

Gert. Farewell!

Gos. Of which I have scarce ten—oh! how it starts me!

Gert. And may the next you love, hearing my ruin—

Gos. I had forgot myself—oh! my best Gertrude! Crown of my joys and comforts,

Gert. Sweet, what ails ye?

I thought you had been vex'd with me.

Gos. My mind, wench,

My mind, o'erflow'd with sorrow, sunk my memory.

Gert. Am I not worthy of the knowledge of it?

And cannot I as well affect your sorrows

As your delights? you love no other woman?

Gos. No, I protest.

Gert. You have no ships lost lately?

Gos. None that I know of. [*cease*]

Gert. I hope you have spilled no blood whose innocence

May lay this on your conscience.

Gos. Clear, by heaven!

Gert. Why should you be thus, then?

Gos. Good Gertrude, ask not.

Even by the love you bear me.

Gert. I am obedient.

Gos. Go in, my fair; I will not be long from ye—

Nor long, I fear me, with thee. At my return

Dispose me as you please. [Exit.]

Gert. The good gods guide ye!

Gos. Now for myself, which is the least I hope for,

And when that fails, for man's worst fortune, pry. [Exit.]

ACT IV.—SCENE I.—A Street in Bruges.

Enter GOSWIN and two Merchants.

Gos. Why, gentlemen, 'tis but a week more; I

entreat you

But seven short days; I am not running from you,

Nor, if you give me patience, is it possible

All my adventures fail. You've ships abroad

Endure the beating both of wind and weather,

I'm sure 'twould vex your hearts to be protested;

Ye're all fair merchants.

1 Mer. And must have fair play.

There is no living here else; for my part,

I would gladly stay; but my wants tell me,

I must wrong others in't.

Gos. No mercy in ye?

2 Mer. 'Tis foolish to depend on others' mercy.

Keep yourself right, sir; you have yet liv'd here

In lord-like prodigality, high and open;

Now ye find what 'tis.

1 Mer. Before your poverty,

We were of no mark, of no endeavour.

2 Mer. You stood alone; and scarce a sail at sea

But laden with your goods. Now I hope, sir,

We shall have sea-room.

Gos. Is my misery

Become my scorn, too? Have you no mercy,

No part of men left? Are all my bounties

To you, and to the town, turn'd my reproaches?

2 Mer. Well, get your monies ready; 'tis but two

We shall protest ye else, and suddenly. [hours;]

Gos. But two days—

2 Mer. Not an hour. Ye know the hazard. [Exit Merchants.]

Gos. How soon my light's put out! Hard-hearted

Bruges!

Within thy walls may never honest merchant

Venture his fortune more! [Enter GERRARD.]

Ger. Good fortune, master!

Gos. Thou mistak'st me, Clause;

I am not worth thy blessing.

Ger. Still a sad man!

No belief, gentle master?

Enter FERRET and GINKES, as porters.

Bring it in, then;

And now believe your beadsman.

Gos. Is this certain?

Or dost thou work upon my troubled senses?

Ger. 'Tis gold; 'tis there, a hundred thousand

crowns;

And, good, sweet master, now be merry. Pay 'em!

Pay the poor, pelted knaves, that know no good-

And cheer your heart up. [ness.]

Gos. But, good Clause, tell me, [fully,

How cam'st thou by this mighty sum? If wrong-

I must not take it of thee; 'twill undo me!

Ger. Fear not; you have it by as honest means,

As though your father gave it.

Gos. What great security?

Ger. Away with that, sir;

Were ye not more than all the men in Bruges,

And all the money, in my thoughts?

Gos. But, Clause,

I may die presently.

Ger. Then this dies with you. [ments.

Pay when you can, good master; I'll no paroh-

Only this charity I entreat you,

Leave me this ring.

Gos. Alas! it is too poor, Clause.

Ger. 'Tis all I ask; and this withal, that when

I shall deliver't back, you shall grant me,

Freely, one poor petition.

Gos. There, I confirm it. [Gives the ring.]

And may my faith forsake me when I shun it! [Ex.

Ger. Away! take up the money,

And follow that young gentleman. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A Wood.—Enter JACULIN.

Jac. I surely cannot err. What borrow'd dress

Can hide my Hubert from me? How I wish,

Yet fear to be resolv'd. He went this way.

Shall I adventure? Oh! this dread suspense,

How it does load my heart!

Enter HUBERT.

Hub. I've look'd my youth up close enough from

In an old tree, and set watch over him. [gadding.

My schemes are almost ripe—Ha, Jaculin!

If through her means, I can but make discovery.

Come hither, pretty maid.

Jac. No, no, you'll kiss me.

Hub. So I will. [Kisses her.]

What's your father's name?

Jac. He's gone to heaven!

Hub. Is it not Gerrard, sweet?

Jac. I'll stay no longer.

My mother's an old woman, and my brother

Was drown'd at sea. [Goes.]

Hub. Stay! do not fly me thus. [me.

Jac. [Aside.] Oh! how my heart melts within

Hub. [Aside.] 'Tis certain she! Pray, let me

Jac. No, no. [see your hand, sweet.

Hub. [Aside.] Sure, I should know that ring!

Jac. [Aside.] 'Tis certain he. I had forgot my

Hub. Do you know me, chuck? [ring, too.

Jac. No, indeed; I never saw ye:

I must be married to-morrow, to a capper.

Hub. [Aside.] How fain she would conceal her-

self, yet cannot.

My pretty wanderer, will you love me,

And leave that man? I'll wait you through the vale,

And make you dainty nosegays.

Jac. And where put them?

Hub. Here, in thy bosom, sweet.

Jac. Can you love, then?

SONG.—JACULIN.

Tho' he is far away,

And over land and sea;

He'll come some happy day,

And prove his truth to me.

And when my love's returning,

My secret known too well,

Thro' all my blushes burning,

Shall want no tongue to tell.

Hub. One word more.

Did you ever know a maid call'd Jaculin?

Jac. Oh! I'm discover'd!

Hub. 'Tis she! Now I'm certain

They're all here. Turn, turn thee, lovely maid,

Thy Hubert speaks to thee.

Jac. Alas! I am forbid? Why thus disguis'd?

Hub. For justice and for thee, love!

Meet me anon, I'll tell thee all my purpose.

Jac. And may I trust thee, Hubert?

Hub. As thine own soul.

Jac. But yet you must not know me. This, and be constant ever. [Exit.

Hub. Oh! blessed certainty!
Now for my other project.
To turn the cunning toils were laid for me
To Hemsikirke's ruin, and the tyrant's fall. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.

Enter VANDUNKE, followed by a Servant.

Van. With officers of justice, said ye? and
Inquir'd for Goswin? Bid 'em come in. [Exit Serv.
Now will I play upon this envious crew,
That fain would run a royal vessel down.
They're here as bidden to a feast, before their hour:
I'll whet and disappoint their hungry appetites.

Enter the four Merchants.

2 Mer. Good day, most worthy burgomaster.
Our visit was to the rich merchant, Goswin.

Van. I'm sorry for't. I fear his strong necessity
Will bring him empty-handed. [ties
You must be merciful.

1 Mer. Oh! but he'll come;
He's rich, or from his ventures should be so.

2 Mer. I only wish
His forwardness to embrace all bargains,
Sink him not in the end.

1 Mer. (To Vand.) Have better hopes;
For my part, I am confident. [friends!

Vand. (Aside.) Here's a set of smiling mouth

3 Mer. His noble mind and ready hand contend
Which can add most to his free courtesies.

Vand. Affable wolves! (Aside.)

2 Mer. It was at his bidding,
I did free from prison a sea robber,
Who yet may live to pay him with his ruin.

What think you of that deed, burgomaster?

Vand. What think! as of a deed of noble pity:

And if that act did plunge him into ruin,

You may now share its glory, by relieving him;

And holding off your bonds.

2 Mer. I love and honour him,

But must not break my neck to heal his finger.

3 Mer. For my part, though his bounty has no
eyes,

Yet my necessities compel me to some foresight.

Vand. Have ye not often profited by this man,

And revell'd at his cost?

2 Mer. Sir, we confess—

Vand. Do, that y'e all base knaves and hypocrites.

See, here he comes to challenge a return

Of kindness from ye.

1 Mer. When our bonds he paid.

Enter GOSWIN, with men carrying bags of money.

Gos. Now, sirs, your bonds. Set down those bags

Your pardon, that you wait. [of gold.

2 Mer. (Aside.) He deals in witchcraft!

1 Mer. Nay, sir, if it would do you courtesy,—

Gos. None at all, sir. (The Merchants bow.)

Vand. There's bending now of backs,

And jutting out of hips. (Aside.)

Gos. Take it, 'tis yours.

There's your ten thousand, sir. Give in my bills.

Your sixteen—

3 Mer. Pray, be pleas'd to make further use.

Gos. No.

Vand. That's plump! You're answer'd, I hope?

4 Mer. What I have, sir,

You may command. Pray, let me be your servant.

Gos. Put on your hats. I care not for your courtesies;

They're most untimely done, and no truth in 'em.

Vand. They're all lies, I'll vouch for 'em ev'ry

2 Mer. I have a freight of pepper. [one.

Vand. Rot your pepper! [thousand.

Gos. Shall I trust you again?—There's your ten

4 Mer. Or, if you want fine sugar, 'tis but sending.

Gos. No, I can send to Barbary; those people,

That never yet knew faith, have nobler freedoms.

How now?—[Enter a Sailor.]

Sail. Why, health to the noble merchant!

The Susan is returned.

Gos. Well!

Sail. Well, and rich, sir;

And now put in.

Vand. Do you mark that?

Gos. Heav'n, thou hast heard my prayers.

What news o'th' fly-boat?

Sail. If this wind hold till midnight,

She will be here, add wealthy.—'Scap'd fairly.

Vand. D'ye hear that, too, knaves.

Gos. How, pr'ythee, sailor?

Sail. Thus, sir. She had fought

Seven hours together, with six Turkish galleys,

And she fought bravely; but, at last, was boarded,

And overlaid with strength; when, presently,

Comes bearing up i'the wind, Captain Vannoke,

That valiant gentleman you redeem'd from prison.

He knew the boat, set in, and fought it bravely;

Beat all the galleys off, sunk three; redeem'd her,

And, as a service to ye, sent her home, sir.

Gos. An honest, noble captain, and a thankful!

Vand. And this is he you would have hang'd,

Ye land pirates!

Gos. There's for thy news. Go, drink the mer-

chant's health, sailor.

Sail. Thank your bounty; and I'll do it to a doil.

Vand. Ay, drink till ye drown yourself,

Or you're no Englishman. [Exit Sailor.

Gos. This year, I hope, my friends, I shall scape

For all your cares to catch me. [prison,

Vand. Come, sir, leave these pitiful knaves;

You must along with me:

Yonder is one who weeps and sobs.

Gos. Alas! how does she?

Vand. She will be better soon, I hope.

Gos. Why soon, sir? [night,

Vand. Why, when you have her in your arms. This

My boy, she is thy wife:

I'll cheer thee up with sack,

And, when thou'rt joyous, fling thee to thy mistress.

Gos. With all my heart, I take her.

You are paid, I hope?

2 Mer. You may please, sir,

To think of your poor servants in displeasure,

Whose all they have—goods, moneys, are at your

Gos. I thank you; [service.

And when I've need of you, I shall forget you.

[Exeunt.

SCENE IV.—A Wood.

Enter HUBERT and HEMSIRKE.

Hub. You the earl's servant? [him,

Hems. I swear I am near as his own thoughts to

Able to do thee service. Release me,

I'll make thee ranger over all the game. [too.

Hub. This may provoke me. Yet to prove a knave

Hems. 'Tis to prove honest; 'tis to do good ser-

vice [prince.

For him thou'rt sworn to, huntsman; for thy

Hub. Then thou shalt see, sir. I will do a ser-

vice, that shall deserve, indeed. [vice,

'Tis not your setting free, for that's mere nothing;

But such a service, if the earl be noble,

He shall for ever love me.

Hems. What is't, huntsman?

Hub. Do you know any of these people live here?

Hems. No. [have 'em,

Hub. You are a fool, then. Here be those, to

I know the earl so well, would make him caper.

Hems. Any of the old lords, that rebell'd?

Hub. Peace!

All. I know 'em all, and can betray 'em.

Hems. But wilt thou do this service?

Hub. More than that, too.

Here's the right heir!

Hems. What, Florez? Oh! honest,

Honest huntsman!

Hub. Now, how to get them,

There's the matter.

Hems. By force.

Hub. Ay, that must do't.

And, with the person of the earl himself,

Authority and might must come on 'em,
Or else in vain. And thus I would have you do't.
To-morrow night be here, the hour be twelve:
Now for a guide to draw ye on these persons,
The woods being thick, and hard to hit, myself.
With some beside, will wait you by th' great oak.
Hems. Keep but thy faith, and such a shower of
wealth—

Hub. I warrant ye. Mis nothing that I tell ye.
Away, away! for here come those will hold ye.

[*Exit Hemskirke.*]

Enter GERRARD, HIGGEN, PRIG, GINKES,
SNAP, FERRET, and others.

Ger. Now, what's the news in town?

Ginkes. No news but joy, sir.

Ev'ry man wooing of the noble merchant,

Who sends his hearty commendations to ye.

Fer. Yes; there's this news. This night he's to
be married.

Ger. This night! He must not marry now.

Hub. Good sir,

By your leave, one word in private with ye.

Nay, do not start; I know ye.

Hubert speaks to ye, and you must be Gerrard,
The time invites you to it.

Ger. Challeng'd thus,
I throw aside disguise, and trust your honour,
Sir, I am Gerrard; say, how stand our hopes?

Hub. Fair, if you now pursue 'em. Hemskirke.
Let go, and these my causes I'll tell ye [I've

Privately, and how I have wrought on him,

Gull'd him, and sent him home as a decoy,

To bring Lord Wulfort hither, with his guards,

To seize (so he'll expect) the banish'd lords;

But, so my plan succeed, his very guards

Shall serve to crush the tyranny they rais'd,

And, at my voice, shall hail their lawful prince.

Till I can prove me honest to my friends,

Look on, and strictly follow these directions.

Snap. What! does he marry Vandunke's pretty
daughter? [pies!]

Prig. Oh! the puddings, the piping hot mince-
Hig. For the leg of a goose, now would I venture

I love a fat goose, as I love allegiance; [a limb:

And plague upon the boors, too well they know't;

And, therefore, starve their poultry.

Prig. Brother Higgen,

What think you of a wassail?

Hig. Worthily;

And then I'll make a speech in praise of merchants.

Prig. And I'll so roar out songs and glees!

Ger. 'Tis passing well, I both believe and joy in't,

And will be ready. Hear me all: keep in

Till this, your huntsman, call ye forth; then do

His bidding faithfully. I must awhile

Forsake ye. On mine anger, no man stir hence.

Prig. Not to the wedding, sir?

Ger. Not any whither. [meat, too.

Hig. The wedding must be seen, sir. We want

We're horribly out of meat.

Prig. Shall it be spoken,

Fat capons shak'd their tails at's in defiance?

Shall pigs, sir, that the parson's self would envy,

And dainty ducks—

Ger. Not a word more. Obey me! [*Exit.*

Hig. Why, then, come doleful death; this is flat

And by this hand— [tyranny!]

Hub. What?

Hig. I'll go to sleep upon't.

Hub. No sleep to-night for any that have hearts

To hunt with me the savage, bloody boar

That wastes the land. I have a scheme, my hearts,

Shall, by one night of watching, win a feast,

Whereat a royal host shall bid you welcome.

[*Exeunt, crying "Long live our huntsman,*

Hubert!"]

SCENE V.—An entrance Hall in Bruges.

Enter GOSWIN, with a paper in his hand.

Gos. Such earnest bidding; nay, more like com-
mand,

To meet him here, on th' forfeit of my word,
In this the moment of my nuptial hour!
What this man is I know not, nor for what cause
He twice has thrust himself into my dangers.
But, sure, heav'n's hand is in't. By strange instinct,
Nature has taught me to behold his wants,
Not as a stranger's.—[*Enter* GERRARD.]
My honest, my best friend, I have been careful
To see thy money—

Clause. Sir, that brought not me.

Do you know this ring again?

Gos. Thou hadst it of me.

Clause. And do you well remember yet the boon
Upon the return of this? [you gave me

Gos. Yes; and I grant it,

Be it what it will. Ask what thou canst, I'll do it,
Within my power.

Clause. You are not married yet?

Gos. No.

Clause. Faith, I shall ask you that, that will dis-
Gos. Do;

And if I faint and flinch in't,—

Clause. Well said, master;

And yet it grieves me, too, and yet it must be.

Gos. Pr'ythee, distrust me not.

Clause. You must not marry.

That's part of the power you gave me.

Gos. Not marry, Clause?

Clause. Not if you keep your promise,

And give me power to ask.

Gos. Pr'ythee, think better.

I will obey, by heaven!

Clause. I have thought the best, sir. [nesty?

Gos. Give me thy reason. Dost thou fear her ho-

Clause. Chaste as the ice, for anything I know,

Gos. Must not marry? [sir.

Shall I break now, when my poor heart is pawn'd?

When all the preparation—

Clause. Now, or never.

Gos. Come, 'tis not that thou wouldst: thou dost
but fright me.

Clause. You may break, sir;

But never more in my thoughts appear honest.

Gos. Didst ever see her?

Clause. No.

Gos. She is such a wonder

For beauty and fair virtue, Europe has not.

Why hast thou made me happy to undo me?

But look upon her, then if thy heart relent not,

I'll quit her presently. Who waits there?

Bid my fair love come hither.

Pr'ythee, be merciful; take a man's heart,

And look upon her truly: take a friend's heart,

And feel what misery must follow this. [mise.

Clause. Take you a noble heart, and keep your pro-

I forsook all I had to make you happy.

Enter GERTRUDE.

Can that thing call'd a woman stay your virtue?

Gos. Look, there she is. Now deal with me as

Didst ever see a fairer? [thou wilt.

Gert. What ails my love?

Gos. Didst thou ever,

By the fair light of heav'n, behold a sweeter?

Gert. Sure, h'as some strange design in hand,

He starts so.

Clause. She is most goodly.

Gos. Is she a thing, then, to be lost thus lightly?

Her mind is ten times sweeter, ten times nobler,—

And but to hear her speak—a paradise.

And such a love she bears to me,—a chaste love,—

And ready now to bless me; the priest too, ready

To say the holy words, shall make us happy.

This is a cruelty beyond man's study;

'Twill be her death to do't.

Clause. Let her die, then.

Gos. 'Twill kill me, too; 'twill murder me. By

heav'n, Clause, [me.

I'll give thee half I have. Come, thou shalt save

Clause. Then you must go with me; I can stay

no longer.

If you be true and noble, in the dark walk
Of aged elms, that opens to the plain,
You'll meet me in this hour.

Gos. Hard heart, I'll follow thee. [*Exit Clause.*
Pray ye, go in? I have a weighty business
Concerns my life and state, (make no inquiry.)
This present hour befall'n me. My cloak there!

Gert. Is this your ceremony? Why is this stop,

Gos. We must part, [sir?
Gert. we must!

Gert. Must! What voice enjoins?

What power commands?

Gos. We shall meet again.

Gert. Who is yon man, that rules so absolute
O'er Goswin's will? [sweet,

Gos. Ask me no more. I can but tell thee this,
I'm ever thine. Farewell. [*Exit Gert.*

I know not why,

But to obey this man, to me seems now

As payment of some great religious debt

Nature stands bound for. [*Exit.*

ACT V.—SCENE I.—Woods.

Enter GERTRUDE and a Clown.

Ger. Lead, if we're right; thou said'st thou
knew'st the way. [homeward!

Clown. Fear nothing, I do know it. Would 'twere

Gert. Follow from me by a beggar! at the time

That most should tie him! 'tis some other love

That hath a more command on his affections,

And he that fetch'd him, a disguised agent,

Not what he personated. Darkness shroud

And cover love's too curious search in me;

For yet, suspicion, I would not name thee.

Clown. Mistress, it grows somewhat pretty and

Gert. What then? [dark.

Clown. Nay, nothing. Do not think I am afraid,

Although, perhaps, you are.

Gert. I am not. Forward! [fear nothing.

Clown. Sure, but you are. Give me your hand—

What a fright one on's are in, you or I?

Gert. What ails the fellow?

Clown. Hark, hark! I beseech you.

Do you hear nothing?

Gert. No.

Clown. List! This wood is full of wolves,

Of hogs, and such carnivorous vermin.

Hark! 'tis the howling of a wolf!

Gert. Of the wind, coward! [now!

Clown. Help me to say my pray'rs. He's got me

I cannot speak! Do I speak, mistress? Tell me.

Gert. A precious guide I've got. (*One halloo.*)

Clown. It thunders now. You hear that, mistress?

Gert. I hear one halloo! [lightning!

Clown. 'Tis thunder, thunder! See, a flash of

Are you not blasted, mistress?

'T has played the harber with me; I have lost

My beard—I am shaven, mistress.

Gert. Pr'ythee, hold thy peace.

Both love and jealousy have made me bold.

Where my fate leads me, I must go. Hold off! [*Ex.*

Clown. The Lord go with you, then, for I will not.

Enter WOLFORT, HEMSKIRKE, and Soldiers.

Hems. 'Tis the fellow,—sure, he that should

guide—

The huntsman that did halloo. Who goes there?

Clown. Mistress, I am taken.

Hems. Ah, mistress! Now look forth. *

Wolf. What are you, sirrah?

Clown. Truly, all is left

Of a poor boor by day, nothing by night.

I'm none that will stand out, great sir.

You might have spar'd your guns and drum;

You may subdue me with a walking-stick,

E'en when you please, and hold me with a pack-

Hems. What woman was't you call'd to? [thread.

Clown. I? None, sir.

Wolf. None! Did not you name a mistress?

Clown. Yes; but she's

No woman yet: she should have been this night,

But that a beggar stole away her bridegroom.

Enter Soldiers with GERTRUDE.

Hems. 'Tis she!

Gert. Ha! I am miserably lost!

Hems. This was a noble entrance to your fortune;
That being thus upon the point of marriage,
Upon her venture here, you should surprise her.

Wolf. I begin, Hemskirke, to believe my fate

Works to my end. *

Hems. Yes, sir; and this adds trust

Unto our guide, who did assure me Florez
Liv'd in some merchant's shape, as Gerrard did
'In the old beggar's. (*Shouts heard.*) That's he

Wolf. Good! Go we forth to meet him. [again!

Hems. Here's the oak, my lord. Come, madam,

you must along with us. [*Exeunt.*

Enter HUBERT, HIGGEN, PRIG, FERRET, SNAP,

and GINKES, like boors.

Hub. I like your habits well. They're safe!

stand close!

Hig. But what's the action we are for now? eh?

Robbing a ripper of his fish?

Prig. Or taking a poultterer prisoner? *

Hig. Without ransom?

Snap. Or cutting off a convoy of batter?

Prig. Oh! I could drive a regiment

Of geese afore me such a night as this,

Ten leagues with my hat and staff, aff'd not a hiss—

Heard, or a wing of my troop disorder'd. *

Hig. Is it a fetching off a buck of clothes?

We are horribly out of linen.

Hub. No such matter.

Hig. Let me alone for any farmer's dog:

If you've a mind to the cheese-loft, 'tis but thus.

And 't's a silene'd mastiff during pleasure.

Hub. Would it please you to be silent?

Hig. Mum!

Re-enter WOLFORT, HEMSKIRKE, and Soldiers.

Wolf. Who's there?

Hub. A friend, the huntsman.

Hems. 'Tis he, himself. [these?

Hub. I have kept to'ch, sir. Which is the earl of

Hems. This, my lord, 's the friend

Hath undertook the service.

Hub. And I have don't.

I know to pitch my toils, drive in my game;

For Florez, and his father

Gerrard, and Jaculin, young Florez's sister,

I'll have 'em all.

Wolf. We will double

Whatever Hemskirke now hath promis'd thee.

Hub. And I'll deserve it treble. What horse ha'

Wolf. A hundred. [you?

Hub. That's well. Ready to take 'em on sur-

Wolf. Yes. [prise?

Hems. Divide, then,

Your force into five squadrons; for there are

So many outlets; of all which passages

We must possess ourselves to round 'em in.

And that they may be more secure, I'll use

My wonted whoops and halloos, as I were

A hunting for 'em; which will make them rest

Careless of any noise, and be a direction

To other guides, how we approach 'em still.

Wolf. 'Tis order'd well, and relisheth the soldier.

Make the division, huntsman. You are my charge,

My fair one. I'll look to you. [*Exeunt.*

Clown. No one shall need to look to me,

I'll look unto myself. [*Exit.*

Hub. Now, comrades, is the promis'd hour at

hand!

Here, where the roads do meet, lie conceal'd;

And, at the bugle's sound, rush forth to aid

Lord Hubert, who then rings the knell

Of Wolfort's power, and hails found Florez,

prince. [*Exit with Guards.*

Enter GERRARD and FLOREZ.

Flo. 'Tis passing strange!

Ger. When we fled from Wolfort,

I sent you into England, there plac'd you

With a brave Flanders merchant, call'd rich Gos-

THE VILLAGE LAWYER;

A FARCE, IN TWO ACTS.



Act II—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

JUSTICE MITTIMUS
SCOUT
SNARL

SHEEPFACE
CHARLES
CLERK

CONSTABLES
MRS. SCOUT
KATE

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Room in Scout's house.

Mrs. S. (Without.) I tell you it shall be—

Scout. (Without.) Nay, nay; but my dear, now—

Mrs. S. (Without.) It does not signify talking, I must and will have it so.

Scout. (Without.) But think, my dear, how ridiculous—

Mrs. S. (Without.) I don't care; I'm resolved; I'll no longer be the laughing-stock of the whole country. Do you imagine I'll—

Enter Mr. and Mrs. SCOUT.

Scout. Nay, but my dear, sweet love, that indefatigable tongue of your's would out-talk any lawyer in the kingdom; I can talk, sometimes, pretty well myself, but I stand no chance with you. Why, you would out-din the whole bar itself, that though a lawyer—

Mrs. S. A lawyer! No one, to see you in this trim, would imagine you had ever carried on anybody's suit but your own. Had you a grain of spirit left, you might—

Scout. Spirit! Nay, nay, wife, don't complain of my want of spirit. Was it not my spirit that drove me from the capital, and made me bury my talents in obscurity? Have not I attended all the harangues of the courts, with only a little whizzing on one side, and a deafness on the other? And have not I convinced you I had too much spirit on a certain occasion?

Mrs. S. Very fine, indeed. And so you make a merit of your blunders!

Scout. Blunders, indeed! I think I made a blunder in coming here. Not a single job have I got since I have been down: not a broken head, nor a quarrel for one to get a penny by; there has not been a bastard born since we've been here; and,

d— me, if I don't think the very cattle keep out of the pound on purpose to spite me. Now, if one could put on the appearance of business, the reality follows of course; and, perhaps, something may turn out—

Mrs. S. Yes; and, in the meantime, your poor wife may starve, and your daughter lose the opportunity of settling herself handsomely, with one of the young men that pay their addresses to her; whom the shabbiness of your appearance has frightened away.

Scout. Why, to be sure, I am shabby enough, of all conscience; and cannot, with any propriety, make my appearance in public. Let me see: I have it; I'll go and purchase a suit of clothes directly.

Mrs. S. Purchase a suit of clothes, without a shilling in your pocket?

Scout. Oh! my dear, that's nothing at all: most of the fashionable suits in London are purchased that way. Let me see: what colour shall I choose? shall it be a brown, a grey, a bat's wing, &c—

Mrs. S. Oh! never mind the colour, so you can find somebody fool enough to let you have the cloth.

Scout. Oh! I'll warrant you. Let me see, now: there's neighbour Snarl, that lives over the way; he keeps a large assortment of colours; I'll hem him out of a suit.

Mrs. S. Mr. Snarl! Take care what you do there, husband; his son, Charles, is in love with our Harriet, and would have married her before now, but for fear of his father's anger. I would not for the world disappoint the girl's hopes.

Scout. Well, well; stop in and bring my gown and band; it will, at least, make me have a better appearance, [*Exit Mrs. S.*] by hiding these d—d rags of mine. Come, wife, make haste. Take care you don't break the China basin on the window. Come, what a long time you are!

Re-enter MRS. SCOUT, with the gown and band.

Mrs. S. Why, I brought it as soon as I could.

Scout. Come, help me on with it; take care what you are about. See what a large hole here is! You sit all day with your hands before you, and I think you might have mended it.

Mrs. S. I'll mend it when you come back.

Scout. There, there; now I shall do very well. And let me tell you, wife, I am not the only one that make use of a gown to hide things that are not fit to be seen. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—*Snarl's Shop.*

Enter SNARL, followed by CHARLES.

Snarl. Charles, have you been looking out for another shepherd, as I told you?

Charles. No, sir; I think you have got a very good one.

Snarl. No such thing: I tell you that Sheepface is a rogue; he has lived with me only a fortnight, and here are missing fourteen of my best wethers.

Charles. Consider, sir, what havoc such a disorder makes in a little time.

Snarl. Yes, yes, I have considered, and I know pretty well, by this time. I have long suspected him; and last night I caught him in the very fact, killing one of my fattest wethers; and I am determined to have him up before Justice Mittemur, this day; but reach me my book, and let me look over the account of my stock, perhaps there may be more missing.

Charles. There it is, sir. *(Gives an account-book.)*

Snarl. And if neighbour Gripe calls, tell him I want to see him about this rascal Sheepface. Let me see: twelve times ten is—

Enter SHEEPFACE.

Charles. Sheepface, my father has discovered all; do the best you can; beware of saying too much. *[Exit.]*

Sheep. Save you, good master Snarl!

Snarl. What, you rascal, are you here? How dare you appear before me, after the trick you have played me!

Sheep. Only to tell you I've been with neighbour Gripe, the constable, who has been speaking to me about sheep-stealing, Justice Mittemur, your honour, and a power o' things; so I said to myself as how I would not make it a secret any longer with your worship.

Snarl. Why, fellow, this affected simplicity won't serve your purpose. Did not I catch you, last night, killing one of my fattest wethers?

Sheep. Only to keep it from dying, by my feckins!

Snarl. To keep it from dying!

Sheep. Of the rot, an' please your sweet worship. It's a way I learnt of our doctor, in the parish: he cures most of his patients the same way.

Snarl. The doctor, eh! The doctors have a license to kill from the college; but you have none, I believe. Why, there was not such a breed in all the kingdom, for Spanish wool.

Sheep. Please your worship, satisfy yourself with the blows you gave me, and make matters up, if it be your worship's good will and pleasure.

Snarl. But 'tis not my good will and pleasure: my good will and pleasure is to see you hanged, you rascal!

Sheep. Oh! no; don't hang me. Consider, that would be the death of me. Besides, your worship, I was only married yesterday; leave me alone for a week or two, and who knows but, by that time, I may save your worship the trouble.

Snarl. No, no; the gallows will be the best way, at last, and every bit as sure.

Sheep. Heaven give you the luck of it, good master Snarl. Since it must be so, I must go seek a lawyer, I find; or might will prevail over right. *[Exit.]*

Snarl. Six times twelve is seventy-two; that is right: then nine times seven is—

Enter SCOUT.

Scout. Egad! I have nicked it very nicely; this was very lucky, to catch him alone. That seems to be a pretty piece of cloth, and will just suit me. *(Aside.)*—Good morning to you, Mr. Snarl!

Snarl. Oh! what, neighbour Gripe! walk in.

Scout. No, it's I, your neighbour Scout.

Snarl. I am my neighbour Scout's most obedient; but I have no business with him at present, that I know of.

Scout. (Aside.) I'll make you tell a different story presently, or I am much mistaken. I called to settle a little account.

Snarl. I have no account to settle with anybody.

Scout. There's a small balance of fifty pounds—

Snarl. I know nothing at all about it; I don't owe any man a farthing in the world.

Scout. (Aside.) I wish I could say as much for myself. Why, sir, looking over my father's accounts, I see he stands indebted to you fifty pounds; and I, as an honest man, am come to pay it.

Snarl. How do you do, neighbour Scout? how do you do? I'm glad to see you.

Scout. Very well, I thank you, sir. How do you do?

Snarl. I think you live in our village here?

Scout. Yes, sir, I do.

Snarl. Pray, be seated.

Scout. By no means; I fear I disturb you.

Snarl. Oh! no, not at all; pray, sit down; I insist upon it.

Scout. Ah! sir, if everybody was of my principle, I should be a deal richer than I am; I cannot bear to be in anybody's debt.

Snarl. Why, egad! the generality of people bear it very well.

Scout. Very true, sir, very true: when would you like to receive this money? for I'm impatient to pay everybody.

Snarl. Why, when you please. No time like the time present.

Scout. Very true: I have it told out at home; but as I only hold my father's effects in trust for my daughter Harriet, for form's sake, you know, it will be proper to have some of the other guardians present at the time of payment.

Snarl. Very true; it is so, indeed. Well, as soon as you please.

Scout. What do you think of three o'clock this afternoon?

Snarl. A very good time.

Scout. And, egad! it happens very lucky; I've got a very fine goose, sent me by a client from Norfolk, and you shall come and dine with me: are you fond of goose?

Snarl. Very. It's my favourite dish.

Scout. That's very lucky. Don't forget to come. I think you do a deal of business here, more than all the rest of the trade around the country.

Snarl. Pretty well; I can't complain.

Scout. And Mrs. Scout will dress the goose by a valuable recipe left her by her great ancle, Alderman Dumpling. Do you like sage and onion?

Snarl. Very much, indeed.

Scout. You shall have it so. Why, you have such an engaging way with you, that people take more pleasure in paying you money, than in receiving it from other people.

Snarl. Ah! sir, you flatter me.

Scout. Not at all. Egad! now I recollect, I promised Mrs. Scout you should have my custom; and I don't care if I take a coat to begin with.

Snarl. Pray, sir, look over my patterns; here's a variety of colours.

Scout. This seems to be a pretty piece of cloth. *(Feeling the cloth that lies on the counter.)*

Snarl. Very fine and good; it is iron grey.

Scout. Don't you remember our going to school?

Snarl. What, along with old Iron-fist?

Scout. The same. You was reckoned the prettiest boy in the whole school.

Snarl. Yes; my mother said I was always a pretty boy.

Scout. This cloth seems very smooth and fine.

Snarl. Right Spanish wool, I assure you. Let me send your quantity to your house.

Scout. Stop, stop! Pay as you go, pay as you go; that is always my maxim.

Snarl. And, egad! a very good maxim 'tis. I wish all my customers made use of the same.

Scout. Don't you remember the tricks you used to play the curate?

Snarl. Yes, very well.

Scout. Ay, you was always full of mischief. What is this cloth a yard?

Snarl. Why, to anybody else it should be nineteen shillings and sixpence; but—

Scout. Now you are going to favour me.

Snarl. No, I am not; only as you are a particular friend, I won't charge you but nineteen; and, luckily, here is just your quantity cut off.

Scout. That is lucky: I'll take it home with me.

Snarl. By no means: my boy—

Scout. Why would you take the poor boy from his work? I don't mind carrying it myself.

Snarl. But let me measure it; perhaps there may be some mistake.

Scout. No mistake: d'ye think I doubt your word?

Snarl. But the price—

Scout. Never mind that; I leave it entirely to you. Well, good morning! don't forget the goose; you'll be sure to be there time enough to dine, before you receive your money. Good morning—don't forget. *[Exit with the cloth.]*

Snarl. D—! but he has carried off my cloth; but he'll pay. Oh! yes, he'll pay; for he must be a very honest man, or he never would have told me of the fifty pounds, and invite me to dine off the goose into the bargain. I am sorry I cheated him in the cloth; but no matter, 'tis the way I got all my money. *[Exit.]*

SCENE III.—Outside of Scout's House.

Enter KATE and SHEEPFACE.

Kate. If you wants a lawyer to get you fairly out of a scrape, my master's the man for your money, Sheepface.

Sheep. I remember he stood my friend before, from being hanged at York; and, would you believe it? only for mending the complexion of a bald-faced horse: and, I don't know how it was, I have such a treacherous memory, but somehow or other, I forgot to pay him.

Kate. Oh! never mind, he won't remember that; but be careful not to tell him your master's name. I know he would not be concerned against Mr. Snarl for the world.

Sheep. No, no; I'll only tell him 'tis my master, and he'll think I mean the rich farmer I lived with formerly.

Kate. Well, well; that will do—but here he comes: I'll go in. *[Exit.]*

Enter SCOUT.

Scout. Egad! I think I have made a good morning's work! This cloth will enable me to make a genteel appearance. But who have we got here? sure, I should know that face. Harkye! sir, didn't I save you and your brother from being hanged, some time ago, at York?

Sheep. Yes.

Scout. And, by the same rule, I think one of you forgot to pay me.

Sheep. That was brother.

Scout. One of you got clear off; and the other died, soon after, in prison.

Sheep. That was not I.

Scout. No, no; I see it was not.

Sheep. For all that, I was sicker than my bro-

ther: but I am come to ask your worship to stand my friend against a—his worship, my master.

Scout. What, the rich farmer here, that lives in the neighbourhood?

Sheep. Yes, yes; he lives in the neighbourhood, safe enough; and if you will stand my friend, you shall be paid to your heart's content.

Scout. Ay, now you speak to the purpose; come, you must tell me how it was.

Sheep. Why, you must know, my master gives me but small wages; very small wages, indeed; so I thought I might as well do a little business on my own account; and so make myself amends without any damage to him, with an honest neighbour of mine—a little bit of a butcher by trade.

Scout. Well, but what business can you have to do with him?

Sheep. Why, saving your worship's presence, I hinders the sheep from dying of the rot.

Scout. Ah! how do you contrive that?

Sheep. I cuts their throats before it comes to them.

Scout. What, I suppose, then, your master thinks you kill his sheep for the sake of selling their carcasses?

Sheep. Yes; and I cannot beat it out of his head, for the soul of me.

Scout. Well, then, you must tell me all the particulars about it. Relate every circumstance, and don't hide a single item.

Sheep. Why, then, sir, you must know that, last night, as I was going down—must I tell the truth?

Scout. Yes, yes; you must tell the truth here, or we shall not be able to lie to the purpose anywhere else.

Sheep. Well, then, last night, after I was married, having a little leisure time upon my hands, I goes down to our pens; and, as I was musing on I don't know what, out I takes my knife, and hap-pening by mere accident, saving your worship's presence, to put it under the throat of one of the fattest wethers; I don't know how it came about, but I had not been long there before the wether died, and all of a sudden, as a body may say.

Scout. What, and somebody was looking on all the while?

Sheep. Yes; master, from behind the hedge; and would have it, it died all along with me; and so, as you see, he laid such a shower of blows on me, that it kept the bride out of temper all night; but I hope your worship will stand my friend, and not let me lose the fruits of my honest labours all at once.

Scout. Why, there are two ways of settling this business; and one is, I think, to be done without putting you to any expense.

Sheep. Let's try that first, by all means.

Scout. You have scraped up something in your master's service.

Sheep. I have been up early and late for it, sir.

Scout. I suppose you have taken care to have your savings all in hard cash?

Sheep. Yes, sir.

Scout. Well, then, when you go home, take it and hide it in the safest place you can find.

Sheep. Yes, sir, that I'll do.

Scout. I'll take care your master shall pay all costs and charges.

Sheep. Ay, so he ought; he can afford it.

Scout. It shall be nothing out of your pocket.

Sheep. That's just as I would have it.

Scout. He'll have all the trouble and expense of bringing you to trial, and after that, have the pleasure of seeing you hanged.

Sheep. Let's take the other way.

Scout. Well, let me see: I suppose he'll take out a warrant against you, and have you taken before Justice Mitimus.

Sheep. So I understand.

Scout. I think the justice's credulity is easily imposed on; so, when you are ordered before him, I'll attend; and to all the questions that you are asked, answer nothing, but imitate the voice of the lambs, when they bleat after the ewes. You can speak that dialect.

Sheep. It's my mother tongue.

Scout. But, if I bring you clear off, I expect to be very well paid for this.

Sheep. So you shall; I'll pay you to your heart's content.

Scout. Be sure you answer nothing but haa!

Sheep. Haa!

Scout. Ay, that will do very well; be sure you stick to that.

Sheep. Yes, your worship, never fear I. What trouble a body has to keep one's own in this world! *[Exeunt.]*

Enter SNARL.

Snarl. Ay, ay; that's my neighbour Scout's house: he is just come home, to give orders about the dinner, I warrant. Egad! I think I shall make a good day's work; what, with the fifty pounds his father owed mine, which, by-the-by, I know nothing at all about, and the money for the cloth, and the goose that is, to be dressed by a famous recipe of Alderman Fumpling's. Egad! I believe they are dressing it now: I'll in, and see what is going forward. *[Exit.]*

SCENE IV.—A Room in Scout's house.

SCOUT and MRS. SCOUT discovered.

Scout. Wife, wife, come along; I think I hear Snarl at the door; come to your place, and mind your ome. *(Sits.)*

Mrs. S. Never fear me; I warrant I shall make an excellent nurse.

Enter SNARL.

Snarl. Where is my friend, Mr. Scout? Is the goose a roasting?

Scout. Wife, wife, here comes the Doctor; he brings me the cooling mixture—the cooling mixture!

Snarl. The cooling mixture!

Mrs. S. Oh! sir, I hope you have brought something for my poor husband; he has been confined to his room, and has not been out this fortnight.

Snarl. Not out of his room this fortnight!

Mrs. S. No, sir; this day fortnight, of all the good days in the year, he was seized with a lunacy fit, and has not been out of doors since.

Snarl. Why, woman, what are you talking about? Why, he came to my shop this morning; and, by the same token, he bought four yards of iron-grey cloth, and I am come for my money.

Mrs. S. This morning!

Snarl. This morning; and invited me to dine with him to-day off a goose, and to receive fifty pounds which his father owed mine. I'll speak to him. How do yth do, good Mr. Scout?

Scout. Oh! how d'ye do, good Mr. Drench?

Snarl. Good Mr. Drench!

Mrs. S. He takes you for the doctor, Mr. Drench.

Scout. Wife, wife, keep the doctor from me, and a fig for the disease.

Mrs. S. For heaven's sake! sir, if you can't relieve him, don't torment him.

Snarl. Hold your tongue, woman! I want my cloth or my money. Mr. Scout, Mr. Scout!

Scout. See, see, see! there are three nice butterflies! there they fly, there they fly, there they fly! with bat's wings—I've catched them—I have them—I have them! Tally-ho, tally-ho! Oh, oh, oh! *(Falls in the chair.)*

Snarl. Butterflies! D—, if I can see any! I wish to see my clothing!

Scout. *(Jumps on the chair.)* My lord, and gentlemen of the jury, my client, Sir Hugh Witherington, charges the defendant, Mr. Montgomery, that is, moreover, nevertheless, as shall appear as—

(Jumps down, and dances.) Tol de rol, de lol! Oh, oh, oh! *(Jumps cross-legged on the chair.)*

Snarl. There now, he's fancying himself a tailor, and at work upon my cloth.

Mrs. S. Do, pray, sir, leave him, and don't torment him.

Snarl. I won't leave him without my money. See, he's getting better: I'll speak to him again. How do you do, neighbour Scout?

Scout. How d'ye do, Mr. Snarl? I am glad to see you; I hope you are very well? My dear, here is Mr. Snarl come to see us.

Snarl. There, there, there! he knows me, he knows me!

Scout. Oh! Mr. Snarl, I beg a thousand pardons; I confess I have been very unkind; but I hope you'll excuse me coming to see you. I have never called on you since I came to live in this part of the country.

Snarl. Never called on me! Oh, the devil! I shall never get my cloth again. Why, man, you called on me this morning, and bought four yards of iron-grey cloth, and I am come for my money, besides fifty pounds your father owed mine. Ay, you may shake your head, but, d—e! if I go out of the house without it.

Scout. Say you so? then I'll try something else. *(Aside.)* Wife, wife, wife! get up—softly, softly—get up; don't lie snoring there; there are thieves in the house. No, no; second thoughts are best; be still while I fetch my gun and shoot them. Cover yourself up close; I'll shoot them, shoot them, shoot them! *[Exit.]*

Snarl. Thieves in the house, did he say? Egad! who knows but, in his mad tricks, he may shoot me for a thief! I'll get out of his way, and not stay with a madman.

Re-enter SCOUT, with a broom, and presents it at Snarl.

Scout. Boh! *[Exit Snarl.]* Victoria, victoria! Huzza! *[Exeunt.]*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Justice Mitimus's Office.

JUSTICE MITTIMUS, Clerks, &c. discovered.

Just. So, the court being assembled, the parties may appear.

Enter SNARL, SCOUT and SHEEPFACE, with Constables.

Where is your lawyer, neighbour Snarl?

Snarl. I am my own lawyer; I shall employ nobody: that would cost more money.

Scout. *(To Sheep.)* Why, how now, you rascal! have you imposed upon me? What's the meaning of all this? Is that the plaintiff?

Sheep. *(To Scout.)* Yes, that's his honour, my good master.

Scout. Oh, the devil! What shall I do? I must stay and brazen it out; if I sneak out of court, it will cause suspicion. *(Aside.)*

Just. Come, neighbour Snarl, begin.

Snarl. Well, then, that thief, there—

Just. No abuse, no abuse!

Snarl. Well, then, I say, that rascal, my shepherd—No—Do my eyes deceive me? Sure, that is—yes, it must be he: if I had not left him very bad, I could have sworn—yes, yes, 'tis him—and that other rascal came to my shop and bought—No, no, I don't mean so; that rascal there has killed fourteen of my fattest wethers. What answer do you make to that?

Scout. I deny the fact.

Snarl. What is become of them, then?

Scout. They died of the rot.

Snarl. 'Tis him; 'tis his voice, too.

Just. What proof have you got?

Snarl. Why, this morning, he came to my house—No, no; I mean, I went down last night to the pens, having long suspected him—'tis he, 'tis he! and he began a long story about fifty pounds—No,

no; I don't mean that—and there I caught him in the very fact.

Scout. That remains to be proved.

Snarl. Yes, I will swear it is the very man.

Just. Why, this is the very man: but is it certain that your wethers died of the rot? What answer do you make to that?

Snarl. Why, I tell you, he came this very morning, and after talking some time, makes no more to do than carries off four yards of it.

Just. Four yards of your wethers?

Snarl. No, no; four yards of my cloth: I mean that other thief—that other, there.

Just. What other? What other, neighbour Snarl?

Scout. Why, he's mad, an' please your worship.

Just. Truly, I think so, too; harkye! neighbour Snarl, not all the justices in the county, no, nor their clerks either, can make anything of your evidence. Stick to your wethers! stick to your wethers, or I must release the prisoner; but, however, I believe it will be the shortest way to examine him myself. Come here, my good fellow, hold up your head, don't be frightened, tell me your name.

Sheep. Baa!

Snarl. It's a lie, it's a lie! his name is Sheepface.

Just. Well, well; Sheepface or Baa, no matter for the name. Did Mr. Snarl give you in charge fourscore sheep, Sheepface?

Sheep. Baa!

Just. I say, did Mr. Snarl catch you in the night, killing one of his fattest wethers?

Sheep. Baa!

Just. What does he mean by baa?

Scout. Please your worship, the blows he gave this poor fellow on the head have so affected his senses, he can say nothing else; he is to be trepanned as soon as the court break up; and the doctors say it is the whole materia medica against a dose of jalap, he never recovers.

Just. But the act, and in that provided, forbids all blows, particularly on the head.

Snarl. It was dark, and when I strike, I never mind where the blows fall.

Scout. A voluntary confession, a voluntary confession!

Just. A voluntary confession, indeed. Release the prisoner; I find no cause of complaint against him.

[*Exeunt Constables.*]

Snarl. No cause of complaint against him! You are a pretty justice, indeed! one kills my sheep, and the other pays me with Sir Hugh Witherington, and then you see no cause of complaint against him.

Just. Not I, truly.

Snarl. A pretty day's work I have made, indeed! a suit of law, and a suit of iron-grey cloth, both carried against me; but as for you, Mr. Lawyer, we shall meet again.

[*Exit.*]

Just. Oh, fie! neighbour Snarl, you are to blame, very much to blame, indeed.

Scout. Come, now it is all over, go and thank his worship.

Sheep. Baa, baa, baa!

Just. Enough, enough, my good fellow; take care you do not catch cold in your head; go and get trepanned, and take care of yourself, Sheepface.

Sheep. Baa!

Just. Poor fellow!

[*Exit.*]

Scout. Bravo, my boy! You have acted your part admirably, and I think I did very well to bring you off so cleverly; and now I make no doubt but, as you are a very honest fellow, you'll pay me as generously as you promised.

Sheep. Baa!

Scout. Ay, very well, very well, indeed! you did that very well just now, but there's no occasion to have it over any more. I'm talking about my fee, you know, Sheepface! Yes, yes, I tell you, it was very well done; but at this time, you know, my fee is the question.

Sheep. Baa, baa!

Scout. How's this? am I laughed at? Pay me directly, you rascal, or I'll play the devil with you! I'll teach you to try to cheat a lawyer, that lives by cheating others.

[*Exit.*]

Sheep. Baa!

Scout. What, again! Braved by a mongrel our, a bleating bell-wether, a—

Sheep. Baa!

Scout. Out of my sight, or I'll break every bone in your dog's skin, you sheep-stealing scoundrel! would you cheat one that has cheated hundreds? Get home to your hiding-place.

Sheep. Baa!

Scout. Away, and mind how you and your wife play the rest of your parts; and, perhaps, I may forgive you, if we succeed; if not, I will make an example of you, you rascal!

Sheep. Baa, baa!

[*Exit.*]

Enter JUSTICE MITTIMUS, and KATE.

Just. Poor fellow! like to die, you say?

Kate. Yes, your worship. Oh dear! (*Crying.*)

Just. Well, well; comfort yourself: remember, you was only married yesterday.

Kate. That's the very thing, sir; if he had but lived a little longer, I should not have cared so much about it; but to be cut off just in the honeymoon, is very hard. Oh, oh, oh! But I am not revengeful, and your worship knows how much I love my master's daughter, Harriet; and Charles, Mr. Snarl's son, is in love with her; but his father won't agree to the match.

Just. Oh! I understand you. So, you'll hush up matters, provided he'll agree to the marriage? well, what say you, neighbour Scout?

Scout. Why—why, I don't know what to say to it. As you all seem willing to settle the business, I don't like to stand out, and so I agree to it. But I think, your worship, I had better go in and fill the blanks of a bond, and make him sign it, or, when all is over, he'll retract from his word.

Just. Well, do so. Here he comes. Go, go!

[*Exeunt Scout and Kate.*]

Enter SNARL and two Constables.

So, neighbour Snarl, I find that the blows you gave the poor fellow on the head have occasioned his

Snarl. Oh, the devil!

[*death.*]

Just. But, barkye! neighbour, I have got a proposal to make, which, perhaps, may not be disagreeable to you: your son Charles, it seems, is in love with Harriet, lawyer Scout's daughter. Now, I believe Sheepface's wife would hush up matters, provided you'll consent to the match.

Snarl. Consent! Why, I suppose I must, in order to save myself from further expense. A very pretty day's work I have made on't, truly!

Enter SCOUT, with the bond.

Scout. Here, your worship, I've filled up a bond, in order that he may sign whatever is agreed to. How d'ye do, neighbour Snarl? I always cut my coat—

• *Snarl.* According to my cloth.

Just. Come, come; sign, sign! (*Snarl signs the bond.*)

Enter CHARLES and SHEEPFACE.

Snarl. Heyday! what the plague! are you not dead?

Sheep. No; your worship could never beat such a thing into my head.

Charles. Dear sir, don't be angry; Sheepface has done nothing but by my directions; and I hope you will not only forgive him, but enable me, by your future generosity, to provide for ourselves henceforward.

Sheep. Do take back one of your best sheep.

Scout. Well, as we have settled our own affairs thus far, we must now appeal to the tribunal, and humbly ask their permission for the Village Lawyer to continue in practice.

[*Exeunt.*]

NO SONG, NO SUPPER;

A MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT, IN TWO ACTS.—BY PRINCE HOARE.



Act I.—Scene 4

CHARACTERS.

FRIDRICK
ENDILINS
CROP

ROBIN
THOMAS
WILLIAM

MARGARETTA
LOUISA
DOROTHY

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A View of the Sea, on the coast of Cornwall.*

ROBIN discovered asleep; FREDRICK enters from a part of the rock.

AIR.

*The lingering pangs of hopeless love,
Condemn'd unpitied—unpitied to endure:
Ah! hapless fate! by flight I strive
To soothe the pain I could not cure.
Cease, ocean, cease, cease thy angry strife,
Or here thy whelming billows pour:
I ask, I ask but this, oh! take, oh! take my life;
Or bear me to some distant shore.*

Cruel destiny! to be driven ashore on this spot which I had resolved to fly from for ever; but all things conspire to counteract my designs. I had scarcely embarked, when a conspiracy was formed among the crew to deprive me of my life, which was happily preserved by the generosity of an English sailor, who, I fear, has perished with all his honest companions. (*Sees Robin.*) Good heavens! is it possible my generous preserver lives! Robin, what ho! Robin!

Robin. (*Waking, and starting.*) No, we won't drown. Courage, my lads! Lay hold of that plank, Master Frederick.

Fred. Honest spirit! Careful of me even in his dreams.

Robin. (*Rises, and stares at Frederick.*) Where the deuce am I?

Fred. Don't you know me, my friend?

Robin. Master Frederick! again! then we are alive yet. I thought we had both been in Davy Jones's locker.

Fred. I assure you, I may sincerely say, that I rejoice more for your safety than my own.

Robin. Recf your compliments a little, and I'll believe you. Where are we, thank you?

Fred. Alas! I am but too well acquainted with

the place. We are on the coast of Cornwall, not far from Penzance.

Robin. Say you so? Never droop, then. We could not have made a better port. I have friends here will take care of us, all as one as if we were at home.

Fred. Friends here! Robin. Ay, if this storm has not carried them into the sea. I have a brother-in-law hard by, whom, indeed, I have not seen for some years; but he was alive, when I heard last.

Fred. What was his name?

Robin. Crop, an honest farmer. [father.

Fred. (*Aside.*) Good heaven! my Louisa's Robin. He married a sister of mine, when I was a boy. She died some years ago, and left him a daughter, who, they say, is grown a fine girl; and now he's spliced to another mate.

Fred. Well, Robin, we shall have no occasion to trouble your brother, at present; I have an estate in the neighbourhood, where you shall be welcome, for your generosity has twice preserved my life.

Robin. Lookye, Master Frederick; I have been from my country these three years; but I have not so far forgotten Old England, as not to stand by a man who fights against odds.

Fred. You risked your own life for me.

Robin. That's no concern for a British sailor; he holds his life in keeping for his king, his country, and his friend, and for them he will cheerfully lay it down.—But, look, some of our messmates heave in sight. Enter WILLIAM and Sailors.

Robin. What cheer, my lads? Any part of the wreck saved? What, all ashore? What's become of the boat?

Wil. Ah! Robin, she went down, just after we left her, with all that we had on board.

Robin. So much the worse! I thought I had been rich enough to have taken Margaretta in tow for life; but, now all is afloat again.

Fred. You shall go home with me, my friends.—

(*Aside.*) I have a strong desire to see Louisa! What if I accompany Robin?

Robin. Thank you, sir. But, some of us will look out and see if the sea heave ashore any of the cargo.

Fred. Robin, I'll go with you to your brother-in-law.

Robin. With all my heart. Do you, William, keep a good look out, from the top of the rock, till it be dark, and the rest keep watch on the beach.

Wil. So we will, Robin. Come along, my lads. [*Exit with Sailors.*]

Fred. Now, Robin, I have a secret to entrust you. Robin. Well, let it be a short one; for a long one always sets me to sleep.

Fred. You must know, Robin, that I quitted England on account of the fairest of women.

Robin. Why, that is something of my case. A shark of a lawyer bore down upon me, carried off some little property that I designed for my mistress, and, as I was not willing to make her a beggar, I went to sea again.

Fred. (*Aside.*) How neatly allied in principles to my Louisa.—Know, then, Robin, the fairest of women, I mean, was Louisa, your niece.

Robin. My niece! Give me your hand, Master Frederick. If she be not married, you shall have her to-morrow. But what the devil made you bear away, and leave her? Did you run foul of a lawyer too? You seemed to have cash enough.

Fred. Yes, Robin; but I was determined to prove her love for me, without acquainting her with my circumstances; I, therefore, gave out I was a poor scholar. This had not altogether the desired effect; for she, fearing to distress her friends by our union, refused me.

Robin. That was taking to the long-boat, when you might have been safe in the ship.

Fred. I shall not immediately inform her of my circumstances; therefore, Robin, promise not to betray me.

Robin. Nay, if it be your fancy—but, believe me, 'tis a foolish one.

Fred. You won't disclose my secret?

Robin. What do you take me for? If this be all, step forward. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A Room in Crop's house.

Enter CROP and DOROTHY.

Crop. But I tell you, wife, you are wrong.

Dor. I'm sure, George, it's your own fault.

Crop. My own fault! Zounds! I wish the devil had the lawyer and law-suit together, for my part.

Dor. Indeed, George, I can't guess the reason why you should be so cross with me. I can't help it, you know, and yet you always quarrel with me.

AIR.—DOROTHY.

Go, George, I can't endure you, you wrong me, I assure you;

I wonder why I love you, why I love you still.

Are women for no use meant, but merely man's amusement, [*will?*]

To tease and torture as he will, and torture as he No; if you lov'd me true, you'd other means pursue; But that you don't 'tis plain, I tell you so again.

No, no, no, no, no, you ne'er could bear to use me so.

What see you, pray, about me, thus to scold and fout me?

Such treatment yet was never heard, I ne'er must speak, (good gracious!)

I'm sure it's quite vexatious! I never now must speak a word.

No; if you lov'd me true, &c.

Crop. Why, isn't it enough to make one cross, to be kept dilly-dally so long after what's my right. I am sure, I wish I had never disputed about it, though it is my right.

Dor. What, you wish to give up the legacy, do you? though Mr. Endless assures you it will be settled next week.

Crop. Ay, so he has said this long time past. I have had plague enough about it.

AIR.—CROP.

How happily my life, I led, without a day of sorrow; To plough and sow, to reap and mow, no care beyond No care beyond the morrow. [*the morrow.*]

In heat or cold, in wet or dry, I never grumbled, no, not I.

My wife, 'tis true, loves words a few; my wife, &c.

What then? I let her prate.

For, sometimes smooth, and sometimes rough, I found myself still rich enough, in the joys of an humble state.

But, when with law I cras'd my head, I lost both peace and pleasure;

Long says to hear, to search, and swear, and plague beyond all measure.

One grievance brought another on, my debts increase, my stock is gone.

My wife she says our means 'twill raise.

What then? 'tis idle prate.

For sometimes smooth, &c.

Dor. (*Crying.*) Ah! George, you don't care anything about me, There's farmer Trotman's wife can have a silk cloak and a dimity petticoat, and go dressed like a lady; ay, and have a joint of meat every day; and I'm sure we haven't a joint above once a month, that we haven't!

Crop. Well, wife, don't be uneasy; things have gone badly of late, to be sure; but have a good heart: when I have gained my law-suit I'll live like a gentleman; I'll never have any small beer in my house; I'll drink nothing but wine and ale; and we will have roast pork for dinner every Sunday.

Dor. I don't like pork; I say it shall be lamb.

Crop. But I say it shall be pork.

Dor. I hate pork; I'll have lamb.

Crop. Pork, I tell you.

Dor. I say lamb; you don't know what's good.

Crop. Zounds! it sha'n't be lamb, I will have pork.

Enter LOUISA.

[peace?]

Lou. For ever contending! Will you never be at Dor. What's that to you? Why do you interfere with what does not concern you? Leave your father and me to settle matters. [*comfort.*]

Lou. I only spoke because I wish'd you to have Dor. Comfort, indeed! Why, when you see everybody happy in the house, you go moping and pining about like a sick turkey-polt: you ought to be ashamed of yourself to let your head be running on a young man, you ought!

Crop. Fie, fie, wife! you aren't contented to have forced her to leave the house, but you must always be tormenting her. Come, Louisa, I am going to your cottage, and will walk with you; I shall be back presently.

Lou. Alas! why should you accuse me of loving Frederick, when you know I refused him because I would not add one to a poor family, who had not means to support themselves?

TRIO.—CROP, DOROTHY, and LOUISA.

I thought our quarrels ended, and set my heart at ease; 'Tis strange you've thus offended; you take delight to tease.

Yes, yes, you take delight to tease.

Dear sir, decide the strife betwixt your child and wife. Alas! the grief I feel, I dare not to reveal: I know that you believe for Frederick's loss I grieve.

Psha, psha, psha, psha! very well, very well, as you please:

Very well, very well, think as you please.

In vain I'm always striving to make our difference cease,

If you're disputes constant, we will not live in peace; No, no, you will not live in peace.

I'm vex'd, dear sir, for you're teasing, what can I do? To none I can complain.

I know that you believe for Frederick's loss I grieve.

[*Exit Louisa and Crop.*]

Dor. A trumpery, saucy baggage! Nelly! (*Calls.*)

Enter NELLY.

Nelly. Here, mistress.

Dor. You heard what George said, Nelly?

Nelly. Yes; I heard him say he would be back

Dor. It is not dark yet? [*again presently.*]

Nelly. No, it is not near night yet.

Dor. Don't you know what I mean, Nelly?

Nelly. Yes; you expect Mr. Endless to see you.

Dor. Yes; I hope George won't meet him, because as he don't know of Mr. Endless's coming, he might be angry. The supper will be in time, Nelly?

Nelly. Yes, I shall take care to have the leg of lamb ready; and you know there is a nice cake that we baked yesterday will do after supper: but what shall we do for wine?

Dor. Oh! Mr. Endless promised to send some wine. He is a charming man, and talks so prettily! "My sweet Dorothy!" he calls me. I wish George would learn manners from him; but I declare he drives me about like his sheep and oxen, and I haven't the last word not once this week. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The outside of Crop's House.*

Enter MARGARETTA, with ballads.

AIR.

*With lowly suit and plaintive ditty,
I call the tender mind to pity;
My friends are gone, my heart is beating,
And chilling poverty's my lot.
From passing strangers, aid intreating,
I wander thus alone forgot.
Relieve my woes, my wants distressing,
And heav'n reward you with a blessing.*

*Here's tales of love, and maids forsaken,
Of battles fought, and captives taken;
The jovial tars, so boldly sailing,
Or cast upon some desert shore.
The hopeless bride his loss bewailing,
And fearing ne'er to see him more,
Relieve my woes, &c.*

My old father little thinks where I am: ecod! it's all his own fault; for if he would have let me married Robin, I should not have run away; but he wanted me to marry an old, stupid figure like himself, only because he was rich: but what are riches when compared to love? I hated him, and wouldn't have had him, if his skin had been stuffed with diamonds. Besides, I knew it was on his account the law-suit was commenced against Robin, which made him leave me. If I were fond of riches, I might have been rich long ago. Haven't I refused a great many good offers? ay, and would again, for I love nobody but Robin; and to have him I'd run away from fifty fathers. I think no one can know me in this disguise; however, I'll lay by my ballad-singing dress now, and seek some honest service, till I hear of Robin's return: but my basket is empty, and it is high time to look out for a night's lodging. Here's a cottage—that's fortunate—I'll try here. (*Knocks.*)

Enter NELLY, followed by DOROTHY.

TRIO.—NELLY, MARGARETTA, and DOROTHY.

Nelly. Knocking at this hour of day,

What's your business, mistress, pray?

Mar. A stranger at your friendly door,

I shelter from the night implore.

Nelly. This begging is a sorry trade,

I fear you'll find but little aid;

But stay, I'll ask, and let you know.

Mar. Alas! too sure, I fear, 'tis true,

A beggar finds a beggar's due;

Though oft unfeign'd the tale of woe,

A beggar finds a beggar's due.

Dor. You must begone, we're left alone,

And harbour here can give you none.

Mar. My aching feet no more suffice,

A little straw is all I crave.

Dor. Not two miles hence the village lies:

I wonder what the wench would have!

Nelly. Not two miles hence, &c.

Mar. Hapless lot! must I go hence? Oh! pity me.

Dor. Go, get you packing, gipsy, hence!

We told you that you could not stay—

Nelly. I wonder at your impudence!

Begone, you baggage, march away!

Mar. Oh! let me stay, for poverty is no offence,
And 'tis too late to find the way.

[*Exeunt Nelly and Dorothy.*]

Mar. Now, as I'm a woman, here is some mischief a foot: two women left alone, and refuse the company of a third, only for the sake of being left alone! Oh, impossible! I'll find it out before I go. Who comes here? some man: I'll step aside, and see if they are as uncharitable to coat and waistcoat as they are to petitioners. (*Retires.*)

Enter THOMAS, with a basket.

Tho. (*Knocks.*) Mrs. Nelly, Mrs. Nelly!

Enter NELLY.

Nelly. Well, Thomas, what do you want?

Tho. My master has sent the wine, and—

Nelly. Hush! speak softly, Thomas.

Tho. My master will be here himself presently.

Nelly. Oh! very well; walk in, and see what we

have prepared. [*Exit with Thomas.*]

Mar. (*Comes forward.*) So, as I suspected; but let me see: (*peeping in at the door*) one, two, three, four bottles of wine! well said, Mr. Steward; very pretty provision, indeed! The cake in the closet is for after supper, I suppose; the boiled lamb is the gentleman's choice, I imagine. Oh! Mr. Thomas seems coming out: I'll step aside again, for I'll see the end on't, I'm determined. [*Thomas comes from the house, and exits.*] Egad! Thomas said true enough, for here his master comes, I believe. I shall see more.

Enter ENDLESS.

End. Egad! this was sweetly contrived: while this law-suit of mine turns my simple farmer out of his house, I turn in; a good turn, 'faith! ha! one good turn deserves another. [*voice.*]

Mar. (*Aside.*) Sure, I should know that face and *End.* This dress, I think, cannot fail of attracting Dorothea's heart; but the best of the joke is, she fancies I am in love with her! Ha, ha, ha! A monstrous good joke, 'faith! Ha, ha, ha! I doubt where I shine most, in carrying on a sham action or a counterfeit passion. I am *Marti quam Mercutio.*

Mar. (*Aside.*) As I live, it is that wicked rogue, Endless, who commenced an action against Robin; took from him all he had, and drove him to sea.

End. If I can but compass my suit, and prevail on her to consent to my wishes; for she has always refused me hitherto.

Mar. (*Aside.*) I must plague him a little—but, hold! I had best decamp; for if he should know me, he'll certainly carry me back to my father, and have me married:—I'll not venture that. [*Exit, singing.*]

End. This is unlucky; this girl is watching me. I daren't go into the cottage; I'll turn back again till she is out of sight, that I will. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—*The inside of Crop's House.*

Enter CROP, followed by DOROTHY.

Dor. So, George, you are come back; where have you been?

Crop. Why, about my business; and heartily tired I am! (*Sits down.*)

Dor. Well, but where have you been?

Crop. Go and shut the door, which I perceive I've left open, and I'll tell you.

Dor. Not I, indeed: I go shut the door! No, go and shut the door yourself; why did you leave it

Crop. Because my hands were full. [*open?*]

Dor. So you want to give me the trouble to shut the door, because your hands were full? Indeed, I shall not. (*Sits down.*) [*obstinate.*]

Crop. Now, wife, go shut the door, and don't be

Dor. I obstinate! upon my word! I obstinate, indeed! I don't choose to shut it, sir.

Crop. Why, then, let it stand open.

Dor. With all my heart, so it may,

Crop. Now, why can't you go and shut it?

Dor. I don't choose it, and there's an end on't.

Crop. Come, I'll make a bargain with you wife; whoever speaks the first word, shall shut the door.

Dor. Agreed!

DUETT.—CROP and DOROTHY.

Crop. I think I'll venture to surmise,
I know who'll speak the first.

Dor. You think, no doubt, you're wondrous wise;
Before I speak, I'll burst.

Crop. Depend upon't—

Dor. Depend upon't—

Both. You'll have the worst.

Crop. Can you your tongue keep in?

Dor. Yes. When shall we begin?

Crop. Agreed, agreed! and now take heed,

When I hold up my thumb.

Dor. Agreed! I'm silent: mum, mum, mum!

(They turn their backs to each other.)

Robin. (Without.) Yo ho! Messmates, what the door open at this time of night? (Enters.) Ha! brother Crop, I'm heartily glad to see you. I've a few friends, hard by, who came to beg a night's lodging of you. We have been cast away, and saved nothing but our lives. I have promised them a hearty welcome, my boy. (To *Crop*.) What, are you deaf? Why, don't you know me? I never took you for one that would be dumb to a friend in distress. What the devil's the matter?—(To *Dor*.) Pray, how long has poor brother Crop been on the doctor's list? What, a dumb wife, too! I wish you joy, brother Crop. Which quarter is the wind now?

Enter FREDERICK.

Fred. So, Crop, where's your daughter? Why don't you answer me?

Rob. It's all in vain; not a breath stirring.

Fred. Why don't you speak, Crop?

Rob. There's an embargo laid on words, and you see the port is shut.

Fred. Answer me, I beg. Where's Louisa?

Rob. Speak to him in some foreign lingo, Master Frederick; for he seems to have forgotten the use of his own tongue.—(To *Dor*.) Do you always discourse together in this manner?

Fred. I suppose this is some new quarrel.

Rob. No; it must be an old one, for they've had no words of late.

Fred. I'll seek an answer elsewhere. [Exit.]

Rob. How the devil shall I get an answer?—What's the matter with you both? I might as well talk to the Gorgon's head, under our bow-sprit. Will you speak? (*Crop* shakes his head.) D—e, a good ducking at the yard-arm, and a round dozen, would put your jawing tacks aboard, and be well employed on you: wouldn't it, mistress?

Dor. Ay, that it would!—Oh, dear! I forgot.

Crop. Ha, ha! Now, Dorothy, go and shut the door. [Exit *Dor*.]

Rob. Shut the door!

Crop. Ay, she spoke first.

Rob. Why, you hadn't quarrelled about shutting the door, had you? Well, George, now your mouth is open, let me know if you can give us a lodging.

Crop. Ay, and welcome. But, I fear I can't be your host to-night; for I must go as far as Grist's, on some business.

Rob. I'll go with you, and look after my messmates.

Enter FREDERICK.

Fred. Pr'ythee, Crop, tell me where she is?

Crop. Where who is?

Fred. Louisa.

Crop. At her grandmother's, where she has been some time; and I assure you, Frederick, she has never had a smile upon her countenance since you left her; therefore, make none of your fine speeches to her, or you'll break her heart.—Ods heart! Robin, I can't tell you how glad I am to see you.

Rob. No more you could just now: your joy was so great, it seemed to be past speaking.

[Exit with *Crop*.]

Fred. What have I heard? Is it possible my Louisa loves me still? I'll think of some disguise to visit her in immediately. [Exit.]

SCENE V.—Outside of Crop's house.

Enter CROP, ROBIN, WILLIAM, and FREDERICK.
During the *Finale*, MARGARETTA, DOROTHY, and NELLY enter.

FINALE.

Crop. How often thus I'm forc'd to trudge;
I own this useless toil I grudge.

Rob. Cheer up, and let your heart be light.

Crop. Though long and tiresome is the way,
I must be back by break of day.

Rob. Your gain the labour shall requite.

Fred. I'll think on what you said.

Crop. Ay, ay; be careful, Fred.

Marg. Lost in the dark, perplex'd I rove,

And know not where I stray;

Some kindly star, a friend to love,

Direct me on my way.

Dor. I'll see if yet the coast be clear—

Hold, hold! not yet, they still are here.

Crop. } But if, at last, my suit shall fail—

Fred. } Psha! never stand to quake and quail.

Rob. } To-night, good fortune be our guide;

Will. } We'll take the best that may betide.

Fred. } Hope, a constant joy disclosing,

Marg. } Balm comfort can impart;

•• Anxious doubt in hope repaying,

Fancy calms the tortur'd heart.

May weary toil success repay,

And fortune guide me on my way. [Ex.]

ACT II.—SCENE I.—A View near the Sea.

Enter WILLIAMS and Sailors.

AIR.—WILLIAMS.

From aloft, the sailor looks around,

And hears, below, the murmur'ing billows sound;

Far from home, he counts another day,

Wide o'er the seas the vessel bears away.

His courage wants no whet, but he brings the sails to set,

With a heart as fresh as a rising breeze of May.

And caring nought, he turns his thought

To his lovely Sue, or charming Bet.

Now to heaven the lofty top-mast soars,

The stormy blast like dreadful thunder roars,

Now ocean's deepest gulph appears below,

The curling surges foam, and down we go.

When skies and seas are met, they his courage serve to whet,

With a heart as fresh as a rising breeze of May.

And dreading nought, &c.

Enter CROP and ROBIN.

Crop. And is your heart still on Margaretta?

Rob. Ay, as true as the wind blows; and if Margaretta's do but hold as steady as mine, I don't fear bringing all to bear.—(To *Sail*.) How goes it lads?

Wil. Cheerfully, Robin. The tide was thrown ashore some of our property, which we have safely put under the rocks.

Rob. As the tide ebbs so fast, my boys, perhaps my keg may be left on the beach. B'ye, brother Crop. [Exit with *Sailors*.]

Crop. Then, I must go to Grist's by myself. [Ex.]

SCENE II.—A Wood.

Enter MARGARETTA.

Marg. What will become of me? I am quite benighted. I have led the lawyer a fine dance, faith! He may now follow his own schemes as much as he likes, so he do not spoil mine.

AIR.

*A miser bid to have and hold me,
And greedy parents would have sold me.
A husband was enough for me,
No matter ugly, lame, or old:
There was no harm that they could see,
So all his bags were full of gold.
No, Robin, no; you need not fear,
You never were in danger here.
Should such a husband have or hold?*

Eh! sure, I heard a rustling among the bushes. As I live, here's a man coming this way. Oh, Jud! I am frightened out of my wits. There are so many paths, that I am at a loss to know which takes me to the village.—[Enter CROP.]

Crop. Egad! it's well I happened to meet with my neighbour Trotman, or I should have had a long walk to no purpose; for he informs me poor Grist is dead. Poor fellow! Well death can neither be seen nor prevented; so, there's an end of that. (*Sees Margaretta.*) Who goes there?

Marg. A poor girl, sir, who wants a night's lodging, and has lost her way.

Crop. Where did you want to go, my girl?

Marg. To the next village, sir.

Crop. You are out of the way, indeed. However, come with me, and I'll provide you with a night's lodging. [harm?]

Marg. Lud! sir, I hope you don't intend me any

Crop. Not I, my girl. Do you see yonder cottage, where the smoke rises through the trees? I am the owner of it; and I trust its doors were never shut to charity.

Marg. Are you the owner of that cottage? *

Crop. I am. There's an honest housewife that will use you kindly, who is melancholy enough, poor soul! I dare say, at being left alone.

Marg. (*Aside.*) Very melancholy, indeed! Well, some of you men are really good creatures; and I could find in my heart to do you a piece of service, honest farmer. [care of you.]

Crop. Come, my girl, don't be afraid; I'll take

Marg. Heaven bless you for your kindness! I think I shall have it in my power to reward you, or I am very much mistaken. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—*Inside of Deborah's cottage.*

Enter LOUISA and DEBORAH.

Deb. Nay, nay, my child, don't take on so; don't cry so; you should endeavour to forget Frederick.

Lou. Forget him! that's impossible.

Deb. Well, but consider it was not any ill-usage of yours that made him leave the place: 'twas all his own doing.

Lou. That consideration consoles me; had it been otherwise, I could never have forgiven myself. (*A sharp is heard.*) What's that? Music at this hour!

Deb. No, lack-a-day! it's only old Jones, the Welsh fortune-teller.

Lou. My dear grandmother, let him come in; I should like to have my fortune told.

Deb. If you live to be old, your fortune will tell itself. [told.]

Lou. Pray, fetch him in, and have your fortune

Deb. My fortune, indeed! No, no; I know my fortune well enough; however, I'll go and send him to you. [Exit.]

Lou. It will, at least, serve to divert me.

Enter FREDERICK, in a black gown and beard.

Fred. Save you, young woman! may the stars shine with favourable rays on this house. Your face wears the marks of melancholy.

Lou. What have you to say to my face?

Fred. Your fortune cannot mend your face, though your face may mend your fortune. But my profession is to make proper questions to the hand; favour me with yours.

Lou. What will that tell you?

AIR.—FREDERICK.

*Pretty maid, your fortune's here;
You have power, the heart to charm;
Leave your hand, what should you fear?
Wrinkled age can do no harm.
Mercy on me! what is this?
Lines of heart too hard I see;
How I long to print a kiss,
On the hand you shew to me.*

I have discovered there is a young man who adores you, and whom your usage forc'd to quit his country.

Lou. Nay, you're wrong; I didn't force him.

Fred. Be assured, it was on your account. He meant to cross the seas; but he was scarce embarked, when a storm overtook him; the night was dark, the waves were high, the vessel struck upon a rock—(*Louisa screams and faints.*) My Louisa! look up, your Frederick lives.

Lou. Good heavens! Frederick, what means this disguise?

Fred. I scarce can tell you now. But, my dear Louisa, I am now in possession of an ample fortune; I am the real heir to the estate in the neighbourhood, who has been so long expected here.

Lou. Ah! Frederick, you are too rich for me.

Fred. No, Louisa; thank heaven! we live in a country that knows no distinction of person but in virtue.

DUETT.—FREDERICK and LOUISA.

Both. *Thus every hope obtaining,
The doubtful conflict o'er,
Fortune of thee complaining,
I waste my sighs no more.
Love by thy power bestowing
The hand I fondly prize,
Take from a heart o'erflowing,
My vows which grateful rise.*

Fred. *Still fondly possessing the maid I adore,
In transports, unceasing, the moments shall roll.*

Lou. *Still fondly possessing the youth I adore,
In transports, unceasing, the moments shall roll;*

*Content with my blessing, I ask not for more,
But dote on the treasure so dear to my soul.* [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.—*A Room in Crop's house.*

ENDLESS and DOROTHY discovered at a table laid for supper. At the back, are several sacks, which appear to be full.

Dor. Indeed, Mr. Endless, I wouldn't do such a thing for the world.

End. (*Aside.*) I have carried on this action too precipitately.—But, my dear Dorothy, let us reason about this affair together. (*Rises.*)

Dor. (*Rises.*) But what signifies our reasoning about a thing which I know to be wrong.

End. I say, what signifies our knowing a thing to be wrong, when nobody else knows nothing about the matter.

Dor. Ay, but is there no such thing as conscience?

End. But conscience can't be summoned into court. I never heard of a man's conscience being subpoenaed on a trial; if that were the case, there would be an end to our profession at once; oh! it would be all dicky with us.

Enter NELLY, with a boiled leg of lamb, and exit.

End. But, as Nelly seems to have been so busy for us, let us sit down, and finish the subject after supper. (*They sit.*)

Dor. I needn't ask you to make free, I hope, as all you see on the table is your own.

End. Don't mortify me, my sweet Dorothy, by calling it mine, you know it is all yours—(*aside*) at least, if your husband's money can make it so.

Dor. Oh, dear! you are so obliging, I fear, we shall never have it in our power to return your kindness, at least, till George has gained his law-suit.

End. (*Aside.*) I'll take care not to wait till then. — Don't mention any reward to me, I am sufficiently repaid in the happiness of— (*Rises to kiss her hand, a loud knocking at the door.*) Who the devil's that? Do you expect anybody here to-night? Oh, lord! the supper will be spoiled.

Enter NELLY.

Dor. Run, Nelly, see who's at the door; if it be George, I'm undone!

[*Exit Nelly, and returns immediately.*]

Nelly. Oh, dear! it is my master, as I hope to be married.

End. The devil it is!

Dor. Oh, dear! what shall we do with Mr. Endless?

End. Ay, there will be an end of Mr. Endless.

Crop. (*Without.*) Why, wife! Dorothy!

End. Zounds! put me any where. Have you no closet, or snug corner, I can creep into?

Dor. No; but here I have it—creep into this sack.

End. A sack! [sack.]
Dor. Yes. I'll get my husband to bed presently, and then I'll come and let you out.

End. Creep into a sack! the thing's impossible. My new suit will be totally spoiled.

Dor. No, no; it has only had flour in it, and that will easily brush off.

End. (*Aside.*) D—, but I wish I could brush off!

Dor. Come, Nelly, help me to put it over him.

End. Well, don't you let the cat out of the bag.

Crop. (*Without.*) Why, Nelly, Dorothy! why don't you open the door? (*Dorothy and Nelly put a sack over Endless, and place him among the other sacks. Nelly removes the lamb, and exit.*)

Enter CROP, MARGARETTA, and NELLY.

Crop. Why, wife, one would have thought, by your keeping us at the door so long, you had been fast asleep. What were you dreaming of?

Dor. (*Aside.*) I am sure, we never dreamt of you.

Crop. Poor Grist is dead, which made me come back to-night: and, on my way, I met this young woman, who had lost her road: you must give her a night's lodging, and a bit of supper.

Marg. (*Aside.*) Where the deuce have they hid this roguish lawyer? I know he's here, by their confusion.

Dor. Why, George, as I didn't expect you home to-night, I have got nothing for supper at all.

Marg. (*Aside, and feeling the sack.*) Oh! you are there, are you, Mr. Lawyer?

Crop. Hang it! I'm sorry there's nothing for supper, for I expect Robin here presently.

Marg. (*Aside.*) What do I hear? Robin expected here!

Crop. He's only gone to the sea shore, to see if anything were flung up by the tide.

Rob. (*Without.*) Hallo, hallo!

Crop. Egad! here he is, I'll go, and bring out one of our cheeses; I dare say he's hungry: he always had a good appetite. [Exit.]

Enter ROBIN, with a small keg under his arm.

Rob. Huzza! my boys, Robin's his own man again. With these fruits of honest industry, will I moor for life; and when I hear the wind rattle, I'll heave a sigh for all poor brother tars.

Marg. (*Aside.*) I hope he hasn't forgotten poor Margarett. He hasn't said a word of me yet.

Enter CROP, with a cheese.

Crop. To think I should have nothing for supper but cheese. A plague of this ill luck!

Rob. I'm so happy, I could dance a hornpipe on the head of a copper nail!

Crop. What makes you so merry, Robin?

Rob. Why, George, I have now recovered my spirits.

Crop. What, in that keg, I suppose?

Rob. Ay, the finest in the world; drawn from all parts of the globe. You shall taste them.

Crop. With all my heart! Give us a glass, Nelly.

Rob. A glass, indged! Lord love your lubberly head! Give me a hammer. (*Crop gives a hammer; Robin unhoops the keg, and takes out a handful of gold.*)

AIR.—ROBIN.

*Three years a sailor's life I led,
And plough'd the roaring sea;
For why her foes should England dread,
Whilst all her sons are free?
From France to Spain, I earn my bread,
I thought it fair, d'ye see?
And if a shot had ta'en my head,
Why there was an end of me.*

*A medicine sure for grief and care,
I steer'd my course to find;
Thenceforth, an easy sail to bear,
And ran before the wind.
Their conj'ring skill let doctors boast,
And nostrums of their shop,
Where'er we search, from coast to coast,
There's none like golden drop.*

*For gold we sail the world around,
And dare the tempest's rage;
For when the sparklers once are found,
They ev'ry ill assuage.
'Twixt Jew and Christian not
A difference here we find;
The Jew no loathing has to pig,
It's to be of the Guinea kind.*

Are not these the best cordials? These are the true golden drops, extracted from the Spanish mines; and I hope, from my soul, they will not be the last we shall draw from the same quarter.

Marg. (*Aside.*) I'm afraid, now he's so rich, he'll marry a lady.

Rob. Here, Crop, you may want a few guineas; and, as the keg is open, here, take a handful, and when you've recovered your law-suit, pay me. And now with the rest—

Crop. Ay, Robin, what will you do with the rest?

Rob. Carry it to Margarett; and if she be still in the mind, I'll marry her directly, and live happy all the rest of my life.

Marg. (*Aside.*) My charming Robin!

Rob. If I could but see her now—

Marg. (*Coming forward.*) Ay, if you did, I fear, you'd change your note.

Marg. Margarett! (*Runs and kisses her.*)

Marg. I little thought of meeting you here, Robin. [ask that.]

Rob. And, how came you here? I forgot to
Marg. Oh! that's too long a story to tell you now.

Rob. Well, then, let's hear it another time. Oh! dear Margarett! I say, that—I say—you—that—Oh, lord!—(*Kisses her again.*)—Come, let's now to supper, and be merry. But—where is the supper? What have you got in the house, brother?

Crop. Why, I never knew anything happen so unlucky! we have got nothing in the house; and I am as hungry as a lion myself.

Dor. Why, what a fuss you make about a supper! we are not all so rich as Mr. Robin.

Crop. But, what use are riches, now? we can't eat and drink gold.

Rob. Egad! if you can, you shall have it.

Crop. Faith! Robin, I can give you nothing but bread and cheese.

Rob. Well, bread and cheese and kisses, eh! Margarett! Sit down, my girl.

Marg. Presently, Robin.—(*Aside.*) Now, let me see if I can't furnish the table better. I smell the lamb yet. (*Robin and Crop sit.*)

Rob. Come, Madge, give the landlord and I one

of the songs you used to sing, if you haven't forgot them. You don't know what a good pipe she has.

Marg. I'll sing you one that I heard this morning, which is quite new.

Rob. Ay, let's hear it.

Marg. The person who learnt it me, said 'it should never be sung before a poor meal: but you shall judge if he was right.

Crop. Well, begin, my girl.

AIR.—MARGARETTA.

*Across the downs this morning,
As betimes I chanc'd to go,
A shepherd led his flock abroad,
All white as driven snow;
But one was most the shepherd's care,
A lamb so sleek, so plump, so fair;
Its wondrous beauties, in a word,
To let you fairly know,
'Twas such as Nelly from the fire
Took off not long ago.*

Crop. Hold, hold! my girl, if I heard you right, I think you said, "as Nelly took off the fire not long ago."

Marg. 'Tis part of my song, sir.

Rob. Ay, 'tis part of her song!

Crop. Well, but is it a joke, or earnest? Have you any lamb in the house, Nelly?

Rob. Come, Nelly, let's overhaul your lockers.

Crop. Come, come, wife; I see how this is, you had a mind to surprise me agreeably.

Dor. Why, that was the case, indeed, George. I knew you was very fond of lamb; so, as it was only a small joint, I meant to give it you, when you was alone.

Crop. I thought so. But bring it here, Nelly; I am one that don't like to see my guests fare worse than myself.

Rob. Come, bear a hand, Nell. Stretch along the lamb halliards, and a knife or two. (*Nelly goes out, and returns with the lamb, &c.*) Egad! Madge, it was lucky you happened to fall in with the sheep.

Crop. Ay, so it was. Come, let's hear the rest of the song. (*Margaretta sings.*)

*This lamb so blithe as Midsummer,
His frolic gambols play'd;
And now of all the flock a herd,
The pretty wanton stray'd.
A wolf that watch'd with greedy eyes,
Rush'd forth, and seiz'd the tender prize:
The shepherd saw, and rais'd a stone,
So round, so large, I vow,
'Twas like the cake that Nelly laid
Upon the shelf, just now.*

Crop. Stop, my dear! Didn't you say, "like the cake, Nelly laid on the shelf, just now?" Why, Nelly, is there a cake in the house?

Rob. Ay, that there is.

Crop. Come, bring it out, Nell. (*Nelly goes out, and returns with the cake.*) [*Margaretta*]

Rob. What, still the same mad-cap as ever,

Crop. Egad! that is a most excellent song.

Marg. Will you hear the rest of it, sir?

Crop. By all means; and if the latter part of it be as good as the former, it will be, by much, the best song I ever heard.

Marg. You shall judge, sir.

Crop. I sha'n't be tired; I love a song.

Rob. Egad! brother Crop, "No Song, no Supper." (*Margaretta sings again.*)

*This monstrous stone, the shepherd flung,
And well his aim he took;
Yet, scarce the savage creature design'd
Around to cast a look;
But fled as swift, with footsteps light,
As he who brought the wine to-night.
I try'd to stop the thief, but he
Turn'd round in rage, good luck!
So quick the lawyer scarce could be,
That's hid in yonder sack.*

Crop. A lawyer hid in a sack! Zounds! what is all this?

Rob. (*Goes to the sacks.*) Oh! impossible! these are full of corn. (*Beats a sack.*) Yes, faith, here's one seems to be heaving anchor. (*Endless comes forward.*) Eood! if they should all rise, you'll have a fine field of standing corn, brother Crop. (*Endless offers to go.*) Held, held! no exportation, without inspection. (*Pulls off the sack, and discovers Endless, who is covered with flour.*)

Crop. Endless! Oh! the devil!

End. Assault me, if you dare! if you strike me, it is cognizable in court, as I was not found in any overt act.

Crop. But you was found in a very rascally one, though.

End. I don't care for that. [*you.*]

Crop. If these be your tricks, I know how to suit

End. And you know how to non-suit, I find.

Crop. To think I should entrust you to manage my affairs.

Rob. You might have had a young Crop before you looked for it.

End. I beg you wouldn't mention it.

Crop. I have a great mind to knock your head off.

End. Don't mention it; pray, don't!

Rob. You deserve to be beat like a sack.

End. Don't mention it! I move for a habeas corpus out of this court. But take care how you in-cant a limb of the law, or you may chance to bring down the vengeance of the whole body. [*Exit.*]

Rob. If such limbs were lopped off, it would do the constitution good.

Crop. (*To Dorothy.*) What have you to say for yourself, you jade? So, the lamb was for Mr. Endless!

Marg. I should but half repay your kindness, if I didn't tell you, that your wife has ever refused to listen to his addresses: this, I assure you, he said himself, when he little thought any one overheard him.

Crop. Say you so! then, wife, give me your hand; and let us, for the future, endeavour to live happily together; and the best way to do is to forget and forgive.

Rob. So it is, brother Crop.

Enter WILLIAM.

Will. Oh! Robin, all our fortunes are made. Master Frederick is a rich 'squire, and is going to marry your niece. There will be oxen roasting, and wine and ale running about the streets: there are illuminations; and she has ordered the whole town to be set on fire.

Enter FREDERICK and LOUISA.

Rob. Master Frederick, I wish you joy. And, d'ye see, Louisa, make him a good wife. This storm to-night has blown back your lover; but, remember, the gentle gales of moderate weather may keep the husband within hail of you.

FINALE.

Mar. { *Let shepherd lads and maids advance,
And neatly trim be seen;*
Dor. { *To-night, we'll lead the merry dance,
In circles o'er the green.*

Crop. { *Beyond our hopes by fortune crown'd,
Here all our troubles cease;*
Lea. { *Each year that takes its jocund round,
Shall bring content and peace.*

Fred. { *And whilst we sport, and dance, and play,
The labor blithe shall sound,
We'll laugh and chant our carols gay.*

Dor. { *While merry bells ring round,
Now mirth and glee, and pastimes light,
The frolic hours shall share;
And sparkling eyes shall wake to-night;
To-morrow, time for care.*

Chorus. And whilst we sport, &c. [*Exeunt.*]

THE VOTARY OF WEALTH;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY J. G. HOLMAN.



Act I.—Scene I

CHARACTERS.

OLD VISORLY
LEONARD VISORLY
CLEVLAND
DROOPLY
SHARPSET

HENRY MILLVILLE
OAKWORTH
MASTER OF HOTEL
SIMPSON
BAILIFF

LADY JEMIMA VISORLY
MRS. CLEVELAND
JULIA CLEVELAND
CAROLINE
GANGICA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in Old Visorly's house.

OLD VISORLY and LADY JEMIMA VISORLY discovered at breakfast. Old Visorly reading the newspaper.

Lady J. A very pleasant, sociable companion, indeed! Can you pore over newspapers at no other time? You compliment me most highly in letting me see, that, while you are in my company, you need other entertainment.

Old V. My dear, I beg your pardon. One is anxious, you know, for the good of one's country.

Lady J. You are anxious, Mr. Visorly, for anything that is to shew disrespect to me.

Old V. Lord, how you talk! I shew disrespect to you! *(Still reading.)*

Lady J. There! are you not still inattentive to me and my remonstrances? Ah! I might have known what I had to expect. That is the consequence of being sight of what was due to my birth and rank, and marrying a commoner.

Old V. My dear Lady Jemima, why should you urge that so often? I am sensible of the honour, and of my own unworthiness.

Lady J. Still you pay no attention to what I am complaining of. Anything, I find, is preferable to my conversation.

Old V. (Aside.) Never spoke a truer word in her life. My dear, I shall have done in a moment I am among the deaths.

Lady J. I wish to the Lord you were!

Old V. Oh! fie, fie, Lady Jemima!

Lady J. You would provoke the patience of a saint! *(Old Visorly, who has been still reading, starts up.)* What is the matter?

Old V. Tol lol de rol! *(Singing and capering.)*

Lady J. The man is mad!

Old V. Tol lol de rol!

Lady J. What frenzy has seized you?

Old V. Frenzy, my dear! only the frenzy that arises from good news.

Lady J. Can't you give utterance to your good news without such absurdity?

Old V. Well, well, I will, my dear. *(Reads.)* "On Thursday, the 14th of last Month, died at an advanced age, at Calcutta, in Bengal,"—Tol lol de rol!

Lady J. Oh! mad, mad!

Old V. (Reads.) "John Cleveland, Esq. His immediate wealth devotes on his only son, who is shortly expected in England." There is a fortune for our dear son, Leonard!

Lady J. How do you mean for our Leonard?

Old V. Mr. Cleveland, the son and heir of the deceased, is my first cousin: I'm his nearest of kin. The old fellow, who is dead, was such a capricious sort of animal, that he might have left every shilling of it away from his own son; but

now it is come into his possession, it is in the fair road to our family.

Lady J. This is, indeed, welcome news; and here comes our dear Leonard to partake it.

Enter LEONARD VISORLY.

Old V. Ah! my dear boy!

Lady J. Ah! my dear son!

Leon. Good morning. How do you do?

Lady J. Here is news!

Old V. Ah! my boy, we have news for you!

Leon. Well, let me have it.

Old V. Why, then,—

Lady J. No, no; Mr. Visorly, I'll tell it him.

Leon. I'll save you the trouble: old Cleveland is dead at Calcutta. His son inherits all his fortune; and the good news is, that their burses and lacks may, eventually, come to our family.

Old V. Ay, my boy!

Lady J. Yes, Leonard!

Leon. I would not give five guineas for the chance of inheritance.

Old V. No!

Leon. No. I know a little more of the circumstances than you do. Mr. Cleveland has a daughter.

Old V. Pooh, pooh! Some—some—you understand me.

Lady J. Mr. Visorly, I am shocked at your indelicate allusions.

Leon. I wish they were well grounded; but 'tis a melancholy fact, that the daughter is legitimate, and her mother, Cleveland's wife, is living.

Old V. Dear me, dear me!

Lady J. How do you know all this?

Leon. From the most positive information,—Cleveland's own acknowledgment. He has written to me.

Old V. Really!

Leon. Yes; stating, that as we were the nearest and only male relations he had, to us he has taken the liberty of consigning his remittances, with directions how he wishes them to be invested. Understanding that your residence in London was only casual, and also thinking the trouble of business more suited to my time of life, he thought it better to address his letter to me: in his letter, he explains all the particulars of his marriage, and recommends his wife and daughter to our attention.

Lady J. How! are they not with him?

Leon. No. His daughter we may hourly expect. Not being able to settle his affairs immediately on the death of his father, he sent her before him, unwilling to detain her from her mother.

Lady J. Why, is the mother in England?

Leon. Yes; and has been for several years. His marriage was without the consent of his father; and, for some time, unknown to him. Enraged when he discovered it, he insisted on a separation; to avoid ruin, which would have been the consequence of his father's resentment, he was forced to comply. The child was suffered to remain with him: the wife was doomed to return to England; where, for these fifteen years, she has lived in retirement.

Old V. Well, what is to be done?

Lady J. They are recommended, it seems, to our attention; but, really, I don't well see how I can reconcile to myself, taking notice of, and introducing to my acquaintance, [people one doesn't know who, and that have been living one doesn't know where.]

Leon. What do you talk of? Are they not the wife and daughter of a nabob? Your highly-bred friends will worship you for the introduction. Think what will be the magnificence of their house, the splendour of their equipage, the brilliancy of

their entertainments. Such suppers as theirs will be, the fashionable world would scramble for a seat at, even if they were given by a personage from a hotter place than Bengal.

Old V. Leonard says very truly; we shall get credit by shewing such gold pheasants to our friends.

Leon. Certainly: for all will be charmed with the splendour of their plumage; even those who are so little fashionable as not to attempt plucking the feathers.

Old V. Well, we must prepare to shew them all possible civility.

Leon. Ay, ay; pray, let us; for I have something in view that will pay us for our trouble.

Lady J. What is that, son?

Leon. The hope of making the young lady a part of our family.

Old V. What an excellent thought! Ah! Leonard, Leonard, you are a cunning rogue!

Lady J. You amaze me, child, that you don't extend your views. My son, the grandson of the Earl of Castlegreat, ought to aspire to the proudest heiresses of the noblest peers, not stoop to a thing of mushroom growth.

Leon. Consider, mother, this mushroom is the growth of a golden soil.

Lady J. Well, son, pursue your own inclinations; my affection for you will always make me yield to your wishes.

Leon. Then this glorious fortune may be mine. Invite them to your house. The mother having long experienced a constrained seclusion from society, will, doubtless, be gratified with attentions from a woman of your rank. The daughter is young: I don't despair of success with her; and the preference the father has shewn, in the trust confided to me, makes me hope every thing from him. So, all seems fair for my success; and half a million at least is the prize. Think of that! think of that!

Enter a Servant.

Serv. (To Leon.) A person below desires to speak with you, sir.

Leon. What is his name?

Serv. He says his own name is immaterial; but he desired me to mention the name of Cleveland.

Leon. Shew him up directly. [*Exit Serv.*]

Enter OAKWORTH.

Leon. You are welcome, sir.

Oak. Thank you, sir, thank you. So, I be got to you, at last. You great folks take a plaguy time coming at. Ma'am, your humble servant. Mayhap, I should say your ladyship. Pray, excuse all faults.

Leon. Never mind, Lady Jemima doesn't stand upon ceremony.

Oak. Don't she! why, then, Lady Jemima is a lady just after my own heart.

Old V. Well, sir, you come concerning Mr. Cleveland.

Oak. Why, yes, sir; yes. You must know, sir, that I am an old fellow, that remembers Mrs. Cleveland, (heaven bless her!) when she was not the height of my knee. Often and often is the time that I have danced her o'top of it. Well, that is neither here nor there. When her father died,—(ah! I shall never forget it! he has not left a better man behind him!—there was not a dry eye in the village, except the undertaker's, and folks do say he cried a bit. Well, her father, good soul! had met with so many losses and crosses, that there was little enough left for his daughter to live like a lady on; so, she was persuaded by her friends to take a voyage to India with a cousin

of her's, who had married, and was going to settle there.

Leon. Mr. Cleveland has acquainted me with the rest. There he married her; and, from thence, by the severity of his father, he was forced to send her.

Oak. Ah! poor dear! home she came again, miserable enough, to be sure. Well, mayhap, all for the best; now she will be as happy as the day is long. But, for this many a year, she has led a lonesome sort of a life; for you may think my dame and I (though we love her like a child of our own) can't have been company good enough for her; but, she was as kind to us, and made as much of us, as though we had been the best people in the land.

Lady J. We shall soon, I hope, have the pleasure of receiving her in this house. She must not think of seeing any other habitation.

Leon. Oh! certainly not. She must make this her abode.

Old V. Oh! to be sure, to be sure!

Lady J. When did Mrs. Cleveland arrive?

Oak. But last night.

Lady J. And where is she?

Oak. Why, she is at a—~~at~~—a—What the plague do you call it? It is the like of an inn, only it goes by a finer name.

Leon. Oh! an hotel.

Oak. Ay, ay; an hotel.

Leon. But what hotel?

Oak. Od rabbit it! I forget the name of it; but I can ask the man who shewed me the way here; for, as I never was in London before, I can't travel without a guide. He waits below to take me back again; he will tell me. (*Going.*)

Lady J. Stay, sir; he shall direct us both. The carriage is waiting; and I will not lose a moment in paying my respects to Mrs. Cleveland.

Oak. Well, now, that is kind of you, indeed, my lady. I will leave the direction below stairs, and go on before.

Leon. By no means. Lady Jemima will take you in the carriage with her.

Oak. Why, you are joking, sure!

Lady J. (*Aside to Leon.*) My dear Leonard, think if I should meet any of my friends with this bumpkin for my cicisbeo.

Leon. (*Aside.*) Oh! mother, to oblige me. My mother is ready to attend to you, sir.

Oak. Psha, psha! no tricks upon travellers. Her ladyship ride with such a lout as me!

Lady J. (*Aside.*) It may well surprise you.—Oh! sir, I shall be proud of the honour.

Oak. The honour! that is a good one. Come, then, my lady. Lord, how my dame would laugh to see me seated in a coach with Lady Jemima.

[*Exit with Lady J.*]

Leon. Won't you accompany my mother, sir? I have business which must detain me.

Old V. Yes, yes; I will go with you, Lady Jemima. (*Calling after her.*)—I say, Leonard, where will her ladyship wish the rustie, if she meet any of her noble relatives? Ha, ha! 'tis a good joke! Ah! Leonard, you are a droll dog!

[*Exit.*]

Leon. If my design succeed, on what a pinnacle of fortune shall I be placed! The independence bequeathed me by my grandfather I have turned to good account. What, though it has been the means of effecting the ruin of a few thoughtless profligates, their vices were incurable, and they would have been as completely beggared by the skillful operations of others, if all my thoughts had been engaged in the exercise of devotion, and my guineas appropriated to charitable donations; nay, to preserve my estimation with the world, I have raised from the earth those, whom others, less mindful of opinion, would have left grovelling in

misery. Psha! when I scrutinize my conduct with an eye half inclined to condemnation, I find matter for praise instead of censure. Dupes will be dupes; knaves will make their prey of them; and lucky is the dupe that becomes the prey of a knave with some conscience, and a great regard for a good reputation. Who have we here?

Enter SHARPSET, dressed as a methodist preacher.

Sharp. Peace be unto this house!

Leon. Who is this? With what hedge divine have I the honour of an acquaintance?

Sharp. Thy name is Leonard Visorly.

Leon. Well, sir, what is your business?

Sharp. To discourse with thee on the state of thy conscience.

Leon. I request you will save yourself that trouble; my conscience is a charge of which I choose to have the sole guardianship.

Sharp. But it is my duty to inquire whether thou hast treated that precious charge like unto a faithful guardian; whether thou hast not stained with guilt, that which was consigned to thy care spotless and pure; and which now goads thee with complainings for thy iniquity; therefore, I say—

Leon. You shall say no more in this house. Out with you directly! (*Offering to push him out.*)

Sharp. Oh! Leonard, Leonard, is this the way you treat an old friend, after so long an absence?

Leon. An old friend! What do you mean? who are you?

Sharp. And so, my reverend appearance has concealed from your recognition your friend and brother in iniquity, Jeremy Sharpset!

Leon. Sharpset!

Sharp. The very same.

Leon. But, what is the meaning of this transformation?

Sharp. The restlessness of my disposition, and inclination for any pursuit, in preference to laudable exertion, and honest industry.—I am afraid you felt the loss of me.

Leon. Yes, I confess it: you were very serviceable.

Sharp. Yes, I was. I did the roguery, and you received the profits.

Leon. Come, come; you were not ill paid.

Sharp. Oh! no; I don't complain. How is poor Drooply?

Leon. Still the creature of my bounty.

Sharp. Well, that is kind of you! a generous weakness in your character! You swindled him out of two thousand a year, and are good enough to allow him a hundred. Ah! you are a model of philanthropy.

Leon. Come, a truce with your sarcasms.

Sharp. Ah! bless your honest, tender heart! He is as grateful to you as ever, I console.

Leon. Yes; he esteems me his friend and preserver.

Sharp. Poor fellow! 'He was wont to set the table in a roar,' now quite chop-fallen! I declare, I never think of him but with a heart-ache.

Leon. Well, well—But what have you been doing, since we parted?

Sharp. All sorts of things I ought not to do. To confess the truth, the reason I quitted you was, I was tired of the work you chalked out for me: you wanted to push me a little farther in roguery than I liked. I am but a petty-larceny villain. That ruin of poor Drooply, in which I was the chief engine for you, that hit me hard! I am foolish enough to have qualms. I know you despise me for it; but we all have our weaknesses.

Leon. Well, well; but what became of you?

Sharp. I'll tell you. I had, unluckily, once in my life, dined at a lord mayor's feast. I shall

never forget it. Talk of earls and dukes entertaining! Paha! a rivalet to the ocean. Ever after, I panted for city honours. So, all my honest earnings I was determined to deposit in trade. An opportunity soon offered; I was to become a sleeping-partner in a great house. I paid down my cash to the last guinea. A docket was struck against the firm the very next week: so, the poor sleeping-partner had nothing but the open air for his slumbers; and, instead of being in the road to claim a seat at a Guildhall dinner, I had scarcely enough to purchase one in Porridge Island.

Leon. So, all your hopes of a gold chain vanished?

Sharp. Yes; and I was in a very likely way to be adorned with an iron one. But I was resolved to take myself out of the reach of temptation and danger, by leaving London.

Leon. In what capacity did you travel?

Sharp. Still I had a taste for partnership. I engaged with a very respectable gentleman to divide with him the attention and profits of—

Leon. Of what?

Sharp. A collection of wild beasts.

Leon. I guess you were not a sleeping partner here.

Sharp. No; my companions were rather hostile to repose. Not much liking such uncivilized society, and being a little apprehensive that my fellow-travellers might one time or other make a supper of me, I soon out this connection, and instead of exhibiting the merits of others, I got a taste for displaying my own.

Leon. How, pray?

Sharp. I joined a party of strolling players.

Leon. Indeed!

Sharp. I know you must be shocked at my descending so d—d low, as to turn actor. But I did not disgrace myself long.

Leon. How happened that?

Sharp. The audience would not let me.

Leon. How so?

Sharp. I came out in Richard the Third. I thought it devilish fine, but the good folks in the front thought otherwise. I ranted, they hooted; however, I out-roared them, and pushed on till I got into Bosworth Field. "A horse, a horse! my kingdom for a horse!" When a drunken, fox-hunting squire (I shall never lose the sound of his d—d voice!) bawled out of the boxes, that I should have the best horse in his stable, if I would ride away directly, and never come back again.

Leon. Ha, ha, ha!

Sharp. The actors warned me it would not do. I thought it envy in them, and have some reason to think they sent in a party to hiss me. However, by way of comfort, they told me, though I should never act tragedy, they thought I should succeed in low comedy. Low comedy! only think of their impudence! Is this a face for low comedy? No, no; I could not stoop to that.

Leon. Well, your next resource?

Sharp. Oh! then I got a call, and mounted the habiliments in which you see me. This was lucrative; but my conscience would not suffer me any longer to drain from the pockets of the poor, the earnings of their industry: nay, what is worse, amitter their innocent minds with groundless terrors, and inspire them with prejudice against their fellow-creatures.

Leon. So, then, you deign, at last, to return to me.

Sharp. Yes; for I would rather cheat the rich, than delude the poor.

Leon. Well, well; I'll endeavour to find you employment.

Sharp. That I don't doubt; as long as there is a

pigeon to be plucked, and I am disposed to be a rook at your service.

Leon. No; I have, at present, more honest objects in view, to attain which I may need your assistance.

Sharp. Well, I'm glad of that; for, upon my soul, I'm tired of being a rogue.

Leon. If I reach the point of my present aim, I may, myself, relinquish that character. I shall, then, have wealth enough to gratify even my ambition. I am no further a knave than as it forwards my grand pursuit, the attainment of wealth. And who would not use any means to gain that, which covers vice with the garb of respect, and without which virtue meets but pity or derision.

Sharp. Well observed; and never was observation more patly illustrated. You are a glorious instance of the first part of your sentiment, and here comes a proof of the latter. (*Retires.*)

Enter DROOPLY.

Leon. Ah! Drooply, how do you do?

Droop. How do you do, my dear fellow?

Leon. Where have you hid yourself? nobody has seen you, of late.

Droop. I have been striving to follow the example of my acquaintance, and learning to be as shy of them as they are of me.

Leon. Why, what an altered being you are! you used to be a merry fellow.

Droop. Yes, for I used to be a rich fellow.

Leon. Come, come; cheer up! Good spirits are a man's best friends.

Droop. Ay; but like the rest of his friends, when his money leaves him, they leave him too.

Leon. Nay, nay; your friends have not all deserted you.

Droop. All but you. There is not another man in the world who would care a straw if the devil had me.

Leon. If you are so despondent, I must recommend you a spiritual comforter.—(*To Sharpset.*) Can your reverence administer consolation to this afflicted being?

Sharp. No, for I can't return him the money I won of him.

Droop. Whom have we here?

Sharp. What, not remember me! If I had done you a kindness, I might expect to be forgotten; but I thought every one remembered an ill-turn.

Leon. In this pious pastor, you behold a quondam acquaintance, Mr. Sharpset.

Droop. What, Sharpset turned methodist?

Sharp. Yes; but don't wrong my understanding—only from necessity.

Leon. You might triumph now, if you were disposed to indulge spleen; for the man who was the chief gainer by your losses at play, is now as low in the world as yourself.

Droop. No, I am so completely without gratification, I have not even the comfort a malicious disposition would afford me. It is far from a relief to me, to see another unfortunate.

Leon. You are mutually distressed; yet, how differently you bear your misfortunes!

Sharp. That is easily accounted for: I have a thousand resources, Drooply has none. Born to no other inheritance, I have learned to turn to account what I inherit from nature; so, that, though my acquisitions have been squandered, I am still in possession of my original patrimony.

Droop. Ah! you lucky dog! you have an estate in every corner of your brain, and a pretty income at the end of every finger. Now, the whole produce of my skull would not get me change for sixpence; and, as for my hands, curse them! they are fit for nothing but to dangle by my sides, or stuff out my coat-pockets.

Leon. Why, I am afraid they will never fill your pockets with anything but themselves.

Droop. Oh! I wish I had been a Turk!

Leon. A Turk!

Droop. Yes, a Turk: they are the only wise people on earth; they teach their great men some honest employment.

Leon. Do they? I know some great men I wish they would give a lesson to.

Droop. Oh! if we had that good mussulman custom among us, how many a rich man would be of more use to society when his estate was gone, than while he possessed it! As a good cobbler is a more valuable character than a rich man who does not employ his wealth properly.

Leon. Why, you are turning moralist!

Droop. Yes; the loss of wealth seldom lessens a man's morality. While I am creeping about, such a piece of moving lumber, what respect I feel for every reputable tinker that comes in my way! This very morning, how I did envy a merry rogue of a shoeblick! With what glee he put the polish of an artist on the boot he was blacking! how merrily he brushed and sang, and how conceitedly and happily he looked at his work, when he had done it! Oh! you jolly dog, thought I, what a happy man had been spoiled, if you had been born to two thousand a year! you would never have enjoyed the luxury of polishing a shoe, or the independent exultation of existing by your own industry.

Leon. We must endeavour to dispel your melancholy. You are a martyr to *ennui*. I must find you employment.

Droop. You must do something beside—find me capacity.

Leon. That you don't want: your talents have been only slumbering.

Droop. Haven't they? they have had a pretty long nap, and a sound one, too. I'm afraid it will be a hard matter to wake them.

Leon. I don't despair; especially, when I shall set the loud voice of friendship to rouse them.

Droop. If they don't wake at that call, you may take your oath their slumber is everlasting. But though I am master of this poor tenement, I really am so ignorant of the state of the upper story, as not to know whether the inhabitants have perished by neglect, or are only dozing from want of employment; but, this I do know, there is a lively fellow in the first floor, (*pointing to his heart*.) who would dance with joy to do you the slightest service, and lose every drop of blood to prove his friendship and gratitude. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in Visorly's house.

Enter LEONARD and CAROLINE.

Car. Yes, I have not been in town above half an hour.

Leon. Have you brought with you, from the country-house, the box, which, I told you, contains the writings of your property.

Car. Yes: shall I give it to you?

Leon. No; I am too busy, at present: only, take care of it.

Car. Well, my dear brother, I am so glad we are to have our house full of company! Oh! that is delightful! How I do love a racketing, noisy scene! In a morning, the fashionable bustle of Bond-street; the musical thunder of a footman's rap; the dealing out tickets to the whole ton world; and then, at night, driving to twenty different assemblies, seeing the whole world in the course of

an evening. Oh! dear, dear! what a charming age to live in! We see more of life in one day, than our ancestors did in their whole existence.

Leon. Yes; but I doubt whether we are the happy ones for it.

Car. To be sure we are! What is all this but happiness? Care can never reach us; for, in all this hurry, nobody has time to think; and you know it is thinking makes one unhappy.

Leon. Well, I'm not cynic enough to attempt to reason people out of their notions of happiness; for, as it exists in imagination, the idea is the reality. But, my dear Caroline, I have told you my wish to be thought well of by this young East Indian. From living in the same house, and being nearly of an age, you will most likely contract a friendship.

Car. Yes; and her taking my brother for her lover, will be the best security for that friendship; for, then, we can't be rivals; and nothing is so apt to make young ladies disagree, as being both of the same mind.

Old V. (*Without.*) This way, Mrs. Cleveland.

Leon. Here comes the mother.

Enter MRS. CLEVELAND, LADY JEMINA, and OLD VISORLY.

Old V. Believe me, madam, we experience the greatest pleasure in welcoming you to this house. My daughter, madam; my son, Leonard.

Leon. I feel extreme happiness in the event of this moment, which makes me known to you, madam. Suffer me to assure you, that if I can be the humble instrument of rendering you a service, I shall esteem it the greatest bliss of my life.

Mrs. C. Sir, I thank you.

Lady J. I hope, madam, we shall be able to make your residence here, not entirely disagreeable to you. Our friends and connexions, (among whom, I am proud to say, are some of the first rank,) will, I am sure, do their possible to second our poor endeavours.

Mrs. C. Your kindness, madam, merits my warmest return of gratitude. The endearing attentions with which you honour me, will tend to soothe the terrors of a mind anxious for the safety of the dear objects on which all its future happiness depends.

Leon. With what sincere joy, madam, I consider how short will be the continuance of your apprehensions, and how complete the happiness you will so soon possess!

Mrs. C. Heaven grant it! I have passed many a tedious year, with no other solace than the hope of what now appears so near to me. Fifteen years' absence from the husband of my affections, and from my dear child, has been a period, you may well conceive, barren of comfort; and, even now, I have much to dread, a long and dangerous voyage. But, I will hope the best, and not wrong Providence, by doubting its goodness.

Enter OAKWORTH.

Oak. I am out of breath—quite out of breath—and I'm almost out of my wits. She is arrived! she is arrived!

Mrs. C. My daughter!

Oak. Yes; I have seen her, I have seen her!

Mrs. C. Oh! good heaven!

Oak. I have. Ah! the sweet, little dear! and not so little, either. She is quite a woman. Ah! bless her! I've had a kiss, and I'll have another. I beg pardon, gentlefolks; if I be unmannerly, 'tis joy makes me so.

Mrs. C. Where is she?

Oak. In this very house, by this time. Oh! here she comes! here she comes!

Enter JULIA CLEVELAND.

Mrs. C. My child!—oh! my sweet child!

Julia. My mother!

Mrs. C. How have I longed for this blessed moment! But, your dear father, did you leave him well?

Julia. Yes, quite well; and eager for the happiness which I feel now.

Mrs. C. My sweet, sweet Julia! How well am I repaid for my past years of misery! Oh! height of bliss! The mother clasps once more in her fond arms, her long lost, only child!—Pardon these transports; joy like mine will keep no limits.

Leon. We all participate too much in your felicity, to wish to repress such exquisite emotions.

Old V. Yes, madam, we all feel boundless joy. *(Apart to Leonard.)* What a pretty, little creature it is! Oh! you will be a happy rogue!

Mrs. C. My Julia, to these generous friends we owe the utmost gratitude; their kindness grants us an asylum, while your father shall remain from us.

Car. 'Tis for us to be grateful, for your kind compliance with our wishes.—*(To Julia.)* Though we can't rival the splendour of Calcutta, I hope London will have some charms for you.

Julia. Oh! yes; I find already it has every charm; for, I'm with my mother, and with friends who look as if they loved me.

Oak. And, who that sets eyes on you, can help loving you, you dear, pretty creature? I beg pardon, gentlefolks.

Julia. Who is that good, old gentleman? You can't think how glad he was to see me: he kissed me as fondly as if I had been his own daughter.

Mrs. C. He is one, my Julia, who has made my comfort, for these fifteen years, the chief business of his life.

Julia. What, has he been so kind to my dear mother? Oh! then, I must kiss him again. *(Runs and kisses Oakworth.)*

Oak. I am too happy! I am too happy!

Julia. Though my new friends are so kind to me, I must not forget those who have loved me before. Where is Gangica?

Enter GANGICA.

Gan. Here, my dear mistress.

Julia. Mother, you must love Gangica for my sake; she has left her country and all her relations, because she would not part from me; therefore, I must love her better than ever, and every body that loves me, must love Gangica.

Mrs. C. Her affection for my dear child makes her certain of my love. But I feel exhausted with excess of joy. We should not lament that there are few incidents in life, which awaken such extreme delight; for, were they frequent, how shortly would our weak frames yield to the tumults of ecstasy!

Lady J. Let me conduct you, madam, to your apartments.

Mrs. C. You are all goodness. Come, my dear child. *[Exeunt all but Leonard, Old Visorly, and Oakworth.]*

Oak. *(Looking after them, then wiping his eyes.)* I can't tell how it is; I be no whimperer, gentlemen; but, somehow, my eyes do nothing but moisten to-day.

Old V. I feel the fear of sensibility bedew my cheek.—*(Aside to Leonard.)* Ah! Leonard, my boy, if you can but get her—

Leon. *(Apart.)* Hush, sir, hush!—*(To Oakworth.)* What delight, sir, you must feel at the happiness of this family, to whom you have shewn so much attachment! what gratitude do they not owe you!

Oak. Gratitude to me! that is a great mistake of yours, and it behoves me to set you right. *Mrs. Cleveland's* father saved me once from ruin,—me and my family from beggary; and, I think, he must have but a bad notion of the value of a kindness done him, who, if he could live long enough, would not strive to repay it down to the fiftieth generation.

Leon. What a noble heart!

Oak. Noble heart! Psha, psha! sure, the world is not so bad, that a man need be praised for not being a monster.

Leaq. I am proud of the happiness of being known to you.

Old V. And so am I, most sincerely.

Oak. Why, to be sure, a mighty matter to be proud of, gentlemen,—being known to an old, stupid, country bumpkin. Surely, you be jeering a body! but, if you be, I can't find in my heart to be angry; for, as long as you are so good and so kind to the dear creatures I love, you may flout and jeer at me as much as you please.

Leon. You mistake us extremely: we feel the value of such integrity as yours; and, be assured, we shall always say less of your merits, than we think you deserve.

Old V. Always less than you deserve.

Oak. Do you know, I shall take that very kind of you; for, if you be so good as to fancy I have any deserts at all, you must, in conscience, think they be very little; and if so be you keep your word, and say less than you think, I shall be mighty happy; because, then, you will just say nothing at all. So, gentlemen, as in duty bound, I am your most humble servant. *[Exit.]*

Leon. This old rustic, sir, appears to stand vastly well with the mother. I must endeavour to gain his good graces; for the sentiments of a man she has known so long, and esteems so highly, must have great weight with her.

Old V. Very true; I'll take care to pay him vast attention. I'll do your business with him! I'll ogle the old fool!

Leon. Yes, sir; but, be cautious, lest your partial affection for me should make you too lavish in my panegyric.

Old V. Do you think I don't know how to get round such a silly, old bumpkin? Leave me to wheedle him; I'll do it cunningly, shrewdly, Leonard! wisely, my boy! *[Exit.]*

Leon. Now the game is started, I must set my whole pack, full cry, for the chase. Here comes my prime agent in knavery, Sharpset. Having used him so essentially in the plunder of Drooply, and that business completed, I could have dispensed with his return; for, no intercourse is so grating as that which subsists with a confederate in villainy. However, to keep him in my power, I have still contrived to keep him in my debt; so, that I need not fear him, and he has talents to render him still useful to me.

Enter SHARPSET.

I am glad to find you returned to the laity. I would rather see knavery wear any garb than that of religion.

Sharp. Your reason for which is, that then only you are afraid of its being an overmatch for you.

Leon. Not so; but that I have not ceased to respect, though I have dared to violate.

Sharp. Heyday! I believe you congratulate me on laying down the trade of preaching, because you mean to take it up. But, it tells well for morality, that even some knaves can admire the cause, which honest men are risking their lives to defend. But, a truce to this style; for it sits awkwardly upon us. Your visitors, I find, are arrived.

Leon. Yes; and the girl is as beautiful as an angel!

Sharp. Oh! a divinity!

Leon. Why, have you seen her?

Sharp. No.

Leon. Then, whence these raptures?

Sharp. Did not you tell me she was heiress to half a million?

Leon. Oh! your servant. But, I assure you, her intrinsic worth—

Sharp. Can be nothing to her sterling worth!

Leon. I am convinced I feel something like love.

Sharp. To be sure you do. I should adore a twentieth part of the sum, if it were in the pocket of the ugliest old harridan that ever was ducked for a witch.

Leon. You seem to hold beauty very cheap.

Sharp. Oh! no; I only value money very highly.

Leon. But when they are combined.—

Sharp. That is always possible. Whoever has the money, need not be long without the beauty.

Leon. In one object, I hope to possess the ultimatum of my wishes in both. It must now be my care to have all around her impressed with esteem for me; my eulogium wafted to her on every breath, cannot fail of infusing a favourable prepossession. Be you mindful, that, on all occasions, your report of me may swell the gale of approbation. I need not tell you, that your interest will be no sufferer by your panegyric.

Sharp. And I assure you, I am so good-natured a fellow, that, make it equally profitable to me, and I would rather speak in a man's praise than against him; so much am I unlike the greater part of my acquaintance.

Leon. The chief personage I wish to enlist in my favour is an old rustic, much devoted to the family, and ranking high in the mother's esteem. his name is Oakworth.

Sharp. What?

Leon. Oakworth.

Sharp. Oak—Oak—worth! Where does he come from?

Leon. With Mrs. Cleveland, from Warwickshire. What surprises you?

Sharp. Oh! nothing: only it strikes me, I have heard that name before.

Leon. Be earnest to throw yourself in his way; and, remember, by discreetly applied praise, to pave my passage to the esteem I desire. To merit esteem is, at best, a tedious method of obtaining it: the purchased diploma equally gives the title, and saves the labour of deserving it. [Exit.]

Sharp. So I am to throw myself in the way of this old rustic, Oakworth. You little guess, my very worthy friend, what you are directing: to throw myself in the way of no less interesting a personage to me, than my identical dad! my own natural father! It is now a long while since I saw the good old boy: I was but fourteen, I think, when it entered my mad head to scamper away from him; a project well worthy of so experienced an age. That frolic has thrown me into many a situation which it would be whimsical to relate; yes, and many a situation it would not be prudent to relate. I long to have a glimpse of the old back. I wonder whether he would know me?—Whom have we got here? Oh! this is one of the Asiatic importations.

Enter GANGICA, looking about with curiosity; on seeing Sharpset, she starts back.

Don't be frightened, my dear; I am very tame.

Gan. You not hurt me?

Sharp. Lord love you! not I.—(Aside.) I sup-

pose she thought I should dart at her like one of her native tigers.—I assure you, my dear, I sha'n't bite.

Gan. No, no; but you may do great deal mischief, and not bite.

•*Sharp.* But I won't do any mischief at all.

Gan. Dat's good man. You not wonder I am afraid: I am stranger.

Sharp. 'Tis a sign so, by your being afraid; for, were you not a stranger, you would know that nobody in this country has the power of wronging another with impunity. Besides, your being a stranger, is a sure title to protection.

Gan. Oh! den, dis be very good country. Glad I come here.

Sharp. And so am I glad you are come here, my little marigold.

Gan. What for you glad I come here?

Sharp. Because I like the look of you.

Gan. Oh! you mock. You not like my copper face.

Sharp. Why not, my dear? In my mind, a lady looks better with a face of copper, than of brass; and that is all the fashion.

Gan. Oh! if my face were like my dear Miss Julia's! Oh! she so pretty, she so good!

Sharp. And you love her very much?

Gan. Ay, dat I do! I would die for her! Oh! I would do great deal more; I would live to bear pain in my limbs, and sorrow in my heart, to make her happy.

Sharp. Well said, my little disciple of Brahma! If the hallowed waves of the Ganges had any share in infusing this gratitude, I wish its stream lay near enough to be resorted to as a fashionable bathing place.—(Aside.) This little, sun-burnt favourite may do Leonard service. I'll try to retain her in his cause.—I know who loves your young lady very much.

Gan. So do I.

Sharp. Ay! Who?

Gan. Every body.

Sharp. Yes, yes. But, there is a gentleman here, in this house—a young, handsome gentleman.

Gan. Yes.

Sharp. Very handsome.

Gan. Yes, very handsome.

Sharp. What, have you seen him?

Gan. Yes; I see him now.

Sharp. (Looking about.) Who?

Gan. Why, handsome; very handsome gentleman. (Looking in his face.)

Sharp. (Aside.) Meaning me. This girl's simplicity has done more than all the bronze of her sex could ever accomplish; wonderful to relate! made me blush!—But, my dear, I am not the only handsome gentleman in this house; I mean another, who has conceived a great esteem for your young lady; and your good opinion of him will, I know, give him great satisfaction; and so—(Aside.) But I had better have done with talking; and appeal to the rhetoric of all times, and all nations. (Takes out a purse.) You must know, my dear, that this gentleman is very generous; and I am sure he will be highly pleased at my making you a present from him of this little purse. (Gives her the purse.)

Gan. But what for you give me dis?

Sharp. Why, that—that you may speak well of this young gentleman.

Gan. How I speak well of him I not know?

Sharp. Humph!—But when you do know him—

Gan. Den, if he good man, I speak well of him without dis; if he bad man, I not speak well of him, for whole ship full of money. (Returns the purse.)

Sharp. (Aside.) So, so! my friend Leonard will

not be able to buy his diploma here. There is something mighty fascinating in this dusky piece of disinterestedness. Since I find we are not likely to come to a right understanding as agents, I'll try how we can agree as principals.—Pray, my dear, have you left your heart in India?

Gan. No; my heart in de right place. (*Points to her heart.*)

Sharp. I'll answer for that; 'tis in the right place, I am sure. But you have not resolved never to love anybody?

Gan. No; I love great many.

Sharp. The deuce you do!

Gan. Yes; my young lady I love dearly, dearly! And I love every body dat love her.

Sharp. Oh! in that all? But all your love seems to belong to your lady. Can't you love a little on your own account?

Gan. What you say?

Sharp. Why, you have not made a vow to die a maid?

Gan. I never make vows; it is wicked.

Sharp. Very well. Why, then, if I were to be very fond of you—

Gan. Yea?

Sharp. Would you be fond of me?

Gan. I not know.

Sharp. Why not?

Gan. Because, though your face white and pretty, I not know if your mind so.

Sharp. Why, that's true, my love. But you may take my word for it.

Gan. No, no; not take man's word when he praise himself.

Sharp. Well, how are you to know?

Gan. Why, in great long time, if I find you do all good—not one bit of bad.

Sharp. Oh, lord! oh, lord! oh, lord! here is a trial of gallantry! here is a test for a lover!

Gan. Well, good b'ye! I stay too long while with you. My lady want me, may be. I see you again sometime.

Sharp. Yes, my dear, I hope so.

Gan. Good b'ye, good b'ye! [*Exit.*]

Sharp. I am afraid I stand but a poor chance of success here. It is not very likely that my little Gentoo's system of choosing a lover should come into fashion; but if it should, lord, lord! what a different class of beings the favourites of the ladies would be!—No—yes, 'tis he; my papa, by all that's miraculous! Oh, the deuce! what a business here will be!

Enter OAKWORTH.

Oak. Whew, whew! plague take it! I never was so tired with riding a whole day after the fox, as I am now with half-an-hour's plaguy palaver from this old master of the house. He may be a very good sort of man, which I don't doubt, but he be cursed tiresome. Who be this fine spark? Servant, sir.

Sharp. How do you do? how do you do? (*Hides his face with his handkerchief.*)

Oak. Pretty well, at your service. Poor gentleman, he have got the tooth-ache, I believe. I am afraid you feel uncomfortable, sir.

Sharp. I do, upon my soul, sir.

Oak. Are you often attacked in this way?

Sharp. No, sir; I have not been attacked in this way, for a great many years.

Oak. Dear, dear! what, you be quite taken by surprise?

Sharp. Never more so in my life, sir.

Oak. Well, sir, but I hope you will soon get rid of so troublesome a companion.

Sharp. I hope I shall, sir.

Oak. And as you seem to be very uneasy, it will be my kind in me to keep you company a bit.

Sharp. If you stay with me—How the devil am I to get rid of my troublesome companion? (*Aside.*) Oh, lord! oh, lord!

Oak. You seem to be in huge great pain. I would not be plagued in this way. I would get somebody to lug him out.

Sharp. Oh! how I wish somebody would be so kind!

Oak. If I could borrow a pair of pinocers I would do it for you in a moment; I have drawn ~~my~~ so in our village.

Sharp. Oh! I could not think of troubling you.

Oak. It will be a pleasure.

Sharp. No, by no means: I think I am rather better.

Oak. Ah! the fear of the tug always makes it leave off aching. But you had better have him out; he'll plague you again.

Sharp. I am afraid he will, but I must bear it. He doesn't know my voice, and my face and person must be still more altered: hang it! I'll e'en try.

(*Aside, and taking the handkerchief from his face.*) I begin to feel easier, sir.

Oak. Heartily glad to hear it.

Sharp. My face is rather enlarged, sir.

Oak. Hum! I see no swelling at all. Ah! you were more frightened than hurt.

Sharp. So it turns out, sir—for he has not the slightest remembrance of me. (*Aside.*) But how came you to understand drawing teeth?

Oak. Oh! in a little village, a man that means to do good to his neighbours, must turn his hand to everything. Why, I have bled folks afore now.

Sharp. That has run in the family. I have bled 'em a little, too. (*Aside.*) Well, sir, and I dare say you have a good dame at home who is as ready to assist her neighbours as you are?

Oak. Why, yes; my old girl don't grudge stirring her stumps when there is any good to be done.

Sharp. I am glad to hear the good old dame is alive. Now I'll venture to touch on a tender subject. (*Aside.*) Any—any sons and daughters?

Oak. No, no; they be all gone.

Sharp. What, none left?

Oak. No, no—yes, one, mayhap; one may be alive; one ungracious boy—No, no; it be hardly possible; though there is a chance, a little chance: I have always kept a watch on the Old Bailey sessions papers, and the County Assize lists, and, to be sure, I never found his name down in them; but there is little certainty or comfort in that; for, you know, my poor wicked boy may have been hanged, or sent to Botany Bay under some other name.

Sharp. Hanged, or sent to Botany Bay!

Oak. Ah! sir, it grieves my heart to think it, but he had such little sharpening tricks about him when he was but a child, that I was forced to lash and lash every day of my life. I dare say, if he be alive, he have got my well meant marks on his back to this day.

Sharp. Really!—It aches at the recollection, (*Aside.*)

Oak. Yes; you must suppose I had his well doing at heart, and so I never spared him. I did hope, by good advice, and good example, and a good horsemanship, altogether, to have made an honest man of him; but the rogue scampered away when he was but a youngster, and so got loose into the wide, wicked world, with a bad disposition, and necessity to whet it. You must needs think as I do about what is become of him.

Sharp. I really think, sir, you judge too severely of your son, Je—What is your son's name, sir?

Oak. Jeremy.

Sharp. Oh! sir, take comfort: many a lad with as bad a beginning has turned out a great man.

Oak. Ay, a great man, mayhap; but I am afraid nobody with so bad a beginning has turned out a good one.

Sharp. Upon my soul, you can't think how it shocks me that you should judge so harshly of a child of your own. I dare swear no more harm has happened to Jerry than there has to me.

Oak. Oh, dear! oh, dear! it be quite a different case.

Sharp. Not at all, not at all. A case very much in point, I assure you.

Oak. How be that? Why, were you a bit of a rogue when you were a younker?

Sharp. To own the truth to you, my dear sir—but don't mention it—I was.

Oak. Ah! but you never ran away from your home?

Sharp. I did.

Oak. You don't say so?

Sharp. Honour.

Oak. Yes, yes; but you soon saw your error, and went back to your father?

Sharp. So far from it, my good sir, that it was many years before we met.

Oak. Indeed!

Sharp. And, then, quite by accident.

Oak. Really!

Sharp. Yes; and the best joke was, he did not know me.

Oak. Not know you! Oh! the old fool! Beg pardon, sir, for making so free with your father.

Sharp. No apology; pray, make as free with him as you please. Was it not droll?

Oak. Devilish droll! Ha, ha, ha! I can't help laughing. So, you met him, and he did not know you?

Sharp. No, he did not know me.

Oak. Well, and what did he say when he did know you?

Sharp. Why, that, my dear sir, I must defer telling you till another opportunity.

Oak. Well, sir, whenever you please; I long to hear the rest.

Sharp. Depend upon it, sir, it won't be concealed from you. Good day to you, sir.

Oak. Good b'ye, sir. Ha, ha, ha! Only think of your own father's not knowing you. Ha, ha!

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Old Visorly's House.

Enter JULIA CLEVELAND and CAROLINE.

Car. But you surely won't stay at home this evening, too?

Julia. Yes, indeed, I had rather.

Car. You have the most unaccountable domestic propensity. Has novelty no pleasure for you?

Julia. Yes, 'tis novelty makes me domestic; a dear novelty, the novelty of a mother. Now I have gained the sweet society, should I resign it for frivolous amusements I can command at all times?

Car. Well, you are a dear, good girl.

Julia. But where are you going this evening?

Car. That I cannot tell, without referring to my engagement-list; but, as near as I can guess, to about a dozen assemblies, the opera, a concert, and a masked ball.

Julia. My dear Caroline, you'll be fatigued to death.

Car. Oh! no, I am never weary with pleasure.

Julia. And do you often make these laborious exertions for your amusement?

Car. Oh! yes, all through the season: and I don't think that half long enough.

Jul. Well, to be equal to such efforts, a woman of fashion must be endued with more strength than any creature in the universe.

Car. To be sure. Your elephant is nothing to her; for grovelling instinct restrains him from exceeding the paltry limits of mere corporeal exertion; but the elevated spirits and glowing imagination of a woman of fashion make her a being all essence: she is like the wind—light, fleet, and invincible.

Julia. And is she not sometimes like the wind in my native country, which now breathes all gentleness, yet, in a few hours, will whirl a whole fortune to destruction?

Car. Why, yes, I am afraid there have been instances of the tornado kind. I really don't know whether many men may not be better pleased with your quiet stay-at-home notions, than with more dash and spirit; but perhaps you never yet examined your inclinations with an eye to how a husband would approve them. Ah! Julia, you blush, my dear: I believe this scrutiny has not been unattended to.

Julia. How you talk!

Car. Yes; I talk, and you think; but both on the same subject. My dear girl, have I yet claim enough on your confidence to ask, if the being I allude to has stolen into your dreams, and been admitted into your waking reveries in the form of a beautiful accomplished youth, whose exact likeness you have never yet realized; or have you already assigned him "a local habitation and a name?"

Julia. Heigho!

Car. Oh! then I'll lay my life Mr. Heigho has a name and place of abode. Am I not right?

Julia. Yes.

Car. And in what quarter of the globe does he exist?

Julia. Nay, where should he? I have not been long enough in this country to have found him here. I must have met him before.

Car. (*Aside.*) So, my poor brother! your chance is gone. What is his name?

Julia. Henry Melville.

Car. And you expect him here, no doubt?

Julia. Oh! yes; in the same vessel with my father.

Car. And does he know your partiality?

Julia. Yes, and I know his for me; and my father approves.

Car. Oh! you happy girl! Now, the man I love neither knows my partiality for him, nor do I know whether he cares at all for me. And if we did know that we cared for each other, I am sure my father would let us care on till both our hearts broke before he would give his consent.

Julia. Why so?

Car. Because the poor dear fellow has lost all his fortune; but, luckily, my father's consent is not essential, as I have a fortune independent of him.

Julia. Then you are not in a very hopeless state?

Car. Oh! yes, I am; for my lover (my love, I should say,) lost all self-importance with his fortune; and I very much fear I shall never be able to make him comprehend that a young woman with a good estate is ready to let him be master of it.

Julia. How strange!

Car. Hints won't do: and if I could bring myself to say to him plainly, "Dear sir, I adore you!" he would only think I was making a jest of him.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. Drooply to wait on you, madam. (*To Caroline.*)

Car. Lord, how my heart beats! Julia, my dear girl, this is the very man.

Julia. Then, my sweet Caroline, you can very well dispense with me.

Car. Oh! no; pray, don't go.

Julia. You would be very angry if I took you at your word. Adieu! *[Exit.]*

Car. Will this provoking creature for ever give me the trouble of making love to him without understanding me?

Enter DROOPLY.

So, sir, you are come.

Droop. Yes; but I will go away again if I intrude.

Car. Nay, did not I send for you?

Droop. So I understood.

Car. And why do you give me the trouble? You made your visits formerly without being sent for.

Droop. Did I? Yes; I dare say I was a very troublesome fellow.

Car. Nay, you found those visits always received with pleasure; therefore, it is strange you need be reminded to continue them.

Droop. My visits received with pleasure! Ah! this is the way in which you always used to brenter me.

Car. Banter you! Stupidity!

Droop. Yes, yes; I know you are at your old tricks. You were always cutting your jokes at me.

Car. I!

Droop. Yes, you; and I remember I used to laugh at them; but that was when my pockets were full. Upon my soul, I can't now. No, no; you must excuse me. I defy a man to laugh at a joke when he has lost all his money.

Car. You strange creature! Do you know that I have been thinking of you a great deal lately?

Droop. Yes, I don't doubt it; to play me some trick or other.

Car. Silly animal! *(Aside.)* I have been even dreaming of you. Do you ever dream of me?

Droop. I could not think of taking such a liberty.

Car. Provoking! *(Aside.)* Oh! I had almost forgot—I knew I had something particular to tell you. It was whispered to me to'other night, at Lady Blab's, that you—now mind, if it be true, I sha'n't be angry—that you have told some friend in confidence—now mind, I have promised not to be angry—that you were in love.

Droop. I told some friend?

Car. Yes; and that delicacy, occasioned by the loss of your fortune, had prevented you from declaring your passion to the object of it.

Droop. I n'yer—

Car. Now do stop a moment:—but that if you thought it would be favourably received—now remember, I have promised not to be angry—you would overcome your diffidence, and reveal it.

Droop. I assure you that—

Car. A moment's patience, pray:—at last, by great entreaty, I learnt the lady's name.

Droop. And what was it?

Car. Need you be told? It was Caroline Visorly.

Droop. Upon my soul it is a trumped-up story from beginning to end.

Car. Incurrible stupidity! *(Aside.)*

Enter GANGICA.

Gan. Beg pardon; did not know company was here. *(Going.)*

Car. If you want anything, you need not run away, child. *(Gangica goes up to a table.)* Well,

sir, I have no more to say; only don't entirely relinquish the society of one to whom your's ever was, and ever will be, a pleasure. Adieu! *[Exit.]*

Droop. Now who the devil can have told such a cursed pack of lies of me? All done to ruin me in her good opinion. That I, a poor, undone dog, with not a sixpence in the world but what I receive from her brother's friendship,—I might say, his charity,—should presume to cherish hopes of Caroline Visorly! No, no; all my hopes of her vanished with my fortune. I loved her; I do love her; and what a good-natured soul it is not to have flown into a rage at supposing I could be guilty of such vanity, such presumption, such folly! Ay, that—that saved me; knowing the folly, she pardoned the presumption.

Gan. *(Coming forward.)* You happy, very happy man.

Droop. Oh! yes, my dear; very, very.

Gan. Bless me! but you not look, you not speak like happy man.

Droop. And pray, my little dear, what should make you suppose I am a happy man?

Gan. Because pretty lady love you.

Droop. Pretty lady love me! Why, even little tawny must cut a joke at me. *(Aside.)*

Gan. Yes; pretty lady, dat went out jst now, love you.

Droop. Oh! I am known for a butt by instinct. I have not a doubt but it would be the same all the world over. If I were to land at Otaheite, the natives would begin quizzing me directly in their d—d gibberish. Why, you are a comical little rogue. So that lady loves me, does she?

Gan. Yes.

Droop. You'd find it hard to make me believe that.

Gan. And you find it much more great deal harder make me believe she not love you.

Droop. Indeed!

Gan. Yes; she not make me believe herself, if she say she not love you.

Droop. No!

Gan. No; because dey tell me dat always tell true.

Droop. They! Who are they?

Gan. Dese. *(Pointing to her eyes.)* Truth not always come from here, *(pointing to her mouth)* always from here. *(Pointing to her eyes.)*

Droop. Eh!

Gan. You tink, because I stranger, I not understand. Oh! language of love is de same in my country, your country, all country. *[Exit.]*

Droop. Eh! what? No, it can't be. Let me think—hum! 'faith! it begins to dawn; now it glares. Oh! what a blind dolt have I been! Ha, ha! Huzza! I hear myself laugh again, and think I could out a caper. Tol, lol, de rol! Whew! A fine girl loves me, and so—fortune; go hang! *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—Another Apartment in Old Visorly's house.

Enter LEONARD, with a letter in his hand, followed by a Servant.

Leon. Is my father at home?

Serv. Yes, sir.

Leon. Tell him I wish to see him directly. *[Exit Servant.]* *(Reads.)* "Sir,—Knowing you to have the management of Mr. Cleveland's concerns, I write to inform you, that the ship in which he came passenger from India, was wrecked off Portland, the 20th ult. and every soul perished."

Enter OLD VISORLY.

Old V. Well, my dear boy, what news, what news?

Leon. Very important, sir; Cleveland is no more.

Old V. Dear me, dear me!

Leon. By this I learn that the vessel that brought him from Bengal is wrecked, and he has perished.

Old V. Poor man, poor man! alack! he was a good twenty years younger than I am. Only to think that I should outlive him! Ah! there is no knowing who is to go to the grave first; mayhap, I may outlive you, Leonard. (*Weeping.*)

Leon. Oh! sir, don't indulge such melancholy ideas. His death, though, to be sure, very dreadful, and likely to awaken sensibility in the breasts of his relations, yet carries with it to us a kind of consolation.

Old V. How do you mean, Leonard?

Leon. You know my wish to be united to his daughter; and, perhaps, he might have had in his mind a very different alliance for her.

Old V. Very true.

Leon. Now my attainment of that object is infinitely more secure, the mother and the girl being both under our own roof, and likely now to continue so.

Old V. Very true. Lord! what a blockhead was I, to fall a blubbering! and for a man, too, who, though he was my first cousin, I should not have known from Adam. But I have a very tender heart.

Leon. Yes, and a very soft head. (*Aside.*) But, now, sir, to break these dismal tidings to his wife and daughter—that must be my mother's business.

Old V. Yes, we will go and prepare her to make the melancholy discovery. You have the way, my dear Leonard, of placing things in a right point of view. It is really quite a weakness, my being so tender-hearted. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—Another Apartment.

MRS. CLEVELAND AND JULIA CLEVELAND
discovered.

Mrs. C. My dear, dear Julia, what happiness has heaven allotted me, to compensate for my past wretchedness! To have my lovely child restored to me, adorned with every grace, endowed with each perfection a mother's fondest wishes could desire! Oh! none but a mother can know the happiness I feel.

Julia. My increasing joy be ever my dear mother's portion! it must; goodness like her's must be the object of heaven's choicest blessings.

Mrs. C. When your dear father, and the happy youth, to whom my Julia has assigned her heart, have passed the perils of the ocean, and tread secure on English ground, then shall I have no wish on earth ungratified; but till those joyful tidings reach me, my heart will beat with apprehension.

Julia. Nay, do not be alarmed with needless terrors. I feel confident of their safety.

Mrs. C. Ah! my dear girl, your's is the age of sweet delusion; when hope, as yet unknown for a deceiver, promises each wish acquaintance with reality.

Julia. I have escaped the perils which you dread, and reached your arms in safety. Why not be confident the same good fate attends on them?

Mrs. C. Ah! my Julia, but winds and waves are treacherous; besides, the foe—nay, that's a silly terror: the ocean is our own, and our extended fleets, rich with the commerce of the world, sail as securely to their native ports as if peace universal reigned.

Julia. Then, free from apprehension, let us await the speedy completion of our happiness.

Enter GANGICA.

Gan. Oh! madam—Oh! my young lady! Oh, me! unhappy me!

Both. What is the matter?

Gan. Oh! I can't speak—I can't tell you what I know cut your dear hearts, and make dem bleed as mine do.

Mrs. C. Speak, child, for heaven's sake!

Julia. Tell us, Gangica; tell us all.

Gan. You will know; you must know; but spare poor Gangica, don't bid her tell you, for fear you hate her for making you so wretched.

Julia. Speak, Gangica, directly.

Gan. Your dear, dear father dead—dead—dead. (*Mrs. C. transfixed with horror, Julia sinks on the sofa.*)

Enter OAKWORTH.

Mrs. C. Where is my child? (*Oakworth points to her.*) Oh! Julia, Julia! (*Bursts into tears, and takes Julia in her arms, Gangica goes to the sofa, and leans over Julia.*)

Enter LADY JEMIMA VISORLY.

Lady J. I find the dismal tidings are already known. Madam, be comforted.

Mrs. C. Alas!

Oak. This be a woeful day! alack, alack! that ever I lived to see it!

Lady J. A letter has been just now brought, directed for Miss Cleveland. (*Shewing the letter.*) It may contain something important, and I hope—

Mrs. C. Pray, give it me; I grasp at any hope. Julia, 'tis from Henry Melville. (*Reads.*) "*Snatched by Providence from a watery grave, I haste to acquaint my dearest Julia with my safety. As my situation was infinitely more perilous than her dear father's, I rely on his deliverance, and conclude he will have embraced his lovely daughter before this reaches her.*" No, no; he has not embraced his lovely daughter—he never will embrace her.

Lady J. Take comfort, madam. You have now strong reason to hope the best.

Julia. Yes, dearest mother, be assured the same protecting angel has preserved my father, too.

Oak. Do, do hope it. Heaven will not forsake the good.

Mrs. C. Come, my child; in heaven I trust.

[*Exeunt Mrs. C. Julia, and Lady J.*]
Oak. Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear! This world be full of troubles. But a little bit ago we were so happy as nothing was ever like it; and now it is all weeping and misery. Oh! those devildom hard blowing gales and cursed craggy rocks, they have brought cruel sorrow to many a family. Poor little Gangica, she takes on as dismally as any of us. It is a tender-hearted little creature. Gangica, come, dear, don't you droop; you may see your young lady's father again, alive and well.

Gan. No, no, no; I never see him more. He be sunk down—deep down—roaring waves roll over him—I never see him more.

Oak. Yes, yes; heaven will let him live to comfort his wife, his child, ay, and to reward your fidelity.

Gan. Oh! if he live, if I see him again, dat be my reward.

Enter SHARPSET.

Sharp. Sir, how do you do? Ah! my little dear, you here! Why, you have been crying; and you look gloomy, too, sir.

Oak. Yes, sir; we have neither much cause to look cheerfully.

Sharp. I am sorry for that: I heard, indeed, that ill news had arrived which concerns the ladies.

Oak. Then, when you know that we belong to

those ladies, you can't expect us to be gay, when those we love are in affliction.

Sharp. Very true, sir. But, poor thing, (*to Gangica*) come, do cheer up a little; don't be so very dismal; do let me see you smile again.

Gan. Smile when I full of sorrow? Why, you wish my face mock my heart?

Oak. Come, sir, leave her *as* nature made her; don't teach her any of your d—d fashionable tricks making the face look one thing while the heart means another. Go, my good girl, and comfort yourself with the hope that we may soon have reason to smile again. [*Exit Gangica.*] There is a creature that will make me expect in future to find the fairest mind in a dark coloured case. I hope I may live to see her as happy as she deserves to be. If I had but a son of my own—but what signifies wishing?

Sharp. Ah! what, indeed! for have you not a son of your own, sir?

Oak. If I have, I love her too well to wish she had him. No, no; if I had a son such as I could wish—

Sharp. I am afraid you are very hard to please, sir?

Oak. I should take great pains to get him this girl for a wife.

Sharp. And I am so much of your way of thinking, that if you were my father, I should be highly grateful for your kind endeavours.

Oak. Would you? then only let me find out that you are worthy of her, and though you are a stranger to me, I'll do all I can for you.

Sharp. That is very kind of you, indeed, sir.

Oak. But, hold, hold! are you sure your father would approve of it?

Sharp. Quite sure, sir.

Oak. How do you know?

Sharp. He has already signified his approbation.

Oak. Indeed! When?

Sharp. Just now, sir.

Oak. Why, has he ever seen the girl?

Sharp. Oh lord! yes, sir.

Oak. Well, well; but I should like to have a little conversation with the old gentleman.

Sharp. Ah! sir, you have had a great deal in your time.

Oak. What, then, I know him?

Sharp. Nobody half so well, sir.

Oak. Really! What, an old acquaintance?

Sharp. A very old one, sir; you knew him long before I did.

Oak. Bless my soul! And, pray, sir, what is your name?

Sharp. I am called Sharpset, sir.

Oak. Then you must be mistaken, sir. I have no acquaintance of that name.

Sharp. My dear sir, that is not the family name, that is not my father's name.

Oak. Well, what is your father's name?

Sharp. The very reason, sir, which made me adopt another name, still prevents me from just at present avowing my real one; but, depend upon it, you shall know, sir.

Oak. Well, sir, whenever it is proper to tell me, I shall be glad to know; but give me your hand for your father's sake.

Sharp. And I grasp your's with affection for my father's sake. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—The Street.

Enter HENRY MELVILLE.

Henry. That, I find, is the house of Mr. Visorly. There I shall learn my Julia's residence. This is but a sorry garb for a lover to seek his mistress in; but, if I know my Julia's heart, her joy at finding

me preserved from death will make her little heed, or scarcely see, the poorness of my raiment. Her father's safety, though I little doubt it, I long to be assured of. Now then, to be resolved on that important point, and meet my Julia. [*Exit.*]

SCENE V.—An Apartment in Old Visorly's house.

Enter HENRY MELVILLE.

Henry. To find she is in this house is more good fortune than I could hope.

Enter JULIA CLEVELAND.

My Julia!

Julia. Oh, Henry! to behold you again after such danger—but where is my father?

Henry. Have you not seen him yet?

Julia. Oh! no, no; tell me, does he live?

Henry. I hope so, Julia.

Julia. Oh! is it only hope?

Henry. Be comforted; he may be safe, he surely must. Soon as our vessel bulged on the rock, and the impetuous torrent rushed at the dreadful chasm to overwhelm us, the boats were instantly hauled out, and in a moment thronged. In one, least crowded, was your father; he called to me, and earnestly conjured me to come into it; as I was going to comply, I saw a poor old man kneeling to heaven to save him from the fate his feeble age denied him to contend against: the boat could safely hold but one, I placed him in it, seized on a friendly coop, and with it trusted to the waves.

Julia. My generous Henry! But my father—

Henry. The sea was very boisterous, and often washed over me; yet, at intervals, I snatched a short view, and still saw his boat riding in safety. At length, the bursting billows, showering so frequently their torrents over me, deluged my senses. When I recovered them, I found myself in a small vessel, whose crew had humanely rescued me from death.

Julia. Oh! my poor father.

Henry. Nay! droop not Julia. This vessel was a sloop of war sailing for the Downs. Before I recovered, it was under weigh, I was therefore forced to remain in it till it gained its station. Landed at Deal, I could of course hear no tidings of your father, whose boat, no doubt, safely reached the nearest shore. His not being yet arrived argues nothing against his safety.

Julia. But would he not have written to acquaint us with it? News of the wreck could reach us, but no intelligence from him. No! he is gone! My father is gone for ever!

Henry. My Julia's grief distracts me. Still let me hope 'tis without cause; but as no moment should be lost to prove it groundless, I will this instant fly to know the truth. Farewell, my Julia! When next we meet, I trust all grief will vanish. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Visorly's House.

Enter LEONARD VISORLY and SHARPSET.

Leon. Where have you been? I never wanted your assistance more, and I have been hunting after you of late in vain.

Sharp. Whew! you seem in a blessed humour. What has produced such an amiable tone of temper?

Leon. All my scheme is likely to be ruined. There is a lover, a favoured lover, come to light.

Sharp. Oh! the deuce.

Leon. Yes, saved from the wreck—d—n! But there is still one consolation, he brings no tidings of the father. The waves have not spared him.

Sharp. Poor man!

Leon. Amiable tenderness!

Sharp. Mock as you will, I cannot, like you, steel my heart against the common feelings of humanity.

Leon. Psha! he's dead. Will your preaching re-animate him? No. Then to the purpose of doing service to the living, of aiding your friend.

Sharp. How?

Leon. This girl, now the rightful inheritor of her father's immense fortune, must be mine.

Sharp. But you tell me of a lover.

Leon. Yes; and there is not time for endeavouring to undermine his hold on her heart. Measures must be adopted, sudden and forcible.

Sharp. How do you mean?

Leon. To bear her away. Once in my possession, all may go smoothly: at her age, nay, at any age, a transfer of affection is no uncommon incident.

Sharp. But the difficulty; see how she is surrounded.

Leon. Difficulty! every difficulty yields to the enterprising. Her lover is gone, like a true hero of romance, to conjure up the dead. 'Tis easy to get the rest out of the way. First, I'll remove the main obstacle, her rustic protector.

Sharp. Remove him! how do you mean, remove him?

Leon. We must lack invention, indeed, not to effect that. By a hundred stratagems we can keep him out of the way long enough to answer my purpose.

Sharp. But I have a trifling objection to his being put to the slightest inconvenience.

Leon. Objection! what?

Sharp. He only happens to be my father.

Leon. What do you say? your father?

Sharp. My father!

Leon. You astonish me! Well, well, this may turn to account. Then you may have influence to bring him over to my interest.

Sharp. Not I, nor all the world, would be able to influence him to a dishonest action. Beside, friend Leonard, to let you into a secret, I neither like your scheme, nor wish to forward it. After a long absence, I have had the happiness to meet my father, and when I beheld in him what a glow of youth an honest heart infuses into an aged face, I am determined to abandon my roguery, and try to make the rosy honours of honesty hereditary.

Leon. You mean, then, to defeat my purposes?

Sharp. I certainly mean not to aid them.

Leon. But am I to expect your opposition?

Sharp. I hope, Leonard, your own reflections will render that needless. Could you have fairly gained the girl's affections, I should have rejoiced at your success, and thought the society of an amiable woman the likeliest school for forming an honest man; but force, to use force against a lovely, helpless female, nope but a devil could inspire the thought, and none but devils could be found to execute it.

Leon. Bravo! one might judge by your energy that you were a new made proselyte. Apostates are always the maddest enthusiasts. But, fool, do you think I am to be preached out of my intentions?

Sharp. And do you think I am to be ballied out of mine?

Leon. Well, sir, take your course; but be cautious that you do not thwart me. Dare not to breathe a word of my designs, unless your devotion to your new tenets be warm enough to make you welcome a prison in their defence. Mark me, a

prison. You may remember, there are certain bonds of yours in my possession, that give me as entire a power over your person, as though you were my purchased slave. Remember this, and act accordingly. *[Exit.]*

Sharp. How my blood boils at the villain! too true, he has me in his power; but I'll keep him in view, I'll watch his motions. I've deserved a prison before now, and have escaped it; well, then, if I am brought to one at last for a good deed, all's square again, and I begin the world a fresh man.

Enter DROOPLY, repeating as he enters.

*"Come thou goddess, fair and free,
In heav'n yclep'd Euphrosyne."*

Sharp. Why Drooply! surprising! so sprightly, so gay!

Droop. Gay as a lark, my boy.

*"Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful jollity."*

Sharp. What, have you found your estate again?
Droop. No: but I have found myself again. I've regained my spirits, and they are worth all the estates in the universe.

Sharp. But what has effected this wonderful change?

Droop. What! need you ask? what can breathe animation into a clod of despondency, but woman, dear, lovely, angelic woman?

Sharp. So, you have gained your spirits by losing your heart.

Droop. Yes; and a man hardly knows he has a heart till he loses it. But, huzza! I am in love, and what is more, I am beloved. D—n my estate, and give me your hand, my boy, though you won it!

Sharp. I won it! yes, and won it fairly, too.

Droop. Who doubts it? not I, I'm sure.

Sharp. Why, then, may be you ought.

Droop. You are a comical dog.

Sharp. I say, perhaps, you ought to doubt it.

Droop. Heyday! the oddest kind of quizzing, this; the man who won my estate, wanting to make me believe I was cheated of it. You are a devilish droll dog! but I have something else to do than to mind your waggery. *(Going.)*

Sharp. Stay: you are an honest fellow, and have been d—d unlucky in your acquaintance.

Droop. Poh! poh! poh!

Sharp. Drooply, when a man assures you of his honesty, I'll give you leave to doubt him; but when he insists on his knavery, don't be so stupidly incredulous.

Droop. What are you driving at?

Sharp. Plainly to tell you, you have been duped, cheated, robbed,

Droop. By you?

Sharp. Yes; but I have been only second in command. Do you remember by whose kindness you were first made happy with my acquaintance?

Droop. Ham! yes, by my friend Leonard Visorly.

Sharp. He is my commanding officer.

Droop. Leonard! my friend! my patron!

Sharp. Your plunderer. He laid plans, which I only executed; he received the booty, while I was paid but a subaltern's share.

Droop. I am petrified!

Sharp. But, be silent; be prudent; for I've but shown you your malady, without being able to prescribe a remedy. He has played the politician so well, that his villainy is known only to me; the minor agents were all of my employing. So, remem-

bet, don't break out; for you have nothing but my testimony to support an accusation, and he has wound his snares so well, that he has me in his toils. Adieu! be cautious; and trust that the day of retribution will come. [Exit.]

Droop. Here is a damper to my gaiety! not even love can support a man's spirits against ingratitude. I lost my fortune; but still I thought I had a friend left. To find that friend, my—Oh! d—n it, I can't bear the thought. I'll go instantly and seek Caroline; but how to tell her of her brother's villainy? I hope I may not meet him; I should not know how to—

Enter LEONARD VISORLY.

Leon. Drooply! (*Holding out his hand.*)

Droop. How do you do? how do you do?

Leon. What, won't you shake hands with me?

Droop. Won't I shake hands with you? that is a good joke. (*Holding out his hand, and then drawing it back.*) Not but I think shaking hands a cursed foolish habit.

Leon. Why?

Droop. Because, in this d—d hypocritical world, one often gives the gripe of friendship to a scoundrel.

Leon. Very true; one is often mistaken.

Droop. Yes, miserably.

Leon. But when we come to the knowledge of a friend's real worth—

Droop. It sometimes teaches us to consider him a friend no longer.

Leon. Your gloom, I find, has taken the general course, and led you to misanthropy? When men have been unfortunate, they generally grow unjust.

Droop. Yes; and for that there is some excuse. But when men are unjust and fortunate, too, what black souls they must have!

Leon. Very true; but have you had experience of such?

Droop. Haven't I lost a fortune?

Leon. Yes; by play, not knavery.

Droop. Why play and knavery are so much connected, that I can't separate them for the soul of me.

Leon. You appear to have suspicions.

Droop. No; no suspicions at all.

Leon. You surely talk as if you had doubts.

Droop. You mistake; I have not a doubt on the subject. Good bye! I am very miserable, and of course very bad company for you.

Leon. When we meet again I shall be glad to see you more cheerful.

Droop. Why, when we meet again, Leonard—Farewell. [Exit.]

Leon. Um! all is not as it should be. Can that villain Sharpset, have dared reveal to him—I fear it; and if he have betrayed me to him, he will not stop there. His malice, then, must have a check; he shall instantly be taken care of. I have the power to secure him. The old rustic, whom he calls his father, I have been forced to entrap somewhat illegally; but he will be safe till my scheme is executed; and then the fellow that I have bribed to swear a debt against him, may, by flight, secure himself from the vengeance of the violated law. All is well arranged, and this very night shall put me securely in possession of my eastern beauty, and her eastern riches. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—*A House of Confinement.*

Enter OAKWORTH and Bailiff.

Oak. But what right, I say, have you to keep me here against my will?

Bailiff. Lord love your heart! I don't want to keep any gemman in my house against his vill.

Oak. Then let me out directly.

Bailiff. You may go farther, and fare worse. Where do you think to go?

Oak. Why home to be sure.

Bailiff. That is a devilish good one. You are a comical kind of a gemman; but a great many comical gemmen wisits me; I sees most of the vits one time or other.

Oak. Have done with your nonsense, and let me go home; and d—s but I'll trounce you and the rascal who brought me here.

Bailiff. Vy, as for your trouncing, I laughs at that. I does nothing but vat I can justify.

Oak. What! can you justify kidnapping a man in the streets? I am too old to go for a soldier. If I were not, and my country wanted me, I should not need be dragged to my duty.

Bailiff. Vat do you talk about kidnapping for? You knows as well as I can tell you vy you came here.

Oak. I'll be cursed if I do!

Bailiff. Vy, you know, if you paid your debts, you could not be brought into trouble.

Oak. Pay my debts! I don't owe a farthing to mortal man.

Bailiff. Come, come, do behave a little genteelly. There is nothing unlike a gemman in not paying your debts; but it's d—d shabby to deny 'em.

Oak. Well, sir, since you insist upon it, pray, whom may I be indebted to?

Bailiff. (*looking at the writ.*) "To Thomas Testify, von hundred pounds."

Oak. I never heard of such a man. I am not the person. It is a mistake. (*Noise without.*)

Enter SHARPSET.

Sharp. Ay! ay! it's all right. I owe the money, that can't be denied. What! (*seeing Oakworth.*) You here, sir!

Oak. Bless my soul!

Bailiff. Oh! they know von another; both of a kidney, I varrant. Oh! that old one is a deep one. [*Aside and exit.*]

Sharp. How came you here, sir?

Oak. Dragged here; dragged by main force.

Sharp. On what pretence?

Oak. Because they want to persuade me I owe a hundred pounds to a Mr. Thomas Testify.

Sharp. Whom you know nothing of?

Oak. No more than the man in the moon.

Sharp. Sir, there is a rank villany going forward.

Oak. Yes, that is pretty clear.

Sharp. You must send directly for Mrs. Cleveland; every thing dear to her depends upon it. Therefore, send to her immediately, and tell her not to leave her daughter—

Enter MRS. CLEVELAND and GANGICA.

Mrs. C. Let me see him instantly; and, Gangica, do you stay under the care of the servants. My good friend, do I find you in a place like this?

Oak. And are you so very good as to seek me in a place like this? How came you to know of my being here?

Mrs. C. You sent for me, did you not?

Oak. No.

Mrs. C. Amazing! A messenger came to me, acquainting me with your situation, and directing me where to find you; on which you may conclude I lost no time in hastening to you.

Oak. Dear, good creature!

Mrs. C. But who can have been so kind as to inform me where?—

Sharp. The kindness, madam, was the kindness

of the devil, who often puts on the semblance of goodness only to betray. Quit this place, and return home instantly. There is a villainous design against your daughter. Your absence and his has been artfully caused, to effect her ruin.

Mrs. C. Oh! horrible!

Sharp. Lose not a moment in questioning, or all is lost. Though the debt alleged be a false one, give your draft for it, and take him with you. Haste, madam, haste; and heaven prosper you.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Garden belonging to Old Visorly's house.*

Enter LEONARD VISORLY.

Leon. The evening is as dark as I could wish. The moon has civilly withdrawn her intrusive rays. The mother and Oakworth are admirably disposed of. My own family, too, conveniently from home; for, though I am not sure they would thwart a design so greatly to my advantage; yet I had rather be without needless confidants. *Simpson!*

Enter SIMPSON.

Simp. Sir?

Leon. Is the carriage at the garden gate, and every thing in readiness?

Simp. Yes, sir.

Leon. Very well. Wait hereabouts, or be at the garden gate. [*Exit Simpson.*] Now, then, to my young lady. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—*An Apartment in Visorly's house.*

JULIA discovered.

Julia. I wish my mother would return, and bring me news of poor Oakworth. 'Tis hard, that he, so good and friendly to others, should himself experience cruel treatment. Alas! my spirits quite sink under the pressure of misfortune. Oh! my dear father, may I hope ever again to be blessed with thy fond embrace?

Enter LEONARD VISORLY.

Ha! who is there? (*finding it to be Leonard*) I beg your pardon, sir, for my childish alarm; but I am really so weak, that I am agitated by the slightest circumstance. Indeed, I beg your pardon.

Leon. Madam, my situation is a most unfortunate one. I hoped, by years of attention to your every wish, to have convinced you, that for you alone I cherished existence.

Julia. Sir?

Leon. But I have the misery to find your hand is not unpromised, nor, I fear, your mind uninfluenced.

Julia. Sir, my hand and heart are both most solemnly affianced.

Leon. Then all my cherished hopes are vanished. I thought to have convinced you, by every action, that my soul was your's before my lips should venture the confession. I indulged the gay dream, that, by my tender assiduity, you might be won to sympathy, and have heard me breathe the vows of love, with looks that spoke a language. Ah! how remote from what they now convey: yet even those looks, so adverse to my wishes, those eyes, could they dart death, should not impede me from de-olaring this heart, to you devoted, never will forego its claim.

Julia. Sir, what mean you?

Leon. Listed under love's banner, never to desert his cause. You must—you shall be mine.

Julia. Horrible!

Leon. A whole life of tenderness shall atone for what has now the look of violence. (*Approaches her.*)

Julia. Violence! Oh, heaven! help, help! Oh! (*She faints, he catches her in his arms.*)

Leon. She is mine! [*Exit, bearing her off.*]

SCENE V.—*The Garden.*

Enter DROOPLY.

Droop. Well, I have found no great difficulty in scampering over the garden wall: if any of the family should find me here, though, I should be strangely suspected of either an intrigue or a burglary. It was an excellent thought of Caroline's to let me know when we should next meet, by leaving a letter for me in a sly corner of the pavilion, for there is no trusting servants. I'll e'en get my dear little packet, and over the wall again. (*Going towards the pavilion.*) Ha! I hear somebody coming. (*In his hurry to get to the pavilion, he stumbles over a garden chair.*)

Enter LEONARD, with JULIA in his arms.

Leon. Oh, you are there, Simpson. Here, take the lady in your arms. A fortunate fainting fit has prevented outcry. Place her in the carriage, while I return for an instant, for I have forgot to provide myself with the most material companion for long journeies. Here, take one of my pistols, and defend your prize at the hazard of your life.

[*Exit, leaving Julia in Drooply's arms.*]

Droop. What the devil shall I do? and what prize have I got here? (*The moon bursting by degrees from a cloud.*) My sweet, pretty moon, do enlighten me a little more, that I may see who I am hugging so lovingly (*It grows lighter*). Thank you kindly, my dear lady Lona. What, the young East Indian! Oh, that villain! She revives! Don't be alarmed, madam.

Julia. Where am I? Who are you?

Droop. No agent of villany; but one who will protect you.

Julia. Oh! where is that wretch? am I in his power?

Droop. No, madam; nor ever shall be. Ha! he is coming.

Julia. Let me fly from his sight.

Droop. There, madam, into that pavilion. (*He goes with her, enters it, and brings out Caroline's letter in his hand.*) She is safe; and I have got my dear Caroline's letter: so, now, Mr. Leonard, have at you! (*Leonard enters; Drooply meets him, and has put the pistol in his pocket.*)

Enter LEONARD VISORLY.

Leon. Drooply! What do you do here?

Droop. I am only engaged in a little affair of gallantry.

Leon. What, here? Do you disgrace my father's house with your gallantries?

Droop. Do you never disgrace your father's house with your gallantries?

Leon. Insolent!

Droop. No, no; I must do you the justice to own, you carry your gallantries out of your father's house.

Leon. What do you mean?

Droop. Mean! Sure you forget Simpson is in the secret.

Leon. What of Simpson?

Droop. An't I Simpson? You did me the honour to salute me so just now.

Leon. D——n! Well, sir, then where is your charge?

Droop. Here, you villain! (*Presents his pistol.*)

Leon. Drooply, I am in your power: command anything; do but this instant restore me Julia, and you shall again glitter in gaiety; again be the rich, the courted Drooply.

Droop. Yes, to be pillaged again, you conclude, by the well-laid schemes of the friendly Mr. Visorly.

Leon. Ha! I am traduced—vilely slandered! All this I can clear up, and will; but the moments are most precious to me. Where is the lady? restore me Julia, and make your own terms.

Droop. What terms, do you think, would bribe me to restore a lovely innocent to a villain's power? I am poor, I am wretchedly poor: but, would you return my fortune, would you add your own, your father's, nay, all the wealth of this rich city, it should not bribe me to an act of villany.

Leon. Be prudent, and attend to what I say.

Droop. I'll attend to one thing you said most strictly. You charged me to defend my prize, at the hazard of my life: that I do most willingly.

Leon. Drooply, urge me no further! I am desperate! Julia must be mine. Be wise, accept the offer of my friendship: don't risk my vengeance.

Droop. Your vengeance! poh. What, because you found me gentle, nay, humble, to the man I thought my friend and patron, do you think I want spirit to oppose a robber and a ravisher? Leonard, be assured it is a vast pleasure to me to have a pop at you on my own account; but had I no wrongs, sooner than be your accomplice in the ruin of an unprotected woman, d—, but I would march up to you, if you held a lighted match to the touch-hole of a nine pounder. (*Goes up close to him.*)

Oak. (*Without.*) She must have been taken this way.

Enter OAKWORTH, MRS. CLEVELAND, and GLYNICA. The moment Oakworth sees Leonard and Drooply, he runs and collars them both.

Oak. Give her up, give her up this instant, or I'll throttle you both!

Mrs. C. Where is my daughter?

Oak. Ay, where is the lady? Give her up directly. Curse your pistols, I don't mind your pistols; give her up, I say.

Mrs. C. (*To Leonard.*) Heavens! is it you? You concerned in this villany? Where is my daughter, sir?

Leon. Ask that gentleman; he has conveyed her hence.

Mrs. C. You, then, that I have accused, are her defender: I ask your pardon.

Droop. May I perish if he isn't making his bow for the mother's civility. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. C. Where is my daughter, sir? (*To Drooply.*)

Leon. There is one hope left. If he conveyed her to the carriage, (and where else could he?) they have doubtless driven off with her. Where is the lady, villain?

Droop. D—, if his impudence does not petrify me.

Oak. (*Rushing up to him.*) Ay, where is the lady, villain?

Droop. A little patience, you shall know the whole.

Leon. No, sir: no fabrications—no fictions. Where is the lady?

Droop. Should you be pleased to see her?

Leon. Doubtless.

Droop. Oh! I'll do any thing to oblige you. (*Goes to the pavilion and leads her out.*) Now, sir, why don't you appeal to the lady to proclaim your innocence? What, dumb? Ah! I know your modesty of old. Then I will speak for you. From which of us, madam, have you experienced this outrage?

Julia. Oh! from him, from him. (*Pointing to Leonard. Mrs. Cleveland and Oakworth express astonishment, and Leonard rushes out.*)

Droop. That is right, Leonard, move off; but run as fast as you will, the devil must overtake you.

Mrs. C. Then to you I owe my daughter's preservation. Oh! sir, accept a mother's thanks.

Droop. Offer them, madam, to Providence only, which made me the humble instrument to preserve an angel, and expose a fiend. Where, madam, shall I have the honour of conducting you?

Mrs. C. Any where, so I avoid that hated habitation.

Oak. Let us go, madam, to the hotel where we first arrived.

Mrs. C. And where, would to heaven, we had remained! Come, dearest Julia. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Visorly's House.

Enter OLD VISORLY and LEONARD.

Old V. Oh! Leonard, Leonard, it is a bad business; a very bad business. Oh! fie; against her will!

Leon. Seemingly, sir, only seemingly. The man who would deal successfully with the sex, must often force them to follow their own inclinations.

Old V. I don't know that; but I have found that the man who would deal quietly with the sex, is always forced to let them follow their own inclinations.

Leon. It was a desperate effort; but the only chance left for obtaining her. That failed, she is lost most certainly; perhaps, her fortune, too.

Old V. Perhaps! why, to be sure it is.

Leon. No, sir: with your aid, the fortune may be ours without the least incumbrance.

Old V. The fortune ours! Eh, how?

Leon. Had Cleveland died unmarried, you were his heir.

Old V. Yes. What of that?

Leon. Are we sure he did not die unmarried?

Old V. We should be pretty sure, I think, when he has left a wife and child behind to convince us.

Leon. Is she his wife? Can she prove herself such?

Old V. Eh! You surely do not doubt the marriage, therefore, to claim a property, because, perhaps, legal proof can't be obtained—

Leon. Is, you think, not strictly within the pale of moral rectitude.

Old V. I can't say but I am of that opinion.

Leon. Oh! sir, despise all abstract refinement, and be assured that you fulfil every moral obligation, when your conduct is sanctioned by the laws of your country.

Old V. There is something in that: but yet justice, you know, can only be guided by appearances, and one's conscience will not always acquiesce—

Leon. My dear sir, when your conscience opposes a legal decree, you should consider it as acting contumaciously, and that it ought to be silenced for contempt of the court.

Old V. If I could be satisfied that they were really not married.

Leon. There is strong presumption. Would Cleveland's father, think you, have endeavoured to dissolve the sacred ties of marriage;—have insisted on his son's abruptly dismissing a wife? No, no, sir; depend on it, the father, anxious for his son's respectability demanded only his parting with a favorite mistress.

Old V. Very likely, very likely. I always said you had the way of placing things in a right point of view.

Leon. Now, then, you are convinced of the rectitude of your cause, let me urge a strong motive for proceeding with vigour. I have this morning received the unwelcome tidings of the failure of a speculation in which I had embarked the entire amount of my whole fortune, so that I am now compelled to become a burthen to you.

Old V. Oh, lord, lord! dear me, how sorry I am to hear it; for, my dear boy, to let you into the true state of my affairs, *Lady Jemima's* cursed fashionable style of living, has made such a miserable hole in my property, that it is not clear to me, but I may die in a gaol.

Leon. You amaze me, sir! Then, this is our only resource, and at all hazards we must accomplish it.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. Oakworth desires to see both you and my young master, directly, sir.

Old V. Very well.

[Exit Servant.]

Leon. I'll keep out of his way: he is a passionate old fellow, and I am sure he would lose his temper with me. Do you see him, sir, and let him be the bearer of your determination.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—The Hotel.

Enter MRS. CLEVELAND and JULIA.

Mrs. C. How is my dear child, now?

Julia. Better, much better, thanks to your tender care.

Mrs. C. Oh! the wretch, that could alarm my angel thus, and aim by violence to tear my precious treasure from her mother's arms! Heaven's vengeance will await him.

Julia. My spirits would, I think, soon recover this rude shock, but for the dread that overpowers me for the fate of my poor father.

Mrs. C. Ah! my child, I fear—*(Seeing Julia much distressed.)* Yet, still, my love, there is hope, that hope we will cherish. Come, my child, take comfort—take comfort, dearest Julia.

Julia. Oh! what are all the riches we possess, without my father!

Mrs. C. Poor indeed! but we will trust he yet survives, to bestow a value on the gifts of fortune.

Enter OAKWORTH.

Oak. Oh, lord! Oh, lord! Oh, lord! what will this world come to?

Mrs. C. What is the matter?

Oak. Roguery! Villany! Infamy!

Mrs. C. Where? from what quarter?

Oak. From the devil's nest—the house of the Visorly's.

Mrs. C. Pray, let me know the worst.

Oak. I will, I will. As you desired me, I demanded that all the property remitted by Mr. Cleveland, should be consigned to you.

Mrs. C. Well, could they refuse it?

Oak. They did, they did—I mean the old one did; for the young rascal took care to keep out of my way. He was wise—he was wise there.

Mrs. C. But on what plea, on what pretence were you refused?

Oak. A wicked pretence! a damnable pretence! a pretence they ought to swing for.

Mrs. C. What, what?

Oak. That they did not believe—they did not believe—

Mrs. C. What?

Oak. Must I tell you?

Mrs. C. Yes, pray do.

Oak. That you were—Mr. Cleveland's wife—

Mrs. C. Gracious heaven!

Oak. Yes; and he said that he was heir-at-law,

and should not part with a sixpence of what was his right.

Mrs. C. Oh! Julia.

Julia. Dear mother, can this man's preposterous claim give you a moment's concern?

Mrs. C. My child, we are lost! We are ruined!

Oak. What do you say?

Mrs. C. Never, till this moment, did I reflect that I have no legal testimony in my possession to prove myself a wife. Married in India, in private, too! My husband dead! My child without a proof of—Oh, God! Oh, God!

Oak. Compose yourself, dear madam.

Mrs. C. Hard as my lot is, were I alone concerned, I might feel resignation; but my dear girl, my lovely Julia—heiress of thousands, is—the child of poverty.

Julia. Dear mother, do not let me add to your affliction. With you, with such a mother, I can bear poverty; I can indeed.

Oak. Poverty! no, no; not so bad as poverty. You know I have a home, 'tis but an humble one to be sure; and I am a tough old fellow; I can work like a horse. Poverty! not so bad as poverty, either.

Enter HENRY MELVILLE.

Julia. Oh! Henry.

Henry. Julia! dearest Julia, you are in tears, and you have cause. I hoped to dry them, but alas—

Mrs. C. Then my dear husband is no more. *(Henry holds down his head despondently, assenting in silence.)* My cup of misery is full. *(After a pause.)* Sir, you were to have been united to my daughter; her father sanctioned your affections. I am informed he loved your merits, and thought them, though uncombined with fortune, sufficient to entitle you to the heiress of his wealth. I now must tell you, that wealth is lost to her.

Henry. For her sake I lament it, not for my own. To her generous father's bounty, I owe almost existence: he found me only grateful, and his goodness called mere gratitude desert; for I fear I have no merit, but an honest heart: yet, while that shall beat within my breast, I'll press my Julia to it, nor would I resign my dear, my destined bride, to be the husband of an empress.

Mrs. C. Oh! little do the vicious know how precious are the sweets of virtue: that alone can elevate the soul amidst calamity and poverty.

[Exeunt, with Julia and Henry.]

Enter Master of the Hotel.

Master. *(To Oakworth, as he is going out.)* Sir, sir; a word with you, if you please.

Oak. What do you want?

Master. This hotel of mine, sir, stands at a very great rent.

Oak. So I suppose.

Master. Taxes come very high.

Oak. Well.

Master. A great many servants.

Oak. So I see; and what the devil is all this to me?

Master. It ought to make people consider.

Oak. Don't plague me about what people ought to consider.

Master. To cut the matter short, sir, you know that one of the ladies, as I came into the room, was owning her poverty.

Oak. Eh! what?

Master. Yes, sir; and as I can't afford to lose my money, I beg leave to hint that I shall look to you to see my bill fairly discharged.

Oak. Impudent scoundrel!

Master. Sir, I shall teach you to use better language to a man in his own house.

Enter a Gentleman, followed by a Waiter.

Gent. Heyday! nothing but bustle and uproar.

Waiter. I hope you are not hurt, sir.

Gent. Not at all: but no thanks for that to the careless dog of a postilion who overturned me. I have been quarrelling with him outside of the house, and I find you are at the same employment within. Get me a coach directly. *(To Waiter.)*

Waiter. Yes, sir.

Gent. Well, what is the matter, here?

Oak. Only this worthy master of the house insulting his customers.

Gent. That is an odd way of recommending himself.

Oak. *(To Landlord.)* Away with you, and be careful that you let none of your insolence break out before the ladies, or I'll be the death of you, you dog! *[Exit Master.]*

Gent. Sir, give me leave to ask,—that is, if there be no offence in the question,—are the ladies you mention under any pecuniary embarrassment? for it would be a sad thing to have ladies liable to the rudeness of this unfeeling fellow.

Oak. No, sir, thank heaven! Even my poor pocket could satisfy his paltry demands. No, no: though they are unfortunate, they are not in the power of such a pitiful scoundrel as that.

Gent. I am glad of it: but still you say they are unfortunate.

Oak. Yes; misery be the lot of the villains who made them so!

Gent. Who are those villains?

Oak. Their own relations.

Gent. Heavens! what depravity! But can't this villainy be in any way redressed?

Oak. Only one way, if at all; and there the remedy would be as bad as the disease.

Gent. What is the remedy?

Oak. Going to law.

Gent. If law can give the remedy, redress is certain. In this country, the way to justice is not through blind mazes and crooked paths. No; 'tis a public road, open to all, obvious to all.

Oak. That is very true; but like other public roads, you would get on a very little way, without money to pay the toll.

Gent. The warm interest you take in the cause of your friends convinces me that they are worthy of it. I have a fortune, an ample fortune, and I ban no way employ it so satisfactorily as in rescuing the virtuous from the machinations of villany.

Oak. Sir, sir, let me rightly understand you. I beg your pardon; but do you, indeed, mean to employ your fortune to relieve the distress of strangers, utter strangers to you?

Gent. Certainly, or how should I relieve distress at all? for all that belong to me, thank heaven, are above the power of fortune's malice.

Oak. Bless you! bless you! the widow's blessing—the orphan's—

Gent. Nay, nay, good old man, I were blessed enough for all that I can do, in seeing how happy I have made you. But, a widow—an orphan, say you? Those are sacred names. The husband gone, who is protector to the widow? Heaven. The parent lost, who is the orphan's father? Heaven. The man, then, who will not assert their rights, is not uncharitable only, for he is impious. Good man, why do you tremble thus?

Oak. I am old; I feel, now, I am an old man; and though my nerves, I think, would bear me stoutly up under adversity, yet, somehow, this sudden turn of good fortune has shaken me, has shaken me a good deal.

Gent. Compose yourself; then tell the ladies that I shall see them very soon, for I now must go.

Oak. Don't go, don't go yet. Let them hear, sir, from your own lips your goodness.

Gent. My business hence is nothing trivial; and only a case of misfortune could have detained me here an instant; therefore, assure your friends—But why not debar myself a few moments longer of my own gratification, to convince them of my constant protection? *(Aside.)* My good old friend, tell the ladies I wait to see them. *[Exit Oakworth.]* As I say; 'twill make but a few minutes' difference; and the dear, good creatures I so long to behold will forgive me when I tell them that the cause of my delay was to dry the tear of affliction.

Enter MRS. CLEVELAND, led in by OAKWORTH, JULIA following with HENRY.

Mrs. C. Sir, your goodness—

Julia. My father!

Cleve. My wife, my child! Oh, heavenly powers! *[Scene closes.]*

SCENE III.—Another Apartment in the hotel.

Enter DROOPLY and CAROLINE, a Waiter following with a portmanteau, and a small iron box.

Droop. Put the things carefully into a chamber, and be sure take care of that little box.

Waiter. Yes, sir.

Droop. And here we are, my dearest Caroline, with the parson's blessing upon us. I hardly durst raise my hopes to this happiness, even before your worthy brother contrived to make me an estate out of pocket; but, my generous girl, when I reflect that you take a beggar to your arms—

Car. Nay, nay; I am only doing an act of common honesty, in paying the debts of my family; and I am to consider you a very gentle creditor to be satisfied with less than a third of your demand, and to take charge of me into the bargain.

Droop. My dearest girl!

Car. But, amidst our happiness, let us not forget the melancholy situation of the dear Clevelands—Let us instantly try to see them.

Droop. Here comes the little Gentoo, full of glee. Oh! this looks well!

Enter GANGICA.

Car. Gangica!

Gan. Ah! you here! Oh! I glad of dat—I so happy.

Car. What has happened to make you so?

Gan. *(Pointing to her heart.)* Dis too full of joy to let me talk. I can't tell you—but come—come wid me—you know all—den you be too happy to talk—Come, come. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE V.—An Apartment.

CLEVELAND, MRS. CLEVELAND, JULIA, and HENRY, discovered.

Cleve. The villains! ample shall be their punishment.

Mrs. C. It will be ample, be assured; but do not you wrest vengeance from that Power who best knows how to deal it; that Power which never withholds its succour from the innocent, nor lets the guilty escape its awful indignation.

Julia. Why did you not, the instant that you landed, acquaint us with your safety?

Cleve. Alas! I had lost the power of doing so. Enfeebled by fatigue, when I reached the shore, I scarce had sense or motion, a fever followed, from which reason and health returned together.—So, on

the instant, I set out, to be myself the herald of my safety.

Henry. I sought you on the coast near Portland.

Cleve. Well might you hear no tidings of me; for we made our landing at the Isle of Wight; to the humanity of whose inhabitants myself and poor companions owe our lives. Think you those wretches, the Visorlys, will venture to you?

Mrs. C. Convinced that you are no longer living, I have no doubt but the instructions we have given to Oakworth to communicate, will bring them here.

Cleve. The young one has never seen me, and Old Visorly not since I was quite a child; so it is impossible I should be known.

Mrs. C. But promise to preserve your temper.

Cleve. Depend on me

Oak. (Without.) This way.

Mrs. C. I hear Oakworth's voice. We will retire.
{*Exeunt all but Cleveland.*}

Enter OAKWORTH, OLD VISORLY, and LEONARD.

Oak. This is the stranger I told you of. I leave you with the gentleman, begging his pardon for introducing him to such d—d bad company. [*Exit.*]

Leon. We understand that you have volunteered to defend the cause of Mrs. Cleveland. Are we rightly informed, sir?

Cleve. You are.

Leon. I thought the days of chivalry were over.

Cleve. So did I: but since monsters still exist, 'tis fit that they revive again.

Leon. You have begun your career of enterprize, most illustrious knight, with rather a hopeless adventure.

Cleve. It may not be found so.

Leon. You seem an intelligent man. A little conversation will, I have no doubt, bring us to the same opinion, and all errors will be rectified before we part.

Cleve. You need not doubt it, sir.

Old V. Now, my boy, Leonard, will talk him over in a grand style. Oh! he is a blessing to my old age. [*Aside.*]

Leon. This woman has the power of influencing persons very much in her favour.

Cleve. Innocence always has that power.

Leon. Innocence! You, perhaps, are not aware that she has no proofs of her marriage.

Cleve. Proofs may be found.

Leon. In India, you think. Will you go thither for them?

Cleve. I have been.

Leon. What?

Cleve. I have been.

Leon. You knew Cleveland, perhaps?

Cleve. Yes.

Leon. Do you know then of his marriage?

Cleve. I was present at it.

Leon. You surprise me.

Cleve. Will this satisfy you?

Leon. A witness may be suborned. The law will scarcely be content with one person's testimony.

Cleve. With mine it clearly will.

Leon. You may be mistaken, sir; it will be rash to risk it. I will make an offer, a handsome offer—We will resign our claim to half the fortune, manage the business with the ladies as you please, you may depend on our secrecy. We tender to you, mind, to yourself, half the fortune.

Cleve. It is a handsome offer.

Old V. Very indeed! may be, you think a third would be enough.

Cleve. No, no, far from it; for though the bribe sounds handsomely, it would be want of policy in me to take it.

Leon. How?

Cleve. For this plain reason, that, though I admit these ladies to be Cleveland's wife and daughter, still Cleveland's fortune is the right of—

Leon. Whom?

Cleve. Me.

Leon. You! by what title?

Cleve. The clearest in the world—founded on the simple principle, that while a man can prove himself alive, his heirs are not allowed to take possession of his property.

Leon. Alive!

Cleve. Why, gentlemen, you are very hard to be convinced. Surely you should admit a man alive, when he is able himself to tell you so.

Leon. Confusion!

Old V. Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear!

Cleve. And, how do you now feel yourselves, my very worthy cousins? (*Goes to the door.*) Come, come in, and thank your kinsmen for all their kindness.

Enter MRS. CLEVELAND and JULIA.

Old V. Oh! Leonard, Leonard, did I ever think you would have brought me into such disgrace!

Cleve. Sensible rebuke of age to youth! You should have led your son into the path of honesty, not been seduced by him into the road of villainy.

Old V. I'll go home, and if I continue in my present mind, I think it very likely I shall hang myself before to-morrow morning. Oh Leonard, Leonard!

{*Exit.*}

Cleve. With your company, sir, (*to Leonard*) I cannot dispense, till I receive assurance that my property remitted to you is vested as I directed.

Enter DROOPLY, CAROLINE, HENRY, and OAKWORTH.

Droop. My worthy brother, give me joy.

Leon. Your brother!

Car. Even so, sir.

Leon. You are well paired. I wish you all the happiness that mutual poverty can give you.

Car. Poverty! nay, we need not starve. My estate is surely sufficient to prevent that.

Leon. Your estate! You must first persuade me to resign the writings of it.

Car. Thank you, dear brother: but you happen to forget you have already done that.

Leon. I! how—when?

Car. By your direction I brought the box to town with me, which, you said, contained the writings.

Leon. Yes,—ay—that box—eh! let me see it—I have got the key of it.

Droop. The key, my dear fellow! Do you think I do things so cursed mechanically as to want keys? A man just come into possession of an estate, and not break open the box that contained his claim to it.

Leon. What, broken open!

Droop. Yes, with a kitchen poker. Lord, how alarmed you are! Yes, I broke it open, and found I had killed two birds with one stone; for, instead of only getting the writings of one estate, I found the writings of two—This lady's and my own.

A person enters and converses apart with Cleveland, and then exits.

Leon. Curses fall on me!

Droop. That they will, fast enough, never fear. What a shrewd guesser you must be! You had the wisdom to foresee, that some time or other, there would be a junction of the properties, and you there—

fore commodiously packed up the writings together. Ah, you are a considerate fellow!

Cleves. (To Leonard.) Sir, we need your presence no longer. My property I find is vested as I appointed. Now, sir, depart, loaded not with my reproaches, not with my malediction; for the whole world's contempt, and the heaviest curses of the injured would add but a feather's weight to the mountain of remorse which conscious guilt will heap upon thy wretched bosom. When I reflect on the severity that suffering conscience can inflict, I could almost forget my injuries, and pity thee.

Leon. To palliate my guilt I do not seek—yet, in justice, let me declare, the erroneous judgment of the world made me a villain. I beheld the eye of observance and respect ever directed to the wealthy; were he fool or knave, no matter; while all that is truly amiable or great in genius or in virtue, when linked with poverty, was heeded with the stare of disavowal, or the scowl of contempt. To be a golden idol for the world's worship was my aim. I have lost my fortune, character, and happiness in the attempt, and now must meet in penury mankind's abhorrence, and feel too, I deserve it. [Exit.]

Mrs. C. (To Caroline.) I grieve to think how much you must be afflicted.

Car. I am indeed; for with all his unworthiness, I cannot forget he is my brother.

Cleves. Such remembrance honours you; for never should the principles of justice absorb the feelings of nature.

Enter SHARPSET and GANGICA.

Oak. Ah, my good friend, you at liberty!

Sharp. Yes, sir, I found bail.

Oak. I am very glad to see you.

Mrs. C. Sir, I shall ever feel myself your debtor.

Sharp. Oh, madam!

Oak. I know a way to repay him, madam.

Mrs. C. How?

Oak. By making him rightful possessor of the treasure he holds in his hand.

Julia. Gangica, do you consent to—

Gas. I do all as you please, ma'am.

Julia. I'm sure it will please me that you make yourself happy.

Oak. Now I have performed my promise, you must renew my acquaintance with your father.

Sharp. You and my father, sir, have never been asunder.

Oak. Eh! What do you mean?

Sharp. To restore you a truant son, sir, who, till he had atoned as far as lay in his power for his former errors, could not hope to be acknowledged by such a father.

Oak. What, my own boy turned out an honest man?

Sharp. Yes, sir; and who, knowing the precious value of that first of titles, will never forfeit it.

Oak. Now then, I can say, I am completely happy.

Mrs. C. Ever, ever may you remain so!—You will; for benevolence like yours makes the human heart a heaven.

Cleves. The gratitude I owe to all who have befriended these dear objects of my love, I hope to shew by something more than words. What a prospect of happiness opens to our view! Blest with friends, proved such in the trying moments of affliction—with fortune to command profusely every luxury, and I trust, with minds to employ it only in pursuit of one—the luxury of doing good.

[Exeunt.]

THE SCHOOL FOR ARROGANCE;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.



Act III.—Scene I.

CHARACTERS.

COUNT CONOLLY VILLARS
SIR PAUL PECKHAM
SIR SAMUEL SHEEPY
DORIMONT

EDMUND
MAC DERMOT
PICARD
EXEMPT

LADY PECKHAM
LUCY
LYDIA
SERVANTS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The House of Sir Paul Peckham.

Enter LYDIA, followed by MAC DERMOT.

Lydia. Once again, Mr. Mac Dermot, have done with this nonsense.

Mac D. Arrah! and why so scoffish? Sure, now, a little bit of making love—

Lydia. Pshaw! Do me the favour to answer my questions. The Count, your master, is in love with Miss Lucy Peckham?

Mac D. Faith! and you may say that.

Lydia. Is he really well born?

Mac D. Oh! as for that, honey, let him alone. The noblest blood of France, ay, and what is better, of Ireland, too, trickles to his fingers' ends. The Villars, and the O'Connollies.

Lydia. And he wishes to marry into the family of the Peckhams?

Mac D. The devil a bit, my dear!

Lydia. How?

Mac D. He is very willing to marry the young lady, but not her family. His pride and his passion have had many a tough battle about that, d'ye see. Only think! a direct descendant of the former kings of Ireland, and collateral cousin to a princely peer of France, to besmear and besmoulder his dignity by rubbing it against porter butts, vinegar casks, and beer barrels.

Lydia. Miss Lucy is, indeed, a lovely girl; animated to excess, and sometimes apparently giddy and flighty: but she has an excellent understand-

ing, and a noble heart; and these are superior to birth, which is indeed a thing of mere accident.

Mac D. 'Faith! and that it is. I, a simple Irishman, as I am—why now, I would have been born a duke, had they been civil enough to have asked my consent.

Lydia. The Count fell in love with her at the convent, to which she was sent to improve her French.

Mac D. And where I think you first met with her?

Lydia. Yes; she saw me friendless, and conceived a generous and disinterested affection for me. He has followed her to England; has taken apartments in our neighbourhood, and lives in splendour—yet is not rich.

Mac D. Um, um! No; but, then, he is a colonel in the Irish brigade; and besides his pay, has great supplies.

Lydia. From whom?

Mac D. 'Faith! and I don't believe he knows that himself.

Lydia. That's strange! His pride is excessive.

Mac D. To speak the truth, that now is his failing. An if it was not for that, oh! he would be the jewel of a master! He treats his inferiors with contempt, keeps his distance with his equals, and values the rubbishy dust of his great-grandfathers above diamonds!

Lydia. His character is in perfect contrast to that of his humble rival, Sir Samuel Sheepy; who, even when he addresses a footman, is all bows and affability; whose chief discourse is, "Yes, if you please," and, "No, thank you;" and who, in the

company of his mistress, stammers, blunders, and blushes, like a great boy.

Mac D. What is it you tell me? He the rival of the Count my master! that old—

Lydia. A bachelor, and only fifty; rich, of a good family, and a great favourite with Lady Peckham, by never having the courage to contradict her.

Mac D. Why, there now! You talk of the Count's pride! Here is this city lady as proud as ten Counts! Her own coach horses, ready harnessed, don't carry their heads higher! And then she is as insolent, and as vulgar, and—Hem!

Enter LADY PECKHAM and SIR SAMUEL SHEEPY, followed by two Footmen in very smart morning jackets.

Lady P. Here, fellows! go with these here cards. *(Footmen receive each a parcel of large cards, and a's going.)* And, do you hear! When you comes back, get those dismal heads of yours better powdered; put on your new liveries, and make yourselves a little like Christians. These creatures are no better nor broodes, Sir Samooel! They are all so monstrous low, and vulgar! I have a party to-night; I hopes you will make 'em!

Sir S. Certainly, my lady.

Lady P. So, miss, is Sir Paul come to town?

Lydia. I have not seen him, madam.

Lady P. Sir Paul generally sleeps at our country seat, at Hackney.

Sir S. A pleasant retreat, my lady!

Lady P. Wastly! A wery paradise!—Where is my daughter, miss?

Lydia. I don't know, madam.

Lady P. And why don't you know? Please to go and tell her Sir Samooel is here. *[Exit Lydia.]*—A young person that my daughter has taken under her protection.

Sir S. Seems mild and modest, my lady.

Lady P. Not too much of that, Sir Samooel. *(Surveying Mac Dermot.)* Who, pray—who are you, young man?

Mac D. I!—'Faith! my lady, I—I am—myself: Mac Dermot.

Lady P. Who?

Mac D. The Count's gentleman.

Lady P. Gentleman! Gentleman, indeed!—Count's gentleman! Ha! a kind of mungrel Count, Sir Samooel; half French, half Irish! As good a gentleman, I suppose, as his footman here. I believes you have seen him, though?

Sir S. I think I once had the honour to meet him here, my lady.

Lady P. An honour, Sir Samooel, not of my seeking, I assure you. Aspires to the hand of Miss Loocyc Peckham! He! An outlandish French foriner! I hates 'em all! I looks upon none on 'em as no better nor savages! What do they want with us? Why, our money, to be sure! A parcel of beggars! I wishes I was queen of England for von day only! I would usher my orders to take and conquer 'em all, and transport 'em to the plantations, instead of negurs.

Sir S. I have heard, my lady, that the Count was my rival.

Lady P. He your rival, Sir Samooel! He! A half bred, higglety-pigglety, Irish, French fortin hunter, rival you, indeed!—

Enter LYDIA.

Vell, miss, where is my daughter?

Lydia. In her own apartment, madam, dressing.

Lady P. She'll be down presently, Sir Samooel.—Gentleman indeed! The Count's gentleman! Ha! Pride and poverty. *[Exit with Sir S.]*

Mac D. *(Highly affronted.)* Pride! By the holy footstool, but your ladyship and Lucifer are a pair!

Lydia. *(Knocking.)* Here comes Sir Paul.

Mac D. Then I will be after going.

Lydia. No, no; stay where you are.

Enter SIR PAUL PECKHAM.

Sir P. Ah! My sweet, dear Liddy! You are the angel I wished first to meet! Come to me—*(Running up to her.)*—Why how now, hussy? Why so shy?

Lydia. Reserve your transports, sir, for Lady Peckham.

Sir P. Lady!—But who have we here?

Lydia. Mr. Mac Dermot, sir.

Sir P. Oh! I remember; servant to the Count, my intended son-in-law.

Mac D. The very same, sir. *(Bows.)*

Sir P. I hear an excellent character of your master. They tell me he is a fine, hearty, laudless, swaggering fellow! If so, he is a man of family, and the very husband for my Lucy.

Mac D. 'Faith! then, and he is all that.

Sir P. As for this Sir Samuel Sheepy, he shall decamp. A wate drinker! A bowing, scraping, simpering, ceremonious sir! Never contradicts anybody! D—e! An old bachelor! And he! he have the impudence to make love to my fine, young, spirited wench!—But he is my lady's choice! Is she within?

Lydia. Yes, sir.

Sir P. I suppose we shall have a fine breeze on this subject. But, what! am I not the monarch, the Grand Seigneur of this house? Am I not absolute? Shall I not dispose of my daughter as I please? Do you hear, young man? Go, present my compliments to the Count, and tell him, I mean to give him a call this morning.—*(Lydia makes signs to Mac Dermot to stay.)*

Mac D. I am waiting for him here, sir.

Sir P. Waiting for him here, sir! No, sir! You cannot wait for him here, sir!

Mac D. But, sir—

Sir P. And, sir! Why don't you go?

Mac D. The Count bid me, sir—

Sir P. And I bid you, sir, pack! Begone!—*[Exit Mac Dermot.]*—Now we're alone, my dear Lydia—Why, where are you going, hussy?

Lydia. Didn't you hear my lady call?

Sir P. Call! No. And if she did, let her call. Lydia. Surely, sir, you would not have me offend her?

Sir P. Offend! Let me see who dare be offended with you in this house! It is my will that you should be the sultana.

Lydia. Me, sir?

Sir P. You, my queen of hearts! You! My house, my wealth, my servants, myself, all are yours!

Lydia. You talk unintelligibly, sir.

Sir P. Do I? Why, then, I'll speak plainer: I am in love with you! You are a delicious creature, and I am determined to make your fortune! I'll take you a house up in Mary-le-bone; a neat snug box: hire you servants, keep you a carriage; buy you rings, clothes, and jewels, and come and sup with you every evening! Do you understand me now?

Lydia. Perfectly, sir!

Sir P. Well, and—eh!—Does not the plan tickle your fancy? Do not your veins tingle, your heart beat, your—eh? What say you?

Lydia. I really, sir, don't know what to say, except that I cannot comply, unless a lady, whom I think it my duty to consult, should give her consent.

Sir P. What lady? Who?

Lydia. Lady Peckham, sir.

Sir P. My wife! Zounds! are you mad? Tell my wife!

Lydia. I shall further ask the advice of your son

and daughter, who will wonder at your charity, in taking a poor orphan like me under your protection.

Sir P. Pooh! Nonsense!

Lydia. A little farther off if you please, sir.

Sir P. Neater, angel! nearer!

Lydia. I'll raise the house, sir.

Sir P. Paha!

Lydia. Help!

Sir P. My handkerchief! You sweet—

Enter EDMUND.

Edmund. Lydia! sir!

Sir P. How now, sir! (*Aside to Lydia.*) Hem! say it was a mouse.

Edmund. What is the matter sir?

Sir P. What's that to you, sir? What do you want, sir? Who sent for you, sir?

Edmund. I perceive you are not well, sir!

Sir P. Sir?

Edmund. How were you taken?

Sir P. Taken! (Aside.)* Young scoundrel!—Take yourself, away, sir!

Edmund. Impossible, sir! • You tremble! Your looks are disordered! your eyes wild!

Sir P. (Aside.) Here's a dog!

Edmund. Be so obliging, Miss Lydia, as to run and inform Lady Peckham how ill my father is.

Sir P. Why, you imp! (*Stopping Lydia.*) Lydia, stay where you are. You audacious! Will you begone?

Edmund. That I certainly will not, sir, while I see you in such a way!

Sir P. Way, sir!—Very well, sir! very well!

Edmund. I'll reach you a chair, sir. Pray, sit down; pray, cool yourself.

Sir P. Oh! that I were cooling you in a horse-pond.

Edmund. You are growing old, sir.

Sir P. You lie, sir!

Edmund. You should be more careful of yourself. Shall I send for a physician?

Sir P. (Aside.) D—e, but I'll physic you; I'll—(*Muttering as he goes off.*) A sly, invidious—The demure dog has a mind to her himself. Yes, yes; oh! d—e, pitiful Peter; but I'll fit you. [*Exit.*]

Lydia. You see, sir—

Edmund. (Shrugging.) I do.

Lydia. I must leave this family.

Edmund. Leave! Why, charming Lydia, will you afflict me thus? Have I not declared my purpose?

Lydia. Which cannot be accomplished. You promise marriage; but your father will never consent.

Edmund. Then we will marry without his consent.

Lydia. Oh! no. Do not hope it. When I marry, it shall be to render both my husband and myself happy: not to embitter, not to dishonour both.

Enter a Footman.

Foot. A person, who calls himself Mr. Dorimont, inquires for you, madam.

Lydia. Heavens! Can it be? Shew him up instantly. [*Exit Footman.*]

Edmund. You seem alarmed!

Lydia. No, no; overjoyed!

Edmund. Who is it?

Lydia. I scarcely can tell you. A gentleman who used to visit me in the convent.

Edmund. Have you been long acquainted?

Lydia. Little more than two years; during which he was my monitor, counsler, and guide.

Edmund. (Seeing Dorimont before he enters.) His appearance—

Lydia. Is poor; but his heart is rich in benevolence. Pray leave us. [*Exit Edmund.*]

Enter DORIMONT.

(*Running to meet him.*) Ah! sir—

Dori. I am happy to have found you once again.

Lydia. What, sir, has brought you to England?

Dori. Business; part of which was to see you.

Lydia. You have been always generous and kind: yet I am sorry you should see me thus.

Dori. Why? What are you?

Lydia. An humble dependant: a lady's companion.

Dori. Alas! Why did you leave the convent without informing me?

Lydia. 'Twas unexpected. You had forborne your visits; and I feared death, or some misfortune. At my mother's decease, the young lady with whom I live having an affection for me, and seeing me deserted, offered to take me with her to England, promising I should rather be her friend than her companion.

Dori. And has she kept her word?

Lydia. On her part, faithfully, tenderly.

Dori. That is some consolation.

Lydia. But—

Dori. What?

Lydia. She has a mother, who does not fail to make inferiority feelingly understand itself.

Dori. (With some emotion.) Indeed! (*Collecting himself.*) But with whom were you in such earnest conversation when I entered?

Lydia. The brother of my young lady: a gentleman worthy your esteem.

Dori. And worthy yours? You blush.

Lydia. Do you blame me for being just?

Dori. No; he is rich, young, and handsome. Do you often meet?

Lydia. We do.

Dori. You are lovely, inexperienced, and unprotected.

Lydia. Fear nothing; I shall not easily forget myself.

Dori. (Earnestly.) I hope not. But what does he say?

Lydia. That he loves me.

Dori. Is that all?

Lydia. No: he offers me secret marriage.

Dori. Secret marriage!

Lydia. I see the danger, and wish to shun it. You may find me some place of refuge in France.

Dori. Can you so easily renounce all the flattering prospects love has raised?

Lydia. Yes; and not only them, but love itself, when it is my duty.

Dori. Noble-minded girl! Remain where you are; nay, indulge your hopes; for know, your lover will be honoured by your hand.

Lydia. Sir!—Honoured?

Dori. Honoured! By birth you are greatly his superior.

Lydia. Can you be serious? Oh! trifle not with a too trembling heart. Why did my mother conceal this from me? Oh! if true, why die and leave it unrevealed?

Dori. There was reason: she was not your mother.

Lydia. Oh! sir, you have conjured up ten thousand busy thoughts. Is my mother living?

Dori. No.

Lydia. My father?

Dori. He is.

Lydia. Why has he so long forsaken me?

Dori. That must be told hereafter. Be patient; wait the event. You are acquainted with Count Conolly Villars?

Lydia. He visits here.

Dori. I have business with him.

Lydia. Ah! sir, I fear you will meet a cool reception. Your humble appearance and his pride will but ill agree.

Dori. Fear not; my business is to lower his pride.

Lydia. Sir! he may insult you.

Dori. Humble though I am myself, I hope to teach him humility. To visit you, and to accomplish this, was the purport of my journey. Adieu for the present. Think on what I have said; and, though by birth you are noble, remember, virtue alone is true nobility. [Exit.]

Enter LUCY: her dress more characteristic of the girl than the woman; and her manner full of life, but tempered by the most delicate sensibility.

Lucy. Well, Lydia, any news for me?

Lydia. Mr. Mac Dermot has been here with the Count's compliments; but, in reality, to see if Lady Peckham was at home. You know how he wishes to avoid her.

Lucy. Yes; and I don't wonder at it. She has just been with me, ushering her orders, as she calls it. "I desire, miss, you will receive Sir Samuel Sheepy, as your intended spouse." And so she has sent me here to be courted; and the inamorato is coming, as soon as he can take breath and courage.

Lydia. But, why, my dear, do you indulge yourself in mocking your mamma?

Lucy. Lydia, I must either laugh or cry; and, though I laugh, I assure you it is often with an aching heart.

Lydia. My dear girl!

Lucy. I hope, however, you will own there is no great harm in laughing a little at this charming Adonis, this whimsical lover of mine.

Lydia. Perhaps not.

Lucy. What can his reason be for making love to me?

Lydia. There's a question? Pray, my dear, do you never look in your glass?

Lucy. Um—yes. But does he never look in his glass, too?

Lydia. Perhaps his sight begins to decay. But are you not alarmed?

Lucy. No.

Lydia. Do not you love the Count?

Lucy. Um—Yes.

Lydia. Well, and you know how violent and prejudiced Lady Peckham is.

Lucy. Perfectly. But I have Sir Paul on my side; and, as for Sir Samuel, he was dandled so long in the nursery, and is still so much of the awkward, bashful boy, that he will never dare to put the question directly to me; and I am determined never to understand him till he does.

Lydia. Here he comes.

Lucy. Don't leave me.

Enter SIR SAMUEL SHEEPY.

Sir S. (Bowling with trepidation.) Madam—Hem! Madam—

Lucy. (Curtsying and mimicking.) Sir—Hem! Sir—*(Aside to Lydia.)* Count his bows.

Sir S. Madam, I—Hem! I am afraid—I am troublesome.

Lucy. Sir—Hem! A gentleman of your merit—Hem!

Sir S. (Continues bowing through most of the scene.) Oh! madam, I am afraid—Hem!—You are busy.

Lucy. (Curtsying to all his bows.) Sir—Hem!

Sir S. Do me the honour to bid me begone.

Lucy. Surely, sir, you would not have me guilty of rudeness?

Sir S. (Aside.) What a blunder! Madam—Hem! I ask ten thousand pardons.

Lucy. Good manners require—Hem!

Sir S. That I should begone without bidding. *(Going.)*

Lucy. Sir!

Sir S. (Aside.) I suppose I'm wrong again.

Lucy. I didn't say so, sir.

Sir S. (Turning quick.) Didn't you, madam?

Lucy. A person of your politeness, breeding, and accomplishments—Hem!

Sir S. (Aside.) She's laughing at me.

Lucy. Ought to be treated with all reverence. *(Curtsying with ironic gravity.)*

Sir S. (Aside.) Yes; she's making a fool of me.

Lucy. Sir! Were you pleased to speak, sir? Hem!

Sir S. Hem!—Not a word, madam.

Lydia. This will be a witty conversation.

Lucy. I presume, sir—hem!—you have something to communicate.

Sir S. Madam!—Hem!—Yes, madam—I mean no, madam. No, nothing—Hem!

Lydia. Nothing, Sir Samuel!

Sir S. Hem!—Nothing; nothing.

Lucy. Then may I take the liberty, sir, to inquire—hem!—what the purport of your visit is? hem!

Sir S. The—the—the—hem!—the—purport—is—hem!—I—I have really forgotten.

Lucy. Oh! pray, sir, take time to recollect yourself.—Hem! I am sure, Sir Samuel—hem!—you have something to say to me. Hem!

Sir S. Yes; no, no; nothing.

Lydia. Fie! Sir Samuel, nothing to say to a lady?

Sir S. No.—Hem! I never had anything to say to ladies in my life. That is—Yes, yes; I own—I have something of the—the utmost—hem!

Lucy. Indeed!

Sir S. A thing which—lies at my heart.—Hem!

Lucy. Mercy! Sir Samuel!—Hem!

Sir S. Which I—hem!—have long—But I will take some other opportunity. *(Offering to go.)*

Lucy. By no means, Sir Samuel. You have quite alarmed me! I am impatient to hear! I am afraid you are troubled in mind.—Hem!

Sir S. Why,—hem!—Yes, madam,—rather—hem!

Lucy. I declare, I thought so. I am very sorry. Perhaps you are afraid of death?

Sir S. Madam!

Lucy. Yet you are not so very old.

Sir S. Madam!

Lucy. But I would not have you terrify yourself too much.—Hem!

Sir S. Madam!

Lucy. I perceive I have guessed it.

Sir S. Madam!—Hem!—No, madam.

Lucy. What, then, is this important secret? Nay, pray tell me. Hem!

Sir S. Hem! N—n—n not at present, madam.

Lucy. Nay, Sir Samuel—

Sir S. Some other time, madam.—Hem!

Lucy. And can you be so cruel to me? Can you? I declare I shall dream about you: shall think I see you in your winding-sheet; or some such frightful figure; and shall wake all in a tremble.—Hem!

Sir S. A tremble, indeed, madam!

Lucy. And won't you tell me, Sir Samuel? Won't you?

Sir S. N—n—n not at present, madam.—Hem!

Lucy. Well, if you won't, Sir Samuel, I must leave you; for what you have said has absolutely given me the vapours.—Hem!

Sir S. I, madam? Have I given you the vapours?

Lucy. Yes, you have, Sir Samuel; and shockingly, too. You have put such gloomy ideas into my mind—

Sir S. Bless me, madam—hem!

Lucy. Your salts, Lydia!—Hem!

Sir S. I hope, madam, you—you are not very ill!

Lucy. Oh! I shall be better in another room.—Hem!

Sir S. (Aside.) Yes, yes; 'tis my company that has given her the vapours. *(Aloud.)* Shall I—*(Confusedly offering his arm.)*

Lucy. No, no; stay where you are, Sir Samuel.

Sir S. (Aside.) She wants to be rid of me.—Hem!

Lucy. Only, remember, you are under a promise to tell me your secret.—Hem!—If you don't, I shall certainly see your ghost. Remember—Hem!

Sir S. Madam—I—(To Lydia.) Miss Lydia—Hem!

Lydia. Sir?

Sir S. If you would—hem!—be so civil—I—

Lydia. Oh! sir, I have the vapours as bad as Miss Bucey. *[Exit.]*

Sir S. Have you?—Hem! Bless me! The vapours! My old trick. I always give young ladies the vapours; I make 'em ill. They are always sick of me—hem! 'Tis very strange, that I can't learn to talk without having a word to say; a thing so common, too. Why can't I give myself monkey airs; skip here and there; be self-sufficient, impertinent, and behave like a puppy; purposely to please the ladies? What! Is there no such thing to be found as a woman who can love a man for his modesty? This foreign count, now, my rival, is quite a different thing! He, *(mimicking)*—he walks with a straight back, and a cocked-up chin, and a strut, and a stride, and stares, and takes snuff, and—Yes, yes; he's the man for the ladies! *[Exit.]*

ACT. II.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in the house of Sir Paul Peckham.

Enter LYDIA.

Lydia. I cannot forget it. My father alive, and I of noble descent! 'Tis very strange! Hope, doubt, and apprehension, are all in arms! Imagination hurries me beyond all limits of probability.

Enter EDMUND.

Edmund. Why do you thus seek solitude?

Lydia. To indulge thought.

Edmund. Has your friend brought you bad news?

Lydia. No.

Edmund. What has he said?

Lydia. Strange things.

Edmund. Heavens! What?

Lydia. You would think me a lunatic, were I to repeat them.

Edmund. Lydia, you are unjust.

Lydia. Am I? Well, then, I am told—would you believe it?—I am told that my family is illustrious.

Edmund. Good heavens! 'tis true!—I feel it is true! Charming Lydia, *(kneeling)* thus let love pay you that homage which the blind and malignant world denies.

Lydia. Rise, Edmund! Birth can, at best, but confer imaginary dignity: there is no true grandeur, but of mind.

Edmund. Some one is coming.

Lydia. Ay, ay; get you gone.

Edmund. I am all transport!

Lydia. Hush! Away!

Edmund. My angel! *(Kisses her hand.)*

[Exit, hastily.]

Enter Footman, introducing DORIMONT.

Foot. A gentleman to you, madam.

Lydia. This sudden return, sir, is kind.

Dori. I have bethought me. The moment is critical, and what I have to communicate, of importance. Are we secure?

Lydia. We are: this is my apartment. *(Lydia goes and bolts the door.)* Have you seen the Count, sir?

Dori. No; but I have written to him anonymously.

Lydia. And why anonymously?

Dori. To rouse his feelings, wound his vanity, and excite his anger. His slumbering faculties must be awakened. Is he kind to you?

Lydia. No; yet I believe him to be, generally, benevolent, and of noble heart; though his habitual haughtiness gives him the appearance of qualities the very reverse.

Dori. Worthily, kind girl! You were born for the consolation of a too unfortunate father!

Lydia. Again you remind me that I have a father. Why am I not allowed to see him? Why am I not suffered to fly into his arms?

Dori. He dreads lest his wretched and pitiable condition should make you meet him with coldness.

Lydia. Oh! how little does he know my heart! Yet speak: tell me, what monster was the cause of his misery?

Dori. The monster, pride.

Lydia. Pride?

Dori. Your mother's pride, which first endangered his wealth, and next endangered his life.

Lydia. How you alarm me!

Dori. A despicable dispute for precedence was the occasion of a duel, in which your father killed his antagonist, whose enraged family, by suborning witnesses, caused him to be convicted of murder; obliged him to fly the kingdom; and, with your mother, wander under a borrowed name, a fugitive in distant countries.

Lydia. Heavens! But why leave me ignorant of my birth?

Dori. That, being unfortunate, you might be humble; that you might not grieve after happiness which you seemed destined not to enjoy. 'Twas the precaution of a fond father, desirous to alleviate, if not to succour your distress.

Lydia. Oh! how I burn to see him. Is he not in danger? Is his life secure?

Dori. He himself can scarcely say. His enemies have discovered him; are hot in pursuit; add fertile in stratagems and snares. They know that justice is now busied in his behalf; but justice is slow, and revenge is restless. Their activity, I hear, is redoubled.

Lydia. Guard, I conjure you! guard my father's safety! Let me fly to seek him; conduct me to his feet!

Dori. He wished you first to be informed of his true situation; lest, knowing him to be noble, you should expect to see him in all the pomp and affluence, instead of meeting a poor, dejected, forlorn old man.

Lydia. His fears are unjust; injurious to every feeling of filial affection and duty. The little I have, I will freely partake with him. My clothes, the diamond which my supposed mother left me, whatever I possess, shall instantly be sold for his relief: my life shall be devoted to soften his sorrows. Oh! that I could prove myself worthy to be his daughter. Oh! that I could pour out my soul to secure his felicity.

Dori. Forbear! let me breathe! Affection cannot find utterance! Oh! this melting heart! My child!

Lydia. Sir?

Dori. My Lydia!

Lydia. Heavens!

Dori. My child! my daughter!

Lydia. *(Falling at his feet.)* Can it be!—My father! Oh, ecstasy!

Dori. Rise, my child! Suffer me to appease my melting heart!—Oh! delight of my eyes! Why is not your brother like you?

Lydia. My brother! Who? Have I a brother?

Dori. The Count is your brother.

Lydia. 'Tis too much!

Dori. He is not worthy such a sister.

Lydia. The sister of the Count! I? Ah! Nature, thy instincts are fabulous; for, were they not, his heart would have beaten as warmly towards me, as mine has done for him.

Dori. I will make him blush at his arrogance. You shall witness his confusion, which shall be public, that it may be effectual.

Lydia. Would you have me avoid explanation with him?

Dori. Yes, for the present. I mean to see him. Our meeting will be warm; but he shall feel the authority of a father.

Lydia. If you be a stranger to him, I fear lest—

Dori. No, no; he knows me, but knows not all his obligations to me. I have secretly supplied him with money, and gained him promotion; which he has vainly attributed to his personal merits. But I must be gone. My burthened heart is eased. Once more, dear child of my affections, be prudent. I have much to apprehend; but, should the present moment prove benign, my future days will all be peace. (*Knocking heard at the chamber door.*)

Lydia. (*Alarmed.*) Who's there?

Sir P. (*With a.*) 'Tis I! Open the door.

Lydia. I am busy, sir.

Sir P. Psha! Open the door, I tell you.

Dori. Who is it?

Lydia. Sir Paul.

Dori. And does he take the liberty to come into your apartment?

Lydia. Oh! sir, he will take any liberty he can.

Sir P. Why don't you open the door?

Dori. You are surrounded by danger and temptation.

Lydia. Have no fears for me, sir.

Sir P. Will you open the door, I say?

Lydia. Let him come in. (*Lydia unbolts the door.*)

Enter SIR PAUL FECKHAM.

Sir P. What is the reason, you dear little baggage, that you always shut yourself up so carefully?

Lydia. You are one of the reasons, sir.

Sir P. Psha! you need not be afraid of me.

Lydia. I'm not afraid of you, sir.

Sir P. Why, that's right. I'm come to talk matters over with you. My lady's out a visiting. (*Mimicking.*) The coast is clear. I have secured my graceless dog of a son. I suspect—

Lydia. What, sir?

Sir P. But it won't do. Mind! take the hint; I've heard of an excellent house—

Lydia. You are running on, as usual, sir.

Sir P. With a convenient back door. I'll bespeak you a carriage. Choose your own liveries; keep as many footmen as you please; indulge in everything your heart can wish. Operas, balls, routs, masquerades; Rotten-row of a Sunday; town house and country house! Bath, Bristol, or Buxton! Hot wells, or cold wells! Only—Hem! Eh?

Lydia. Sir, I must not hear such ribaldry.

Sir P. Indeed but you must, my dear! How will you help it? You can't escape me, now; I have you fast. No scapegrace scoundrel of a—(*Mr. Dorimont comes forward.*) And so—

Lydia. And so, sir!

Sir P. Zounds! (*Pause.*) And so! (*Looking round.*) Looked up together! You were busy.

Dori. Well, sir?

Sir P. Oh! very, sir. Perhaps you have a house yourself, sir—

Dori. Sir?

Sir P. With a convenient back door!

Dori. So far from offering the lady such an insult, I am almost tempted to chastise that impudent effrontery which has been so daring.

(*Sir P.* Hem!—You are very civil, sir; and, as a return for your compliment, I am ready to do myself the pleasure, sir, to wait on you down stairs.

Lydia. I'll spare you the trouble, sir.

Dori. Though this lady's residence here will be but short, I would have you beware, sir, how you shock her ears again, with a proposal so vile.

Sir P. Your caution is kind, sir.

Dori. I am sorry it is necessary, sir. What! The head of a house; the father of a family! Oh! shame! He who, tottering on the brink of the grave, would gratify appetites which he no longer knows by reducing the happy to misery, and the innocent to guilt, deserves to sink into that contempt and infamy, into which he would plunge unwary simplicity. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*An elegant apartment at Count Villars'.*

Enter MAC DERMOT, and PICARD with a letter in his hand, meeting.

Mac D. So, Mr. Picard, what have you got there?

Picard. Von lettre for Monsieur le Comte.

Mac D. Well, give it me, and go about your business.

Picard. No; I not go about my business. My business is to speak to you.

Mac D. To me! And what is it you want?

Picard. Mon argent; my wage an my congé! My dismissal!

Mac D. How, man alive?

Picard. You are de—de factotum to de Count. He suffere no somebody to speak to him; so I am come speak to you.

Mac D. Arrah, now! and are you crazy? Quit the service of a Count! Your reason, man?

Picard. My raison is you talka too mosh enough; he no talk at all. I follow him from France; I yet live vid him by-and-by four month, he no speaka to me four vord.

Mac D. What then?

Picard. Vat den!—*Je suis François, moi!* I ave de tongue for a de speaka; I mus speaka; I vila speaka! He not so mosh do mee de *faavour* to scold a me! I ave leave de best madame in Paris for Monsieur le Comte.—*Quelle femme!*—Her tongue vas nevare still: nevare! She scold and she clack, clack, clack, clack, clack, from all day an all night! Oh! it vas delight to hear.

Mac D. And so you want to be scolded?

Picard. Oui; I love to be scold, I love to scold; to be fall out an to be fall in. *C'est mon gout.* De plaisir of my life. *J'irai crever!* If I no speak I burst.

Mac D. And is it you, now, spalpeen! that would chatter in the presence of the Count?

Picard. Shatter, shatter! Ha! Vat you mean shatter?

Mac D. Have not you roast beef and plum-pudding?

Picard. Vat is roas beef, vat is plum-boodin, got tam! if I no speaka? I ave a de master in France dat starva me, dat pay me no gage, dat leave a me *tout en guenilles*; all rag an tattare; yet I love him better as mosh! *Pourquoi?* (*Affectionately.*) *Hélas! J'étois son cher ami!* His dear fren! He talka to me, I talka to him. I laugh at his joke, he laugh aussi, an I am both togeder so happy as de prince. Bat, de Count! Oh! he as proud!—Ha!—*Comme ça.* (*Mimicking.*)

Mac D. Poh! Now, my good fellow, have patience.

Picard. Patience! *Moi?* I no patience. If I no speak, I am *enragé*. I am French; I am Picard. Ven de heart is full, de tongue mus run. I give you varn. Let my masta speak, or I shall dismissa my masta!

Mac D. Here comes the Count. Stand back, man, and hold your tongue.

Enter COUNT CONOLLY VILIARS, followed by two Footmen in handsome liveries, who place themselves in the back ground. Mac Dermot comes a little forward.

Count. The more I reflect on my own infatuation, the more I am astonished!

Mac D. My lord—

Count. (*Walking about.*) A man of my birth! My rank! A brewer's daughter!

Mac D. My lord—

Count. (*Gives him a forbidding look.*) The world contains not a woman so lovely!—Neither do they condescend to court my alliance!—I must petition, and fawn, and acknowledge the high honour done. No; if I do—Yet, 'tis false! I shall—I feel I shall be thus abject.

Mac D. If—I might be so bould—

Count. Well, sir!

Mac D. A letter for your lordship.

Count. Oh! What, from the ambassador?

Mac D. No, 'faith, my lord.

Count. Ha! The Dutchees?

Mac D. No, my lord; nor the Dutchees neither.

Count. Who then, sir?

Mac D. 'Faith, my lord, that is more than I can say. But, perhaps, the letter itself can tell you.

Count. Sir!—Who brought it?

Picard. Un pauvre valet lootaman, mee lor. His shoe, his stocking, his habit, his chapeau, vas all patch an piece. And he vas—

Mac D. (*Aside, interrupting him.*) Bo!

Count. (*Throwing down the letter, blowing his fingers, and dusting them with his white handkerchief.*) Foh! Open it, and inform me of the contents.

Mac D. Yes, my lord.

Picard. His visage, mee lor—

Count. How now!

Picard. Mee lor—

Mac D. 'Sblood, man! (*Stopping his mouth, and pushing him back.*)

Count. (*Makes signs to the footmen, who bring an arm-chair forward, and again submissively retire.*) She is ever uppermost! I cannot banish her my thoughts! Do you hear? Dismiss those—(*Waving his hand.*)

Mac D. Yes, my lord.—Hark you, spalpeens! (*Waving his hand with the same air as the Count.*)

[*Exeunt Footmen.*]

Picard. (*Advancing.*) Monsieur le Comte—

Count. (*After a stare.*) Aguin!

Picard. I ave von requête to beg—

Count. Pay that fellow his wages, immediately.

Mac D. I tould you so. (*Pushing him away.*) Hush! Silence!

Picard. Silence! I am no English. I hate silence. I—

Mac D. Poh! Boderation! Be aisy!—I will try now to make your pace. (*Pushes him off, and then returns to examining the letter.*)

Count. Insolent menial! Well, sir, the contents?

Mac D. 'Faith, my lord, I am afraid the contents will not please you!

Count. How so, sir?

Mac D. Why, as for the how so, my lord, if your lordship will but be pleased to rade—

Count. Didn't I order you to read?

Mac D. To be sure you did, my lord; but I should take it as a very particular grate favour, if that your lordship would but be pleased to rade for yourself.

Count. Why, sir?

Mac D. Your lordship's timper is a little warm; and—

Count. Read!

Mac D. Well, if I must I must.—“The person who thinks proper, at present, to address you”—

Count. Sir!

Mac D. My lord!

Count. Be pleased to begin the letter, sir!

Mac D. Begin! Sarra the word of beginning is here—before or after—

Count. “The person?”

Mac D. Yes, my lord.

Count. Mighty odd! (*Throws himself in the arm-chair.*) Proceed, sir.

Mac D. (*Reads.*) “The person who thinks proper, at present, to address you, takes the liberty to inform you that your haughtiness, instead of being dignified, is ridiculous—”

Count. (*Starting up.*) Sir!

Mac D. Why now, I tould your lordship—

Count. (*Walking about.*) Go on!

Mac D. (*Reads, with hesitating fear.*) “The little merit—merit—you have—”

Count. The little merit I have? The little? The little? (*Mac Dermot holds up the letter.*) Go on!

Mac D. (*Reads.*) “The little merit you have, cannot convince the world that your pride—is not—is not—is not—”

Count. Is not what?

Mac D. (*Reads.*) “Impertinent.”

Count. (*Striking Mac Dermot.*) Rascal!

Mac D. Viry well, my lord! (*Throwing down the letter.*) I humbly thank your lordship. By Jasus! but I'll remember the favour.

Count. (*More coolly.*) Read, sir.

Mac D. To the divle I pitch me, if I do!

Count. (*Conscious of having done wrong.*) Read, Mac Dermot.

Mac D. No, my lord; Mac Dermot is a man! An Englishman! Or, an Irishman, by Jasus, which is better still! And, by the holy poker, if but that your lordship was not a lord, now—(*Pulling down his sleeves, and clenching his fist with great agony.*)

Count. (*Carelessly letting his purse fall.*) Pick up that purse, Mac Dermot.

Mac D. 'Tis viry well!—Oh!—Well, well, well! (*Lays the purse on the table.*)

Count. You may keep it, Mac Dermot.

Mac D. What! I touch it! No, my lord, don't you think it: I despise your guineas. An Irishman is not to be paid for a blow!

Count. (*With increasing consciousness of error, and struggling with his feelings.*)—I—I have been hasty—

Mac D. Well, well!—'Tis viry well!

Count. I am—I—I am sorry, Mac Dermot.

Mac D. My lord!

Count. (*Emphatically.*) Very sorry—

Mac D. My lord!

Count. Pray, forget it! (*Taking him by the hand.*) I cannot forgive myself.

Mac D. By the blessed Mary, then, but I can. Your lordship is a noble gentleman. There is many an upstart lord has the courage to strike, when they know their poor starving dependants' hands are chained to their sides, by wretchedness and oppression; but few, indeed, have the courage to own the injury!

Count. I will remember, Mac Dermot, that I am in your debt.

Mac D. 'Faith, and if you do, my lord, your mimory will be better than mine. I have lived with your lordship some years; and, though not always a kind, you have always been a generous master. To be sure, I niver before had the honour of a blow from your lordship; but, then, I niver before had the satisfaction to be quite sure that, while you remembered yourself to be a lord, you had not forgotten poor Mac Dermot was a man.

Count. Well, well! (*Aside, and his pride returning.*) He thinks he has a license, now, to prate.—There is no teaching servants; nay, indeed, there is no teaching any one a sense of propriety.

Mac D. Did your lordship spake? (*Bowing kindly.*)

Count. Give me that letter. And—take the money; it is yours.

Mac D. Your lordship will be pleased for to pardon me, there. If you think proper, you may give me twice as much to-morrow; but the divle a doit I'll touch for to-day!

Count. Wait within call.

Mac D. (Going.) I never before knew he was all together such a jewel of a master. [*Exit.*]

Count. 'Tis this infernal letter that caused me to betray myself thus, to my servant! And who is this insolent, this rash adviser? May I perish if I do not punish the affront! Here is no name! A strange hand, too! (*Reads.*) "*The friend who gives you this useful lesson, has disguised his hand, and conceded his name*"—Anonymous coward!—"His present intention being to awaken reflection, and make you blush at your own bloated vanity."—Intolerable!—"Or, if not, to prepare you for a visit from one who thinks it his duty to lower your arrogance; and who will undertake the disagreeable task this very day."—Will he? will he?—*Mac Dermot!*

Enter MAC DERMOT.

Mac D. My Lord!

Count. If any stranger inquire for me, inform me instantly.

Mac D. Yes, my lord.

Enter EDMUND.

Edmund. Good-morrow, Count.

Count. (Slightly bowing, and with vexation to Mac Dermot.) Why, were are my fellows? Nobody to shew the gentleman up?

Edmund. Oh! you are too ceremonious by half, Count.

Count. A little ceremony, sir, is the essence of good breeding.

Edmund. Psha!

Count. Psha, sir!

Edmund. Ceremony, like fringe hiding a beautiful face, makes you suspect grace itself of deformity.

Count. Do you hear, Mac Dermot!

Mac D. My lord!

Count. See that those rascals are more attentive.

Edmund. Why, what is the matter with you, Count?

Count. (Muttering and traversing.) Count! Count!

Edmund. You seem out of temper.

Count. Oh dear! No, no!—Upon my honour, no! You totally mistake; I assure you, you mistake. I'm very glad to see you; I am, indeed! (*Taking him eagerly by the hand.*)

Edmund. I'm very glad you are. Though you have an odd mode of expressing your joy. But you are one of the unaccountables. Cast off this formality—

Count. (Aside.) Very fine! (*Biting his fingers.*) Formality, sir!

Edmund. Give the heart its genuine flow; throw away constraint, and don't appear as if you were always on the tenter-hooks of imaginary insult.

Count. I! (Aside.) This is d—d impertinent! (*Struggling to be over familiar.*) You entirely misconceive me; my character is frank and open. No man has less constraint; I even study to be, as it were, spontaneous.

Edmund. Ha, ha, ha! I perceive you do.

Count. Really, sir—(*Aside.*) Does he mean to insult me?

Edmund. I thought to have put you in a good humour.

Count. I am in a good humour, sir! I never was in a better humour, sir!—never, sir! S'death! A good humour, indeed!—Some little regard to propriety, and such manners as good breeding prescribes to gentlemen—

Edmund. Ha, ha, ha! Well, well, Count, endeavour to forget the gentleman, and—

Count. Sir! No, sir: however you may think proper to act, that is a character I shall never forget.

Edmund. Never, except at such moments as these, I grant, Count.

Count. By—

Edmund. Well gulped! I had a sort of a message; but I find I must take some other opportunity, when you are not quite in so good a humour. (*Going.*) I'll tell my sister what—

Count. Sir! Your sister! My divine Lucy!—A message!

Edmund. So, the magic chord is touched.

Count. Dear sir, I—I—I am afraid I am warm. Your sister, you said—I doubt, I—that is—

Edmund. Well, well; make no apologies.

Count. Apologies! No, sir, I didn't mean—that is—yes, I—my Lucy—my Lucy—What message?

Edmund. Nay, I cannot well say myself. You know the madcap. She bade me tell you, if I happened to see you, that she wanted to give you a lecture.

Count. Indeed! I'm lectured by the whole family. (*Aside.*) On what subject?

Edmund. Perhaps you'll take pet again?

Count. I, sir? Take pet! My sense of propriety, sir—

Edmund. Why, ay, your sense of propriety, which, by-the-by, my flippancy sister calls your pride, is always on the watch, to catch the moment when it becomes you to take offence.

Count. You—you are determined I shall not want opportunities.

Edmund. You mistake, Count; I have a friendship for you—Why, what a forbidding stare is that, now! Ay, a friendship for you.

Count. Sir, I—I am not insensible of the honour—

Edmund. Yes, you are.

Count. (With great condescension.) Sir, you are exceedingly mistaken; very exceedingly; indeed you are. As I am a man of honour, there is no gentleman whom I should think it a higher—that is—upon my soul—

Sir P. (Without.) Is the Count at home, young man?

Footman. (Without.) Yes, sir.

Edmund. I hear my father: we have had a fracas; I must escape. If you will come and listen to my sister's lecture, so. Good-morrow! [*Exit.*]

Count. 'Tis insufferable! Never, sure, did man of my rank run the gauntlet thus! No respect, no distinction of persons! But with people of this class 'tis ever so: "Hail, fellow, well met!"

Enter SIR PAUL PECKHAM.

Sir P. Ay, "hail, fellow, well met!" eh! you jolly dog? (*Shaking him heartily by the hand.*)

Count. Hem! Good—good-morrow, sir. Here is another family lecturer. (*Aside.*)

Sir P. Was not that young Mock-modesty that brushed by me on the stairs?

Count. It was your son, sir.

Sir P. "Good morning, sir!" said the scoundrel, when he was out of my reach. D—! (*Seigns to kick.*) I would have shewn him the shortest way to the bottom. Well—eh! you have elegant apartments here.

Count. Very indifferent, sir.

Sir P. I shall remain in town for a fortnight, and am glad you live so near. We'll storm the wine-cellar—I hear you are no flincher—eh! When shall we have a set-to, eh? When shall we have a rory-tory? A catch, and a toast, and a gallon a man? But, eh! what's the matter? a'n't you well?

Count. (*With sudden affability.*) Oh! yes, Sir Paul; exceedingly well, Sir Paul; never better, Sir Paul.

Sir P. Why, that's right. I thought you had been struck dumb.

Count. Oh! by no means, Sir Paul. I am very happy to see you; extremely happy; inexpressibly—

Sir P. I knew you would. What say you to my Lucy, eh?

Count. Say! That she—she is a phoenix.

Sir P. D—e! so she is. What is a phoenix?

Count. I adore her.

Sir P. That's right!

Count. The day that makes her mine will be the happiest of my life.

Sir P. So it will; for I'll make you as drunk as an emperor. Hallo, there! get your master's hat. Come, come; you shall dine with me. (*Taking him by the arm.*)

Count. Sir?

Sir P. D—e! I'll make you drunk to-day?

Count. Did you speak to me, sir?

Sir P. To you? Why, what the devil! do you think I spoke to your footman? (*Quitting his arm.*)

Count. (*Again endeavouring to be affable.*) Oh! no, Sir Paul; no, I—pardon me—I was absent.

Sir P. Absent! I smell a rat: your dignity took miff.

Count. No, Sir Paul; by no means. No, I—that is—I will acknowledge, I am not very much accustomed to such familiarities.

Sir P. Are you not? Then you soon must be.

Count. Sir?

Sir P. Ay, sir; a few lessons from me will cure you.

Count. Sir, I—

Sir P. I am the man to make you throw off. I'll teach you to kick your stateliness down stairs, and toss your pride, as I do my wig, behind the fire.

Count. Good breeding, sir—

Sir P. Good breeding, sir, is a blockhead, sir. None of your formal Don Glums; none of your grand pas for me. A friend, good fellowship, and t'other bottle: that's my motto.

Count. People of my rank distinguish—

Sir P. D— distinctions!

Count. They make it a condition, sir—

Sir P. Indeed! Look you, my dear Count, either unbridle, or you and I are two. You tell me you love my daughter: she is the finest girl in England; and I believe the slut has taken a fancy to you. The match pleases me, because it displeases my wife; and, except when you are riding your high horse, I like you, Count. Dismount, and it's a match; if not, turn the peg, and prance; I'm your humble.

Count. (*Aside.*) I'll not endure it: racks shall not make me bend to this.

Sir P. Lucy is a wench after my own heart. No piping, no pining, no sobbing for her. I have a fine fellow in my eye—

Count. (*Alarmed.*) Sir?

Sir P. None of your Sir Ramrod Grumble-gizzards.

Count. By heavens! I would out the villain's throat who should dare impede my happiness.

Sir P. Why, ay, d—e! now you talk.

Count. The loss of my Lucy would render me the most wretched of beings.

Enter MAC DERMOT with the Count's hat.

Sir P. To be sure. (*Taking the Count by the arm.*) Come, come. (*Claps the Count's hat on his head.*) Dinner is waiting: I smell the haunch; it perfumes the whole street. Come along. I hate the shackles of ceremony. A smoking table, and a replenished sideboard, soon put all men on a level. Your hungry and thirsty souls for me! He that enters my house, always deposits his grandeur, if he have any, at the door. (*Sings.*) "This brown jug, my dear Tom, which now foams with mild ale."

Mac D. Well said, old Toby! Oh!

[*The Count makes disconcerted attempts to preserve his stateliness, wishing to be familiar, but scarcely knowing how to behave; Mac Dermot enjoying the Count's embarrassment.*—*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Drawing-room of Sir Paul Peckham, elegantly furnished, but hung all round with prints, chiefly caricatures.*

EDMUND and LYDIA discovered.

Edmund. I shall never recover from my surprise.

Lydia. Hush!

Edmund. The Count your brother? My sister, my family, must be informed.

Lydia. Not on your life, Edmund. So implacable are his enemies, that my father informs me an exempt, bribed by them, has followed him to England.

Edmund. Impotent malice! The laws will here protect him.

Lydia. Oh! who can say? The wicked cunning of such life-hunters is dreadful. I insist, therefore, upon your promise.

Edmund. My angel! fear nothing. (*Kissing her hand.*)

Enter LUCY, unperceived.

Lucy. (*Placing herself beside Edmund.*) Turn about. Now me. (*Holding out her hand.*)

Edmund. Oh! sister, I am the happiest of men.

Lucy. And you appear to be very busy, too, with your happiness.

Edmund. Did you but know—

Lucy. Oh! I know a great deal more than you suspect; not but you seem to be taking measures to inform the whole house.

Edmund. Of what?

Lucy. (*Placing herself between them.*) That you two are never easy apart.

Edmund. Sister, I—I must insist that you speak of this lady with—with every respect.

Lucy. Brother!

Lydia. Edmund!

Edmund. Sister, I don't understand. Are you narrow-minded enough to suppose this young lady unworthy the hand of—

Lucy. Of my brother? No; to call my Lydia sister (*taking her hand*) is one of the things on earth I most fervently wish.

Lydia. My generous friend!

Edmund. My charming girl!

Lucy. But, then—

Edmund. There are now no buts: it will be an honour. I say, sister, you—you don't know—in short, I must very earnestly solicit you to treat Miss Lydia with all possible delicacy. I—I—I cannot tell you more at present; but I once again request, I conjure,—nay, I—

Lydia. Hem!

Lucy. Hem! Humph!

Edmund. You—you understand me, sister.

[*Exit.*]

Lucy. Indeed, I don't. There now goes one of

your lord and masters. Take care of him: he'll make an excellent grand Turk. "Treat Miss Lydia, I say, with all possible delicacy." (*Imitating.*) And have I, Lydia, have I shewn a want of delicacy to my friend?

Lydia. Oh! no; my heart throbs with an oppressive sense of your generous, your affectionate attention to me.

Lucy. Oppressive! Well, this is the proudest world—

Lydia. Nay, I didn't mean—

Lucy. Oh! no matter.

Lydia. Have you had any conversation with the Count?

Lucy. No; there has been no opportunity yet to-day. I am really afraid his pride is quite as absurd as that of my good mamma.

Lydia. And your affection begins to cool.

Lucy. Hum! I—I can't say that. Heigho! He has his faults.

Lydia. I hope he has his virtues, too.

Lucy. So do I. But how to cure those faults?

Lydia. If incurable, 'twould break my heart.

Lucy. Your ardour surprises me. But, hush!

Enter COUNT CONOLLY VILLARS.

Count. (*Bowing.*) I was afraid, madam, 'love would not have found so much as a moment to speak its anxieties; nay, even now—(*Looking haughtily towards Lydia.*)

Lydia. Sir, I—I am sensible of my own unworthiness. [*Exit.*]

Lucy. That lady, sir, is my friend.

Count. Madam?

Lucy. Why are you surprised?

Count. Madam? No, no; not surprised—there is a maxim, indeed, which says, "Friendship can only subsist between equals."

Lucy. But where is the inferiority?

Count. Madam?

Lucy. You are above the poor, the pitiful idea, that wealth confers any claims?

Count. Perhaps it does not, madam. But beauty, understanding, wit—in short, the mind confers ten thousand; and in these I never beheld your peer.

Lucy. Very prettily spoken, indeed! And I am almost persuaded that you love me very dearly.

Count. Madam, I adore you.

Lucy. Yes, you are continually thinking of my good qualities.

Count. Eternally, madam; I think of nothing else.

Lucy. True; you never remember your own.

Count. Were I totally insensible of my own, madam, I should be unworthy of you.

Lucy. You admire me even in my representatives, my relations, and friends. Affable to all, good-humoured to all, attentive to all, your politeness, ease, and urbanity, extend to every person for whom you think my heart is any way interested. Your passions are all subservient to love.

Count. Yes, madam; subservient is the very word?—they are all subservient to love.

Lucy. You never recollect the dignity of your descent, nor accuse mine of meanness. You have too much understanding to plume your thoughts with turgid arrogance; or to presume on the imaginary merit of an accident, which none but ignorance, prejudice, and folly, are so besotted as to attribute to themselves.

Count. Mankind have agreed, madam, to honour the descendants of the wise and the brave.

Lucy. They have so; but you have too much native merit to arrogate to yourself the worth of others. You are no jay, decked in the peacock's feathers; you are not idiot enough to imagine that a skin of parchment, on which are emblazoned the

arms and acts of one wise man, with a long list of succeeding fools, is any honour to you. Responsible to mankind for the use or the abuse of such talents as you feel yourself endowed with, you think only of how you may deserve greatly; and disdain to be that secondary thing, that insignificant cipher, which is worthless, except from situation.

Count. The feelings of injured honour, madam, perhaps, may be too irritable: they shrink from insult, and spurn at contamination. Yet honour is the source of a thousand virtues; the parent of ten thousand glorious deeds. Honour is generous, sincere, and magnanimous; the protector of innocence, the assertor of right, the avenger of wrong. Yes; honour is the patron of arts, the promoter of science, the bulwark of government, the defender of kings, and the saviour of nations: indulge me; then, in cherishing a sentiment so noble.

Lucy. Indulge! Applaud, you mean. Honour with you never degenerates into ostentation; is never presumptuous; is no boaster: is eager to earn, but scorns to extort pre-eminence. Your honour is not that abject, inflated phantom which usurps contested claims, exacts submission which it does not merit, offends, irritates, and incites disgust, nay, tarnishes even virtue itself. You do not, under the word honour, seek a miserable cobweb covering for exorbitant pride.

Count. Madam, accusation so pointed, so—

Lucy. Nay, now, have not I been reading your panegyric?

Enter a Footman.

Foot. My lady desires you will come to her immediately, madam.

Lucy. Very well. [*Exit Foot.*] I am a thoughtless, flighty girl. What I say can have but little meaning; else, indeed, I would have ventured to have given you a word of advice. But—'tis no matter.

Count. Madam, you have stung me to the soul. If I be, indeed, what you describe, 'twere time I should reform.

Lucy. I must begone. I have, I own, been wildly picturing something to myself, which I greatly fear I could not love. [*Exit.*]

Count. And is it my likeness? Surely, it cannot be! Could not love? Excruciating thought!

[*Exit.*]

Enter EDMUND, hastily, and LYDIA, from an inner chamber, meeting.

Edmund. Where is the Count?

Lydia. This moment gone—

Edmund. Which way?

Lydia. Through that door.

Edmund. (*Running, stops at the door.*) Ah! 'tis too late; the footman is telling him.

Lydia. Why are you so much alarmed?

Edmund. The clouds are collected, and the storm is coming.

Lydia. What do you mean?

Edmund. Lady Peckham has watched her opportunity: Sir Paul has dropped asleep in his arm chair; she has ordered your sister to her apartment, and has sent to the Count to come and speak with her; that is, to come and be insulted, here in the drawing-room.

Lydia. What can be done?

Edmund. I know not. I dread her intolerable tongue.

Lydia. Perhaps, were you to retire, and, when they grow warm, to interrupt them at the proper moment, the presence of a third person might be some restraint on the workings of pride; of the violent ebullitions of which I am in great apprehension.

Edmund. Had I but met the Count before he had received the message—

Lydia. Here comes Lady Peckham. Begone!

[*Exit Edmund.*]

Enter LADY PECKHAM, followed by a Footman.

Foot. I have delivered your ladyship's message, and the Count is coming.

Lady P. Wery vell. Go you about your business, feller. [*Exit Footman.*] Your company is not wanted, miss. [*Exit Lydia.*]

Enter COUNT CONOLLY VILLARS, bowing.

So, sir, they tells me, sir, that you and my foolish husband are colloquing together, for to marry my daughter: is this true, sir?

Count. (*With polite haughtiness.*) If it were, madam—

Lady P. Do you know who Miss Loocy Peckham is, sir?

Count. Not very well, madam.

Lady P. Sir?

Count. Except that she is your daughter.

Lady P. And do you know who I am, sir?

Count. I have been told, madam—

Lady P. Told, sir, told! What have you been told? What have you been told, sir?

Count. That your ladyship was an honest wax-chandler's daughter.

Lady P. Yes, sir; the debbidy of his vord, sir. A common-councilman, and city sword-bearer. Had an aldermand's gownd von year, vus chosen sheriff the next, and died a lord-mayor elect. And do you know, sir, that I designs Sir Samool Sheepy, an English knight and barrowknight, for the spouse of my daughter? A gentleman that is a gentleman: a person of honour and purtensions, and not a papish jesuit.

Count. Of his honours and pretensions I am yet to be informed, madam.

Lady P. Vhat, sir! do you mean for to say, sir, or to insinuate, sir, that Sir Samool Sheepy is not your betters?

Count. If Sir Samuel himself, madam, had put such a question to me, I would have replied with my sword; or, more properly, with my cane.

Lady P. Cane! Wery vell, sir; I'll let Sir Samool know that you threatens to cane him. I'll take care to report you. Cane, quotha! He shall talk to you.

Count. Let him, madam.

Lady P. Madam, madam! at every vord. Pray, sir, do you know that Sir Paul Peckham has had the honour to be knighted by the king's own hand?

Count. I have heard as much, madam.

Lady P. Madam, indeed! And for you for to think for to look up to my daughter.

Count. Up, madam!

Lady P. Yes, sir; up, sir. Pray, sir, vhat are your purtensions?

Count. (*With great agitation.*) Madam?

Lady P. Who are you, sir? Where do you come from? Who knows you? Vhat parish do you belong to?

Count. Madam, I am of a family known to history, known to Europe, known to the whole universe.

Lady P. Ah! I believes you are better known nur trusted.

Count. The names of Conolly and Villars, madam, never before were so degraded as they have been in my person.

Lady P. Oh! I makes no doubt but you are a purson that would degenerate any name.

Count. Insult like what I have received from you, madam, no man that breathes should utter, and escape death; but you are—

Lady P. Vhat, sir? Vhat am I, sir?

Count. A woman!

Lady P. A woman, indeed! Sir, I would have you to know, sir, as how I am a lady. A lady, sir, of his majesty's own making. And moreover, sir, don't you go for to flatter yourself that I shall bestow the hand and fortin of Miss Loocy Peckham upon any needy, outlandish Count Somebody-nobody. My daughter, sir, is for your betters.

Count. Madam, though scurril—(*Recollecting himself.*)—I say, madam, though such vul—such accusations are beneath all answer, yet I must tell you that, by marrying your daughter—if after this I should sink myself so low—I say, my marrying your daughter, madam, I should confer an honour on your family, as much superior to its expectations, as the splendour of the glorious sun is to the twinkling of the worthless glow-worm.

Lady P. Vhat, vhat!

Enter EDMUND.

Marry come up! An Irish-French forner! Not so good as von of our parish porpers. And you—you purtend to compare yourself to the united houses of the Peckhams and the Pringles! Your family, indeed! Yourn! Where's your settlement? Yearn? Vusn't my great uncle, Mr. Peter Pringle, the cheesemonger of Cateaton-street, a major in the train-bands before you vas born or thought of?

Edmund. (*Aside.*) So, so! I'm too late.—(*Aloud.*) Let me entreat your ladyship—

Lady P. Vhat! hasn't I an ownd sister at this day married to Mr. Poladore Spraggess, the tip-toppest hot-presser in all Cratched Friars? Isn't my maiden aunt, Miss Angelica Pringle, worth thirty thousand pounds, in the South Sea funds, every day she rises! And doesn't I myself go to bed, and get up, the greatest lady in this here city? And for to purtend for to talk to me of his family! 'hisn!

Edmund. (*With warmth.*) I must tell you, my lady, you strangely forget yourself, and expose your family to ridicule.

Lady P. You must tell me, sir! Vhy, sir, how dare you have the temeracity for to come for to go for to dare for to tell me! Here's fine dolags! henpecked by my own chicken!

Edmund. The Count, madam, is a man of the first distinction in his native country!

Lady P. Vhat country is that, sir? Whoever heard of any country but England? A Count among beggars! How much is his Countship worth?

Count. I had determined to be silent, madam; but I find it is impossible.—(*With warmth.*) And, I must inform you, my family is as ancient, as exalted, and as renowned, as you have proved yours to be—what I shall not repeat. That I am the heir to more rich acres than I believe your ladyship ever rode over; that my father's vassals are more numerous than your ladyship's vaunted guineas; that the magnificence in which he has lived, looked with contempt on the petty, paltry strappings of a trader's pride; and that in his hall are daily fed—(*Stops short, and betrays a consciousness of inadvertent falsehood, but suddenly continues with increasing vehemence.*)—Yes, madam, are daily fed,—now, at this moment, madam, more faithful adherents, with their menials and followers, than all your boasted wealth could, for a single year, supply!

Edmund. Are? At this moment, say you, Count?

Count. Sir, I—I have said.

Edmund. I know you to be a man of honour, and that you cannot say what is not.

Count. I—I—I have said, sir. (*Walks about, greatly agitated.*)

Lady P. You have said more in a minute, nor you can prove in a year.

Edmund. (With warmth.) Madam, I will pledge my life for the Count's veracity.

Lady P. You pledge! What do you know about the matter? I pledge that he has been telling a pack of the most monstrous—

Edmund. Forbear, madam! Such insult is too gross to be endured, almost, from an angry woman.—Dear Count,—

Lady P. Voman again! Very fine! very pretty! Voman, quotha! To be called a voman by my own witals!

Count. (Aside.) What have I done?—*(With agony.)* A lie!

Lady P. As for you, sir, I doesn't believe von vord you say! I knows the tricks of such sham shevaleers as you too vell!

Count. (Walking away from her.) Torture!

Lady P. But I'll take care to have you prognosticated.

Count. (Aside.) D—n!

Lady P. I'll have you karakatoored in your troo colours; I'll have you painted in your father's hall; you and your vooden shoe shrug-and-snuffle scare-scrows! I'll depicter you! I'll not forger your wassals!

Count. (Aside.) I can support it no longer.—*(Going.)*

Edmund. (Catches him by the hand.) My dear Count,—

Count. Sir, I am a dishonoured villain! *[Exit.]*
Lady P. There, there! He tells you himself he is a willin! His conscience flies in his face, and he owns it!

Edmund. (With great ardour and feeling.) Madam, he is a noble-hearted gentleman. His agonizing mind deems it villany to suffer insult so gross. Sorry am I, madam, to be obliged to tell you that, humble though your family is, the disgrace with which you have loaded it is indelible: with anguish of heart, you force me to repeat, I blush while I listen to you. *[Exit.]*

Lady P. Why, who ever heard the like of this here, now? Here's a prodigal son! here's a regenerative reprobate! here's a graceless gog-magog! to purtend as how he's ashamed of me! Me! a purson of my carriage, connexions, and breeding. I! whose wery entrance, of a ball-night, puts Haberdashers' hall all in a combustion!

Re-enter COUNT CONOLLY VILLARS, greatly agitated.

(Seeing the Count.) Marry my daughter, indeed! Fough! *[Exit.]*

Count. Into what has my impetuous anger hurried me? Guilty of falsehood! I! To recede is impossible. What, stand detected before this city madam! whose tongue, itching with the very scrofula of pride, would iterate liar in my ear! No; falsehood itself is not so foul. Mac Dermot!

Enter MAC DERMOT.

Mac D. My lord?

Count. Mac Dermot, I—you—you have heard of the state which, formerly, my father held; of his household grandeur, of the hinds and servants whom he daily fed, and the train by which he was attended.

Mac D. To be sure I have, my lord. Here, your dukes and your peers know nothing at all of it; abroad, some hundreds starve, that one may starve; but, in England, they have learnt the trick of a man eating for himself.

Count. Paha! Listen: the—the misfortunes that since have befallen us, are little known in this country.

Mac D. To be sure they are not, my lord.

Count. Nor—nor—hem! nor would I have them

—hem! Do you understand me, Mac Dermot?

Mac D. My lord?

Count. I—I would not be exposed to the insolent taunts of upstart wealth.

Mac D. 'Faith! then, my lord, you must not live in this city.

Count. Nay, but—attend to me—I—I would—I would have them think—

Mac D. What, my lord?

Count. (Walking backwards and forwards.) Mac Dermot, there are situations—I say, it may, sometimes, be wise, at least, prudent, and—and excusable—Have not you remarked, Mac Dermot, that Lydia—

Mac D. Oh! to be sure, I have remarked, my lord, that she is a sweet orater, that Miss Liddy.

Count. Nay, but her influence in the family—

Mac D. Oh! yes, my lord.

Count. Now, if—if—suppose you were to take—an opportunity—Is she proud?

Mac D. Mild as mother's milk, my lord.

Count. If she were persuaded—I say—our family misfortunes—that is—no, no; the family magnificence—Do you comprehend me?

Mac D. My lord?

Count. Paha! D—n!

[Exit.]

Mac D. (Stands some time amazed.) Why, now, am I Mac Dermot, or am I not? The devil! He would have me take an opportunity with Miss Liddy! 'Faith! and I would very willingly do that. And persuade her—Oh! honey, but she is not so easy to be persuaded. To be sure he must mane something. Oh! *hona mon dioul!* but I have it! Ahoo! What a thickskull have I been all this while! He is a little bit ashamed to be thought poor among this tribe of Balifarnians, who have nothing but their dirty guineas to boast of. And so he would have me persuade—Oh, ho! let me alone. There she goes: I will be after—Boh! frustration! there is that Mr. Edmund, now, close at her heels. The young royster is always getting the sweet craterup in a corner. Take an opportunity! Sarra, the opportunity there is for me to take! *[Exit.]*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—An Apartment at Count Villars's.

DORIMONT and MAC DERMOT discovered.

Dori. Pray, sir, is the Count within?

Mac D. The Count, sir! And pray, why may you ask?

Dori. I want to speak with him, sir.

Mac D. Spake! Oh! the Count is not so easy to be spoken with. Plase to deliv'er your message to me.

Dori. Inform him I am come for an answer to my letter.

Mac D. Letter, sir! What, the letter brought by a shabby footman?

Dori. Ay, ay; has he read it?

Mac D. Read it! 'Faith! and it has been very well read. But, pray, sir, now, are you the writer?

Dori. I am.

Mac D. Then take my advice: make your escape. 'Tis very well for you my master is not at home.

Dori. Why so?

Mac D. Why so, man alive! Have you a mind to be murdered?

Dori. Fear nothing. *(Knocking heard.)*

Mac D. By the holy phial, but there he is! Why, will you begone now?

Dori. No, I will not.

Mac D. Marcy upon my soul! For the Lord's sake, sir—Why, sir, I tell you he'll have your blood. And won't you begone now?

Dori. No, sir.

Mac D. Lord Jesus! what will I do? If he comes into this room, here will be murder.

Dori. Go; tell him I am waiting for him.

Mac D. Ma tell him! I warn you to begone. Remember, I wash my hands of your blood. Make off; make off, I tell you, while I go and keep him to his own apartment. *[Exit.]*

Dori. *(To a Footman crossing.)* Hark you, young man: tell the Count, your master, that the stranger who wrote the anonymous letter to him is here, waiting for an answer.

Foot. Yes, sir. *[Exit.]*

Dori. The fears of the servant strongly speak the anger of the master: but that was what I partly feared, and partly wish.

Count. *(Without.)* Where is the rash, the audacious—

Enter COUNT CONOLLY VILLARS.

the insolent wretch, who—My father! *(Aside.)*

Dori. I scarcely could have expected so kind a welcome, sir: 'tis exemplary.

Count. Passion, sir, is sometimes guilty of improprieties. Pray, pardon me.

Enter MAC DERMOT, behind.

Count. I imagined—*(seeing Mac Dermot)*—How now, sir! Begone!

Dori. Why so? Let him stay.

Count. Begone! or—

Dori. Stay, I say.

Count. And, do you hear? I am not at home.

Mac D. *(Aside.)* Oh lord, oh lord! here will be murder. *[Exit.]*

Dori. What should that mean, sir?

Count. Sir, there are reasons—I ought not to expose my father's safety.

Dori. Rather own, you ought not to blush at your father's poverty. Is this my reception? 'Tis the warm welcome of a duteous son?

Count. 'Tis so sudden: yet my heart feels an affection—

Dori. Which is stifled by your vanity. Your father is contemned, because he is unfortunate.

Count. No, sir; I do not merit a reproach so cruel. Contemn my father! You know me not. Tell me, which way can I prove my respect and love?

Dori. By openly acknowledging me: not by concealment; not by disavowing me in the day of my distress.

Count. Think, sir, of your own safety.

Dori. What danger is there with people of honour? Present me to the family of Sir Paul.

Count. Impossible, sir.

Dori. Impossible!

Count. Let me conjure you not to be too precipitate. You know not the vulgar pomp of newly-made gentry; whose suffocating pride treats indigent merit, nay, birth itself, with the most imperious disdain.

Dori. Talk not of their pride, but of your own. You complain of others' haughtiness! You! In whom the vice is so intolerable, that you willingly would disown your father.

Count. Sir, you wrong me.

Dori. But, determined to be known for what I am, since you refuse, I'll introduce myself.

Count. For heaven's sake, sir! I entreat—I supplicate—on my knees, I conjure you to forbear.

Dori. Yes; pride, kneeling, conjures a father in poverty to suffer himself to be disclaimed. Your mother's pride was my house's downfall: this she has bequeathed to you.

Count. Sir—

Sir P. Without.) I tell you, I know he is at home.

Mac D. *(Without.)* Upon my soul, Sir Paul—

Sir P. *(Without.)* Zounds! Why, I saw him from my own window.

Count. Here is Sir Paul! You know not, sir, how much is at stake. I have not time to tell you now; but let my intreaties—

Dori. Oh! how humble are the proud! But, remember, I consent only on condition that you restrain your arrogance. If, while I am present, any symptom—*(Retires back.)*

Enter SIR PAUL PECKHAM.

Sir P. Sblood! I knew you were at home. But to instruct servants how to lie with the most cool, composed, and barefaced impudence, is one branch of modern education.

Count. I am sorry, Sir Paul—

Sir P. Psha! D— apologies! I have good news for you.

Count. Sir?

Sir P. I do believe *(God forgive me!)* that my wife is growing reasonable.

Count. Does she consent?

Sir P. Yes; to permit you to ask her pardon.

Count. Sir? Ask pardon?

Dori. Yes, sir; ask pardon.

Sir P. Hem! Zounds! Again! Why, what the plague can he do here? *(Aside.)*

Dori. Your servant, sir.

Sir P. Sir, your very humble.

Count. *(Aside.)* What can this mean?

Dori. You seem surprised, sir.

Sir P. Yes; you have a trick of taking people by surprise.

Count. *(Aside.)* Does he know him?

Sir P. Odd enough! *(Aside.)* Who is this queer old fellow?

Count. All is safe. *(Aside.)* Sir, the gentleman—*(To Sir P.)* What shall I say? *(Aside.)* A gentleman, sir, who—*(To Sir P.)*

Sir P. A gentleman!

Count. Yes—that is—

Sir P. What, some poor relation, I suppose?

Count. Yes, sir; a relation. The—the family estates have been under his management.

Sir P. Oh! your steward?

Count. No, not absolutely my—my steward—

Sir P. What, your land-bailiff?

Count. No, sir; no—that is—

Sir P. Does not seem to have made his fortune by his office. A little weather—

Count. He is a man of the strictest probity, sir.

Sir P. Nay, his appearance in the pledge of his honesty.

Dori. *(Aside.)* I can perceive he is practising deceit. Oh, vanity! But I will restrain my anger. The moment of open punishment is not yet come.

Count. *(To his father.)* Let me request you, sir, not to reveal yourself.

Dori. Well, sir.

Count. *(To Sir P.)* His economy and good management are equal to his fidelity.

Sir P. Confounded odd, all this, though. *(Aside.)* Well, Count, I have exerted my whole authority with Lady Peckham; and her son Edmund, who has more influence over her than anybody else, is your friend. So, be wary; do your duty, and the day is your own.

Count. My duty, sir!

Dori. Yes, sir; your duty, sir.

Sir P. A d—d strange fellow! *(Aside.)* Is it not your duty, Count, to serve yourself?

Dori. And would you contend about a word?

Sir P. Very true, sir: you seem a—a plain spoken—a—hem!

Dori. Yes; I think it my duty to tell vice and folly the truth.

Sir P. Hem! You hear, Count?

Dori. His punctilious pride is contemptible.

Count. Sir!

Dori. And, sir! I repeat: 'do your duty, sir.'

Sir P. The most unaccountable—Hem! (*Aside.*)
Count. (*Aside.*) I am on the rack: he will betray himself.

Sir P. (*To the Count.*) The old gentleman does not mince matters.

Count. (*Aside to his father.*) You will ruin me.

Dori. Do as he requires, or I will feign no longer.

Sir P. Lady Peckham is expecting you. Come, come; try whether you cannot put on a winning, submissive air.

Count. I shall burst. (*Aside.*)

Dori. Submissive, sir! Remember.

Count. I shall not forget, sir.

Sir P. You approve my advice, don't you, sir?

Dori. Entirely. The lesson you gave him, sir, is a useful and a necessary one. I know him.

Count. Fiends! (*Aside.*)

Sir P. What, sir—you—have lived long in the family?

Dori. Sir?

Sir P. Nay, don't be affronted.

Count. (*To Sir P.*) Let us begone, sir. I am ready to attend you.

Sir P. (*Aside.*) The bluntest, drollest—

Count. We are losing time, sir.

Sir P. Well, well; in a moment.—Pray, under favour, what may be the amount of the Count's rent-roll? (*To Dori.*)

Dori. Sir! His rent-roll, sir?

Sir P. Ay, his rent-roll: the nett produce of his estates.

Dori. Why that question to me, sir?

Count. For heaven's sake, Sir Paul, let us go.

Sir P. 'Sblood! What a violent hurry you're in all of a sudden.

Count. (*Endeavouring to force Sir P. away.*)

Lady Peckham is waiting, sir; I beg, I entreat—

Sir P. (*Aside.*) The mystery thickens!

Dori. Pray, sir, has the Count—

Count. (*Interrupting.*) For the love of mercy, sir, answer no questions; hear none, ask none. I am frantic.

Dori. Silence, sir! (*To the Count.*) Has the Count ever talked of his estates? (*To Sir P.*)

Sir P. Oh! yes.

Count. (*Aside.*) D—n!

Dori. And told you the amount?

Sir P. No, no; but, as you—

Count. I must insist, sir, on going. (*To Sir P.*)

Dori. I'm not prepared, sir, just now to answer your question of the rent-roll. I have business, and must leave you; but I will shortly give you the information you require. In the meantime, young gentleman, think on what has passed: observe Sir Paul's advice, and act as becomes you. Put off your vanity: be humble, and know yourself. [*Exit.*]

Count. (*Aside.*) Thank heaven he is gone!

Sir P. Your steward is an odd one.

Count. Sir, I—I tell you he is not my steward.

Sir P. No, sir?

Count. No, sir.

Sir P. What is he, then?

Count. Sir, I—

Sir P. I thought you taught everybody to keep their distance; but he treats you with as little ceremony as—as he did me. (*Aside.*) Come, come; Lady Peckham is waiting.

Count. I must own, Sir Paul, I meet with many mortifications. Your daughter is an angel; but, solicitation, Sir Paul, does not become me; it is a

thing I have not been accustomed to. Do you speak for me. Say all, say everything you please. Your mediation will, I presume, be sufficient.

Sir P. D—e, if this is not beyond all human patience! After all I have done in your behalf! What! would you have me and my whole family approach your footstool, there present my daughter, and kneeling, beg your highness to accept her? No, my haughty Count; either my daughter is worth asking for, or not worth having. Carry your pomp to a better market; I'll stoop to it no longer. Your servant, sir. [*Exit.*]

Count. Nay, Sir Paul—Must I endure this? Must I—I, the descendant of an ancient race; the rightful lord of a thousand vassals? What! wait, and fawn on madam; and act the skipjask, and chatter to her parrot, and be of her opinion, and fetch and carry, and praise her taste, and join her scandal, and laugh when she laughs, and kiss her monkey? And to whom? Oh! [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—The House of Sir Paul Peckham.

MAC DERMOT and LYDIA discovered.

Mac D. Oh! yes; stabling for a hundred horses; open house all the year about; servants five-and-twenty to the score; all making work for one another.

Lydia. Then the Count, your master, should be immensely rich.

Mac D. Should be? To be sure he is. Don't I tell you—

Lydia. Yes; you tell me one thing at night, and another in the morning. You had forgotten the colonel's pay, and the secret supplies.

Mac D. (*Aside.*) 'Faith! and so I had.

Lydia. And, pray, was this all your own invention?

Mac D. Why, as to that—And is it me, now, that you would have to betray my master?

Lydia. What, then, he bid you spread this report?

Mac D. Arrah! now, did I say that? Did I say that? I tell you he bid me no such thing! What, and did you think, now, you could get that out of me? By St. Patrick, but I would bite off my tongue if it should dare to blunder out one word against so good a master.

Lydia. (*Aside.*) Honest, affectionate fellow!

Mac D. (*Aside.*) Oh, blarney! She wants to be too cunning for me, the sweet crater! and so, for fear of—Miss Liddy, your servant. [*Exit.*]

Lydia. I almost love him myself, for his love to his master.

Enter SIR PAUL PECKHAM, followed by EDMUND.

Sir P. I tell you, I have done with him. He is a pompous, insolent coxcomb! The Great Mogul himself is a fool to him.

Edmund. All men have their foibles, sir.

Sir P. D— his foibles! I have enough to do with my own. And, do you hear, sir? don't let me be troubled with any of your troubles, either. You understand me. I'll not be trifled with. [*Exit.*]

Lydia. What has put him into so ill a humour?

Edmund. The cursed supercilious haughtiness of the Count: he has insulted Sir Samuel Sheepy, too.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Well, brother, have you succeeded with my mamma?

Edmund. I believe so; I can't tell. Where is the Count?

Lucy. I hear him on the stairs.

Edmund. Well, warn him to be careful. [*Exit.*]

Lucy. What's the matter?

Lydia. The old story: the Count's pride. If he should quarrel again with Lady Peckham, all will then be over.

Lucy. You have put me quite in a tremor.

Enter COUNT CONOLLY VILLARS.

I will inform my mamma, sir, that you are here; and she will be with you immediately.

Count. May I not, madam, be indulged with one previous word?

Lucy. Yes, sir; one, and but one. Instead of conciliating, I find your manners offend and disgust every one. Either cast away your *humeur*, regain the affections and consent of my friends, and, above all, make your peace with Lady Peckham, or this shall be the last meeting of our lives. *[Exit.]*

Lydia. Are you aware, sir, of your danger? Sir Samuel, Sir Paul, Lady Peckham, all affronted! nay, your best friend, Edmund, has this moment left the room to avoid you. Oh! think on that lovely lady; and if you have any affection for her, for yourself, or for your father, recal your reason, discard your folly, and act with a little common sense. *[Exit.]*

Count. This is strange! My father! She know my father? And why am I schooled and tutored thus? The last meeting of our lives! They will absolutely drive me mad among them.

Enter LADY PECKHAM.

Madam, (*bowing*) when I last had the honour of a —an interview with your ladyship, I—I am afraid I might, possibly, be inadvertently betrayed into some warmth—

Lady P. Why, sir, seeing as how my son tells me you are a real nobleman, and not von of the riffraff fortin-hunting fellers, if so be as you thinks fit to make proper apologies, why, sir, I—I—

Count. To a lady, madam, every apology may be made: any concessions, therefore—

Lady P. Oh! sir, as for that there, I wants nothing but what is upright and downright. And I supposes, sir, you are wery villin to own that an outlandish foriner must think himself highly honoured by a connexion with an English family of distinction: because that, I am sure, you cannot deny. And that it vus a most perumptory puercedin in you, being as you are but a Frenchman, or of an Irish generation at best, to putend to the hand and fortin of Miss Loocy Peckham, without my conivance.

Count. Madam?

Lady P. As I tells you, sir, I am upright and downright. So do you, or do you not?

Count. Madam, I am ready to acknowledge that the charms of your daughter's mind and person are equal to any rank.

Lady P. Her mind and person, indeed! No, sir; her family and fortin. And I believes, sir, now you are come to your proper senses, you vill own, too, that no outlandish lord whatever can uphold any ompragement with the Peckham family and connexions.

Count. (*With warmth.*) Madam, though I am ready to offer every excuse which can reasonably be required, for any former inadvertency; yet, madam, no consideration whatever shall lead me—I say, madam, my own honour, a sense of what is due to my own honour, a sense of what is due to my ancestors, myself, and to truth—that is, madam—no; the world, racks, shall not force me to rank my family with your's.

Lady P. Why, sir, what is it that you are talking of? Rank my family with yourn, indeed! Marry come up! No, to be sure. I say rank! I knows

wery vell what is my doe; and that there, sir, is the thing that I would have you for to know: and I insist upon it, sir, that you shall know it; and shall own that you knows it; or, sir, I rewoke everything I have condescended to specify with my son. So do you, sir, or do you not?

Count. Madam—What, madam?

Lady P. Do you depose that outlandish foriners are all beggars and slaves; and that von Englishman is worth a hundred Frenchmen?

Count. Madam, whatever you please.

Lady P. Oh! wery vell. And do you perdict that this here city is the first city in the whole world?

Count. I—I believe it is, madam.

Lady P. Oh! wery vell. And that the monument, and the tower, and Lunnon bridge, are the most magnanimous and superfluous buildings?

Count. Madam—

Lady P. I'll have no circumbendibus. Are they, or are they not?

Count. Your ladyship is pleased to say so.

Lady P. To be sure I does; because I knows it to be troon. And that the wretches in forin parts are all fed upon bran; seeing as how there is no corn?

Count. As your ladyship thinks, (*Bows.*)

Lady P. And that the whole country could not purwidge von lord mayor's feast?

Count. I—certainly not, madam: they have few turtle and no aldermen.

Lady P. Ah! a pretty country, indeed! No aldermen! And that it would be the hite of presumption in you for to go for to set yourself up as my equal? Do you own that?

Count. (*Passionately.*) No, madam.

Lady P. Sir?

Count. No force, no temptation shall induce me so to dishonour my great progenitors.

Lady P. Why, sir!

Count. My swelling heart can hold no longer. Honour revolts at such baseness. Patience itself cannot broof a fallacy so glaring. No: though destruction were to swallow me, I would assert my house's rights, and its superior claims.

Lady P. Wery vell, sir; wastly vell, sir! And I would have you for to know, sir, while my name is Lady Peckham, I vill di-assert my house's rights, and claims: that I despises all—Ha, ha, ha! Wery fine, indeed! Am I to be sent here to be hectorred, and buffed, and bluffed, and bullied, and bounced, and blustered, and brow-beat, and scoffed, and scouted, and—Ha!

Count. (*Recovering his temper and interceding.*) Madam—

Lady P. I ha' brought my hogs to a fine market. But I'll let 'em know who's at home.

Count. My warmth, madam—

Lady P. Your honour and glory, indeed! And for to putend for to send for me hest, to palaver me over as I supposed—

Count. I am ready to own, madam—

Lady P. But I'll rid the house of you: I'll take good care you shall have no daughter of mine. You may post off to your father's hall, and there starve in state. Warm it with a blaze of dried ~~staves~~, and stop up the gaps in the shattered windows and old groaning doors with clay; then send your shivering wassale, that stand jabbering behind your von armed vooden chair, to skin the sheep that died of hunger and the rot, to make you a varm winter surtout.

Count. Madam—

Lady P. My daughter, indeed! I'll karakatooor you. *[Exit.]*

Count. Flames and fury! (*Following, is met by SIR SAMUEL SHEEPY, who shuts the door, and prevents the Count from passing.*) How now, sir?

Sir S. (Bowing.) Sir, your humble servant.

Count. What does this mean, sir? Let me pass.

Sir S. A word or two first, if you please, sir.

Count. Let me pass. (*Putting his hand to his sword.*)

Sir S. (*Bowing, but resolutely guarding the door.*) Sir, I must humbly entreat—

Count. D—n! What is it you want with me, sir? Who are you, sir?

Sir S. My name is Sheepy, sir. (*Bowing.*)

Count. Sheepy! So, so, so! Hell and the devil! At such a moment as this! (*Aside.*)

Sir S. I am told, sir, I have some obligations to you, which it becomes me to discharge.

Count. Well, sir?

Sir S. Not quite so well, sir, as I could wish.

Count. (*Aside.*) Was ever man so tormented!

Sir S. I am informed, sir, that you have condescended to mention me, in my absence.

Count. And so, sir?

Sir S. You did me an honour, sir. (*Bowing.*)

Count. Either speak your business, and suffer me to pass, or I will nail you to the door.

Sir S. Dear sir, you are so warm! I have been told you were so good as to threaten to cane me.

Count. Ay, sir; by whom?

Sir S. By Laçy Peckham, sir

Count. Indeed! Well, suppose it.

Sir S. 'Twas kind of you! Unluckily, I have not been much used to threatening messages, and am really afraid I shall not be very prompt at submission.

Count. Oh! do not doubt yourself, sir.

Sir S. Humble though I am, I do not find that a swaggering look—(*Bowing.*)

Count. Sir?

Sir S. Moderate your anger, kind sir. I have a petition to you. (*Putting on his white gloves.*)

Count. D— your sneer, sir! speak.

Sir S. Bless me, sir, you are so warm! It is only that you would kindly do me the favour either to cut my throat, or suffer me to cut your's. (*Draws and flourishes.*)

Count. (*With his hand to his sword.*) Are you mad, sir? Do you recollect where you are? In whose house?

Sir S. Gadso! true, sir: I should be sorry to be interrupted. Luckily, my carriage is at the door; and I know a snug room in a neighbouring tavern, where this business may be effectually settled, as quietly, us coolly, and as privately as possible.

Count. 'Twere well for you, sir, had you chosen another opportunity: but come.

Sir S. Oh! sir, I know my place; after you. (*Bowing.*)

Count. Away, sir!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—The Count's Apartment.

(*A noise of footsteps without, and voices heard, calling "Here, here! This way! Up, up! Follow!"*)

Enter DORIMONT, hastily.

Dor. I am pursued, beset, and cannot escape!

Enter MAC DERMOT.

Mac D. Blood and thunder! Why, what's all this? Oh! and is it you, sir?

Dori. Where is the Count?

Mac D. 'Faith! and that is more than I can tell. (*Voices without: "Here, here, I tell you! This room!"*) Why, what the devil—

Dori. I am hunted: my liberty, perhaps, my life, is in danger.

Mac D. Why, sure, the Count would not—

Dori. Here; take, hide this packet from the eyes of my pursuers: don't lose it; but, if you have any

sense of worth and honesty, deliver it safe into the hands of Sir Paul Peckham.

Mac D. Niver fear me, honey!

Enter and Exeunt two Bailiffs.

Exeunt. That's the man. Seize him!

1 Bail. Sir, you are our prisoner.

Dori. On what authority, sir?

1 Bail. Authority, sir! The authority of law, sir.

Dori. For what crime?

1 Bail. As to crime, sir, I can't tell; but for a trifling debt of fifty thousand pounds.

Dori. At whose suit?

Exeunt. At mine, sir.

Dori. Your's! Vile wretch! Gentlemen, he is a spy: the creature of a foreign court. I never had dealings with him in my life.

1 Bail. We know nothing of that, sir. He has sworn to the debt.

Exeunt. No parleying; take him away.

1 Bail. Ay, ay; come, sir. [*They drag him out.*]

Dori. (*Without.*) Help, rescue, false imprisonment!

Mac D. Why, what is all this now? Poor old gentleman! (*Voices without: "Rescue, rescue! Help!"*) Where is my shillalah? Oh! by St. Peter and his crook, but I will be one among you, scoundrels! [*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—The House of Sir Paul Peckham.

Enter LYDIA and EDMUND.

Edmund. Be pacified: you are too much alarmed.

Lydia. If Sir Paul should have let them pass, what dreadful consequences may have followed! Where can he be?

Edmund. He is here!

Enter SIR PAUL PECKHAM.

Lydia. Oh! sir, where are they? Has anything happened?

Sir P. Happened! D—e! I could not believe my own ears. A silky Simon! The Count was in a right humour—'Sblood! I had a great mind to have let him kill the old fool.

Lydia. Then they have not fought. Are they safe, sir?

Sir P. Yes, yes; they are safe enough. But do you know? the amorous swain, his blood being heated, could only be pacified on condition that he might have another interview with Lucy. I'm glad on't. I'll go and give her her lesson.

Edmund. Oh! sir, leave him to my sister, she needs no instructions.

Sir P. No? 'Gad! I believe not. She's my own girl: but clear the coast; he is coming.

Edmund. I will go to Lady Peckham; and do you, Lydia, watch for the Count.

Sir P. Ay, ay; he is suddenly grown humble; apologized to me, and promised to come and plead with my lady. But away.

[*Exeunt Edmund and Lydia.*]

Enter SIR SAMUEL SHEEPY.

Well, Sir Samuel, you are here.

Sir S. Yes, sir.—And I half wish I was anywhere else, already.

Sir P. And so you absolutely have the courage to attack my Lucy? Ha, ha, ha! Why, you are quite a hero! you fear neither man nor woman.

Sir S. (*Aside.*) I wish I didn't.

Sir P. Nay, but don't begin to look so pitiful: she'll be here in a minute. Don't flinch; stand to

your guns; she'll not easily strike. Ha, ha, ha! Die hard, my old boy! [Exit.]

Sir S. What is the matter with me? I declare he has talked me into a tremble. Why should I be so terrified at a harmless woman? I can't help it: a pair of beautiful eyes are flaming swords, which no armour can resist.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. So, Sir Samuel!

Sir S. (Aside.) Bless me! my heart is in my mouth.

Lucy. You seem taken by surprise.

Sir S. Madam—hem!—no, madam—yes, madam. (Bowing.)

Lucy. My papa informed me you were waiting purposely to disclose this important secret.

Sir S. Madam—hem!—yes, madam—

Lucy. Do you know that I have had you in my mind I don't know how often since I saw you?

Sir S. Hem! Have you, madam?

Lucy. Yes, I have. 'Tis a pity, nay, indeed, a shame, that so famous an English family as that of the Sheepy's should become extinct.

Sir S. Hem! There is no danger of that, madam.

Lucy. No? Why, it is too late in life for you to marry, Sir Samuel.

Sir S. Hem! Yes, madam—no, madam.

Lucy. Indeed! So you—Well, I should like to know your choice: some staid body, I imagine.

Sir S. Madam—hem!—

Lucy. But I would not have her too old and disagreeable.

Sir S. Hem! I can assure you, madam, she—hem!—she is a very beautiful young lady.

Lucy. You surprise me. Oh! then, perhaps, she is some low-born girl, who has more pride than understanding, and is willing to sacrifice her youth and beauty to the silly vanity of riding in a coach!

Sir S. Quite—hem!—quite the contrary, madam.

Lucy. Then she must be poor, and must think of marrying you for the sake of your riches, hoping you will die soon.

Sir S. Madam!—Hem!—She is very rich.

Lucy. Is it possible?

Sir S. And I should flatter myself would not expect me to die too soon.

Lucy. Oh! but she will. Young women never marry old men but with a wish to dance over their graves.

Sir S. Hem!

Lucy. Perhaps the poor girl may—may have made a faux pas?

Sir S. Hem! Her virtue is unspotted, madam.

Lucy. You amaze me! Young, rich, beautiful, and virtuous! What can her reason be for making choice of you? Why does not she rather marry some youth, whose rare qualities resemble her own? Oh! I've found the secret, at last: she's an idiot.

Sir S. Hem! No, madam, no—Hem!—I am afraid she has too much wit. (Aside.)

Lucy. Nay, then, Sir Samuel, you are the most fortunate gentleman I ever heard or read of. But are you sure she is in love with you?

Sir S. Hem! Not very, madam.

Lucy. No! Oh, oh! I have unriddled it, at last. You have been bargaining for her with her father, or her mother, or—Ay, ay; the poor young lady's consent has never been asked. And would you be so selfish as to seek your own single gratification, and be contented to see her condemned to misery, pining to death for the youth she loves,

and justly detesting the sight of you, as the wicked author of her wretchedness?

Sir S. Hem! (Looking towards the door.) Madam, I—Hem!—I wish you a good evening.

Lucy. (Preventing him from going.) Another word, Sir Samuel. Have you ever talked to the young lady on the subject?

Sir S. Hem! I—Hem!—I have and—Hem!—I have not.

Lucy. You never made a direct proposal?

Sir S. Hem! No, madam.

Lucy. But, why?

Sir S. I—I—Hem!—I can't very well tell.

Lucy. But I can. With much folly and depravity, there is still some virtue in you.

Sir S. Madam! (Looking how to escape.)

Lucy. Though you could form so unjust a project, you never had the courage to insult the lady, by an avowal of your guilt.

Sir S. Hem! Guilt, madam!

Lucy. Yes, sir, guilt. However, sir, she has perfectly understood your insinuations.

Sir S. Madam!

Lucy. She has infinite respect for filial duties. But, though she would beware of offending her parents, I know her to be equally determined never to entail misery on herself; nor to accept a husband whom she could neither esteem, admire, nor love.

Sir S. Madam, I—Hem!—Your servant, madam.

Lucy. (Placing herself between him and the door.) Not till you first promise—

Sir S. (Forgetting his fear.) I'll promise anything, madam.

Lucy. That you will not render yourself more ridiculous, by persevering in so absurd, so unjust a pursuit.

Sir S. No, madam; I'm quite ridiculous enough already.

Lucy. Nay, more; that you will not seek some less friended, more enslaved, or more timid young creature, whom your misapplied wealth might command.

Sir S. Whatever you please, madam.

Lucy. But, that you will rather apply your superfluous hoards to the protection of youthful innocence.

Sir S. Suffer me but to depart, madam, and I will bequeath my estates in perpetuity, as you shall direct; I'll entail them on the Magdalen; or I'll advertise for marriageable men and maids, and you shall portion out my money among them.—I'll—I'll do anything, except marry, or go a courting.

Lucy. Why, then, Sir Samuel—(Kissing his hand.) There, that be your reward.

Sir S. Madam, your humble servant. [Exit.]

Lucy. Ha, ha, ha! Poor Sir Samuel! This is the first time he ever forgot his bow.

Enter COUNT CONOLLY VILLARS.

Well, sir, have you effectually made your peace with my mamma?

Count. I have done my endeavour, madam.—(Aside.) Would I were at peace with myself!

Lucy. And are you still, sir, under the dominion of prejudice so weak? Do you still repeat of what you so long have deemed your condescension?

Count. Far otherwise, madam. There are beings so peculiarly favoured of heaven, and endowed with such high perfections, both of body and of mind, that they are superior to all the distinctions of men, among whom they walk angels upon earth. You are one of these; and my misery is, I never can deserve you.

Lucy. You may have stumbled; but this self-condemnation shows it was but to rise with tenfold strength. Persevere, and we will be severed only by death.

Enter EDMUND.

Edmund. At length, my dear Count, Lady Peckham is pacified. To stoop to her ill-placed pride, to overlook her prejudice, and to petition as you did, was noble in you. I have seconded your efforts, have pledged myself for your honour, and guaranteed your veracity.

Count. Then, sir, you have struck a dagger to my heart! I have been guilty of falsehood. That very pride, and that exalted, or, I fear, extravagant sense of honour, which should have preserved me from a stain so hateful, has dashed me down the precipice!

Edmund. You amaze me!

Count. 'Tis true: 'twas inadvertent; but rankling vanity, strengthened by a purer motive,—the trembling alarms of love,—induced me to persist; nay, a second time, to aid deception.

Lucy. You did wrong. But which of us can say they never erred?

Edmund. Ay, who will stand forth and affirm, that, amid the rude whirl, the confused doubts, or the terrors of passion, they never once have been betrayed into your crime? For a crime, I own it is; and, with consequences so wide, so pernicious, and so fatal, that, when it shall be extirpated from the earth, that moment man will be perfect! But, in this poor world's present state, it is so far venial, that—[painful, humbly thought!]
—no; the noblest, the purest of us all, cannot strike his heart, and say—I never was a liar! But what have you said that—

Enter SIR PAUL PECKHAM.

Sir P. Come, come, we must strike while the iron is hot. We must take my lady while she is in the humour, since she must necessarily be a party in our deeds. And first, I have agreed, as you know, Count, that my daughter's portion shall be eighty thousand pounds: the remainder will chiefly rest with you. What settlement do you intend to make? and on what estates?

Count. None, sir.

Sir P. None!

Count. I have no estates.

Sir P. Sir!—Why, what—Zounds!—After the inquiries I made, I cannot be so deceived. Are not you Count Conolly Villars?

Count. I am, sir.

Sir P. A colonel in the armies of the most christian king?

Count. I am, sir.

Sir P. Recommended to me by Messieurs Devigny, the great merchants at Marseilles?

Count. The same, sir.

Sir P. Why, then, what do you mean?

Count. When I first paid my addresses to this lady, I imagined my rank and family were a sufficient counterpoise to wealth.

Sir P. Ha! Gold in one scale, honour in t'other. Flimsy ware!—No, no; kick the beam!

Count. But, ardent, violent, and eternal, as my love for your angelic daughter is, and must be, even the loss of her shall not tempt me, any longer, to practice the least imposition.

Sir P. Well, but,—Blood! The steward!—the family estates!

Count. I have told you the truth, sir.

Enter LYDIA.

Lucy. What's the matter, Lydia?

Lydia. Poor Mr. Mac Dermot—

Count. What of him? Any harm?

Lydia. He has been in some fray, and is so bruised.

Count. Bruised! Where is he?

Lydia. Below, with a packet, which he wants to deliver to Sir Paul.

Sir P. To me?

Lydia. Yes, sir. Pray go to him.

Sir P. A packet for me! (Going.) I shall never hear the last of this from my lady. [Exit.]

Lucy. Brother, go to my mamma, and endeavour to keep her in temper.—(To the Count.) He not dejected; I know my father's affection for me, and do not yet despair. [Exit.]

Count. Charming, generous girl! This poor Mac Dermot,—

Lydia. He is afraid of seeing you. He says you will never pardon him, for having taken the part of a man, whom you threatened to murder.

Count. I! I threatened to murder no man.—Will you, madam, be so kind as to tell him I am here, and that I insist on seeing him?

Lydia. With pleasure. [Exit.]

Count. Kingdoms should not tempt me to pass another day like this.

Enter MAC DERMOT, with his left arm in a sling.

How now, Mac Dermot! Where have you been? What's the matter with you?

Mac D. No great matter, my lord; only a little bit of a joint here. (Pointing to his arm.)

Count. Broken?

Mac D. A double tooth or two; not much, my lord.

Count. Much! How? What have you been doing?

Mac D. (Pitifully.) I hope your lordship won't be angry.—(Enraged.) But the rascals seized him neck and heels!

Count. Seized who?

Mac D. (Passionately.) He was as innocent as the babe unborn, my lord; and he could 'em so, the dirty rapscallions!

Count. Who are you talking of?

Mac D. (Pitifully.) To be sure, he sent your lordship a—a very impertinent letter.

Count. How? (The Count's perplexities and passions are here effectually roused, and increase through the scene.)

Mac D. There were three of them. Nivir did your lordship set your two good-looking eyes on such a pair of thieves!

Count. For heaven's sake! tell your story straight forward. What letter do you mean? Who?

Mac D. (With great emotion.) I hope your lordship will forget and forgive. It would have moved the bowels of your compassion to have seen the old gentleman.

Count. Is it possible? What can he mean?—What old gentleman?

Mac D. (Enraged.) The dirty shaberoons took him by the throat—My vir, blood boiled—Upon my soul, my lord, I could not bear it! I hope you will forgive me! By the merciful father, I could not bear it!

Count. Tell me this moment who you mean.

Mac D. He came running back, out of breath, and asked for your lordship; and so, my lord, seeing a fillow-crater in distress—

Count. Came where?

Mac D. A couple of as ill-looking Tyburn-turn-pike hum-bailiffs as your lordship could wish, with a cowardly comploter at their back. It was he that came behind me with his shillalee, while I was hard at work with both. But the brave old gentleman stepped in; and, by the virgin's night-cap! but he gave him his dose.

Count. Once more, tell me, instantly, what old gentleman?

Mac D. Considering his age, he is as active and as brave a fellow, as ever handled a fist.

Count. (Aside.) He cannot, surely, mean my father!—*Mac Dermot*, I entreat, I command you to tell me of whom you are talking.

Mac D. If your lordship had but seen the noble ould soul, I'm sure you would have forgiven me.

Count. But what letter?

Mac D. Oh! the divil burn the letter! Now, my lord, don't mention it; pray, don't remember it, your lordship; pray, don't! By my soul, now, my lord, he is a fine ould fellow! Oh! how he luid about him!

Count. Was it the person who came this afternoon?

Mac D. My lord,—

Count. Fear nothing. Speak!

Mac D. Why, then, my lord,—To be sure, it was he himself.

Count. And is he safe? Did you free him from them?

Mac D. Why, my lord, I could not hilp it! I could not hilp it! By the holy footstool, but I couldn't!

Count. *Mac Dermot*,—(Taking him by the hand.)

Mac D. My lord?

Count. Well, well! a time will come—

Mac D. My lord?

Count. Are you much hurt, *Mac Dermot*?—Here! hallo!

Enter a Footman.

Call a chair! Run for a surgeon and a physician! the best that can be procured.

Mac D. For me, my lord?

Count. For you, my noble fellow!

Mac D. Spare yourself the labour, young man.

Count. Go! do as I order you, instantly.—[Exit Footman.]—*Mac Dermot*, you must be put to bed.

Mac D. To bed, my lord!

Count. And lose some blood.

Mac D. 'Faith, my lord, that will be a little too much; I've lost quite blood enough already.

Count. Pray,—I request,—I must have you do as I desire. I would not have any ill happen to you, for the world.

Mac D. Oh! and the divle of ill or harm can happen to *Mac Dermot*, the while he has such a generous prince-royal of a master! though, I believe, the best thing that could happen to me, just now, would be a good supper, and a hearty tiff of whisky-punch.

Count. Not for the Indies!

Mac D. 'Faith, my lord, it was hard work, and has given me a very craving kind of a call.

Re-enter Footman.

Foot. The chair is waiting, sir.

Count. Go, my good fellow! Obey me but this once, and I'll never set the master to you more.

Mac D. Well, well, my lord,—But I hope your lordship won't quite kin me with kindness. [Exit.]

Enter SIR PAUL PECKHAM and LUCY.

Sir P. (With the packet opened.) So, *Count*, I find, after all your pretended raptures, you never wished to marry my daughter.

Count. Sir!

Sir P. Why did not you retract like a man, and not make a paltry, false excuse of poverty?

Count. Sir, I made no false excuse.

Sir P. How, sir! Shall I not believe my eyes? Have I not bills here in my hand, drawn in your favour, for five hundred thousand crowns?

Count. In mine!

Sir P. In your's; given me this moment by your own servant.

Count. Impossible, sir!

Sir P. Impossible, is it? Why, look you, here are the bills. And, hallo!—

Enter Footman.

Go you, sir, and desire *Mr. Mac Dermot* to come back.

Count. Stir not for your life, on such an errand! He must not, shall not be disturbed.

Sir P. Nay, my word, it seems, is not to be believed; nor, perhaps, the bills themselves. But, sir, though you vaunt so highly of being a man of honour, the trick was beneath a man of honesty.

Enter LADY PECKHAM and EDMUND.

Lady P. Here's a komakul kind of an obstreperous person, that says he must speak to the *Count*. You may come in, mister.

Enter DORIMONT and LYDIA.

Sir P. Ah! what, my friend, the steward! I am glad you are come. Never was so amazed in my life. Your mastery here, has been telling me he has no estates.

Lady P. How!

Dori. My master, sir!

Count. The feelings of man cannot support this open shame! (Going.)

Dori. Whither now, sir?

Sir P. Ay, talk to him. I'm in a mist.

Count. Suffer me to pass, sir. (Going.) Speak the truth; reſider me contemptible,—abhorrent; but make me not a witness of my own disgrace!

Dori. Stay, sir!

Count. I cannot.

Dori. Stay; or, dread a father's malediction!

Sir P. (Aside.) His father! The plague!—Hem!—*Lydia!*

Lydia. Hush!

Lady P. Father, indeed! What he! So, so! Here's a wirago; here's a chouse!

Sir P. My lady—

Lady P. I thought what would be the upshot on't!

Edmund. Madam! (Takes her aside.)

Dori. Spurred on by suppositions and conceits the most absurd; wholly intent upon yourself; contemning others; exacting respect you did not merit; refusing ceremony where 'twas due; protuberant with pride, yet poorly carping at and holding idiot warfare with the pride of others; forgetful of the dignity of reason, but, with tenacious grasp, clinging to the ludicrous dignity of birth; the heir, indeed, and first-born of folly, ignorance itself has mocked and taunted at you!

Lady P. Wery troo. Give him his own!

Sir P. Zounds! My lady, I wish he would give you your own a little: not but it's right enough.

Lady P. To be sure! I knows wery vell I am right.

Dori. Your father, too, has been avoided, nay, disowned; your father, who, for years, has lived in indigence, that he might secretly supply your wants, support you in splendour, and preserve you from all the misery of which he made himself the willing victim.

Count. Sir,—You?—Was it you? Oh! ingratitude!

Dori. Your father was offensive to your sight. And what was it you despised! Why, this poor garb. You wished no kindred with virtuous poverty. Had I appeared in all my former state, though knave or fool had been blazoned on my brow, yet, decked in the trappings of magnificence,

I had received an open welcome. But, blessed be my penury, since it has been your punishment.

Count. Sir, wrong as my heart is by remorse, and guilty as I know myself, (for I have still increase of guilt, no words can mitigate my crimes. Yet, though I have erred, I feel I have something in me capable of good; and strong propensities to all the tender ties, the filial duties, and the severer virtues, which I have seemed to want; a mind, which, once convinced, has strength to shun and to subdue its master passion, renounce its folly, and abhor its turpitude. Deep is my offence against you and nature; but let nature plead in my behalf. Here, at your feet, repentant for my faults, I claim that pity, which a father so good, and so affectionate, will not refuse.

Dori. Oh! no; for now you speak like the son of my heart, the image of my brightest hopes. You have stood the fiery trial, and are pure.

Lady P. Why, but, hark you me, mister,—why, what! you are not a count, too, to be sure!

Dori. No, madam.

Lady P. Why, then,—

Dori. If a title can flatter your ladyship, mine is something higher.

Lady P. How!

Dori. I am a marquis.

Lady P. A marquis! You! Vell!—(Aside.) For an outlandish marquis!

Edmund. My lady—

Sir P. Well, but the bills? (Holding them out.)

Dori. They are mine.

Count. Your's, sir!

Dori. Remittances for some recovered arrears. But, where is my brave protector,—my hero!

Count. Safe, sir. Every care is taken of the generous fellow. Is the physician come?

Sir P. Yes, yes; I have taken care of that. I have sent him my own physician.—Hem!—(Aside.) My cook!

Count. You know not half his worth.

Dori. Which shall not go unrewarded.

Count. No, by heaven!

Dori. We have now the means; we no longer are oppressed and poor.

Count. Yet, are you not in present danger?

Dori. No; malice has spent its last effort. Our ambassador has just sent me the final decision of the judges: my sentence is reversed, my whole estates are restored, and the power of my persecutors is at an end.

Count. Oh, fortune! Oh, my father!—And, may I hope it? My Lucy, may I?

Lucy. Yes; hope every thing.

Count. Mine?

Lucy. Your's; heart and soul.

Sir P. She is a brave wench!

Lady P. Hold a blow, if you please! What! am I nobody?

Count. Madam, to you a thousand excuses are due.

Lady P. To be sure they are!

Count. I am conscious of my past ridicule, and will no more contend with your ladyship for prejudices so false and weak.

Lady P. I know I was right; I know you made yourself ridiculous; I told you so often enough!

Sir P. Well said, my lady. But, hark you,

Miss Lydia,—And, sir,—

Dori. Count,—(Aside.) How shall I tell him?—My son, look at this charming, this virtuous young lady.

Sir P. (Aside.) Zounds! what now?

Count. I am conscious of having treated her with proud unkindness, at the very moment, too, when I perceived she was sincerely my friend.

Dori. Your friend! Look at her. Does not your heart throb? Feel you not sensations more tender? Are you not all doubt, all hope, all fear, all perturbation?

Count. Sir!—What!—Who?

Dori. Can you not imagine? Look at her, I say; behold her agitation!

Count. Mercy!

Dori. Open your arms, your heart, to receive her.

Count. Sir!—Madam!—Who?

Dori. Your sister.

Count. My sister!

Lydia. My dearest, best of brothers! (Running into his arms.)

Lucy. My friend! my Lydia!

Count. Oh! how culpable have I been!

Sir P. (Aside.) 'Sblood! here's a pretty piece of business!

Lady P. What's that you say, sir? Miss Liddy the Count's sister!

Edmund. 'Tis very true, madam.

Lady P. Troo! Vell, I purtest, I'm quite in a quandary.

Dori. (To Sir P.) And now, sir,—

Sir P. (Aside.) Yes, 'tis my turn, now!—Yes, sir.

Dori. While labouring to reclaim the follies of youth—

Sir P. Yes, sir.

Dori. We ought not to forget the vices of age.

Sir P. Hem!—We'll talk of them after supper, sir. (Looking round at Lady Peckham and the company.)

Dori. Well, sir, on condition—

Sir P. Oh! any condition you please, sir.

Edmund. (Leading Lydia.) My dear father!—

Sir P. My kind son!—(Aside.) Sly rascal!

Lydia. (To Sir P.) We shall want a house, sir.

Sir P. Hem!—Ay, ay!

Lydia. Somewhere in Mary-le-bone.

Sir P. Very well.

Lydia. With a—

Sir P. Zounds!—(Apart to Lydia.) Hush! don't mention the back door.

Lydia. (Apart to Sir P.) Then we are all friends?

Sir P. (Apart.) To be sure. But, you may as well not tell Scapegrace.

Lydia. (Apart.) Never fear.

Sir P. (Apart.) Not a word of the new liveries.

Lydia. (Apart.) Depend upon my honour.

Count. My sister and my friend! Can it be?

Edmund. Would you not wish it thus?

Count. Oh! most ardently!

Dori. Chequered are the scenes of life: pleasure and pain, joy and grief, austerity and laughter, intermingling, weave a motley web. Our prejudices are our punishments: they cling about us, warp our actions, distort our manners, render us the food of satire, the mockery of fools, and torture us, as wailing urchins are tormented to make sport for boys. Error and folly impede the progress of perfection. Truth alone can make men wise and happy. Myself the sacrifice of falsehood and mistake, feebly have I striven to stem the torrent; and here my task, and here, I hope, my troubles end.

(Exeunt.)

SEDUCTION;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.



Act V—Scene I

CHARACTERS.

LORD MORDEN
GENERAL BURLAND
SIR FREDERICK FASHION
WILMOT

LAPELLE
BAILIFFS
SERVANTS
LADY MORDEN

MRS. MODELY
MRS. PINUP
HARRIET
JIMLY

ACT I.

SCENE I—*A Drawing-room at Lord Morden's.*

Enter LAPELLE.

Lap (Looking at his watch) Twenty minutes past ten, a shameful time of the morning for a gentleman & gentleman to be disturbed. My lord has lost his money; can't sleep himself, and won't suffer others to take their natural rest.

Enter MRS. PINUP.

Mrs. P. I declare, upon my honour, this is a most monstrous time of night for a lady's gentlewoman to be kept up, dozing over a dull novel, or nodding in an antichamber and an arm chair, while others are taking their pleasure, and losing their estates, among their friends.

Lap. Good morrow, Mrs. Pinup.

Mrs. P. Good morrow, Mr. Lapelle! Good night, you mean. I have not been in bed yet.

Lap. No!

Mrs. P. That vile, bed-side bell! They'll wear me haggard before I am old. Know I should not rest long, so threw myself down in my clothes, and, just as I was got into a sound sleep, tingle, tingle, tingle, up I must get to dress my lady, who for my part, I believe, never sleeps at all.

Lap. Why, yes, your fashionable folks are a kind of ghosts, that walk of nights, and greatly trouble the repose of valets and ladies' maids, and late hours, like white paint, are excellent promoters of cracked complexions.

Mrs. P. I declare, upon my honour, I am as tired

as—as—

Lap. A hackney coach horse, on a rainy Sunday

Mrs. P. Yes, and as drowsy as—

Lap. An alderman at an oratorio. Your lady had a deal of company at her rout. Was Sir Frederick Fashion there?

Mrs. P. To be sure.

Lap. He is a prodigious favourite with your lady, I think.

Mrs. P. Favourite! There are strange doings in this world!—Staid, I know not how long, after every body else was gone

Lap. What! alone with your lady?

Mrs. P. Alone, with my lady.

Lap. Indeed! Was Mrs. Modely at the rout?

Mrs. P. Yes. But, don't ask me any questions; it's impossible I should say ten words more: I am talking in my sleep now. When I get up, in the morning, (that is, about three o'clock in the afternoon,) I'll tell you all. So, good night. *[Exit.]*

Lap. A wonderful change in a short time! Lady Morden, young, handsome, and full of spirits, was, not a month ago, reserved in her conduct, fond of her husband, contented with home, and, indeed, a miraculous kind of exception among wives of quality, whereas, now, she has suddenly turned fantastical in dress, capricious in temper, free of speech, and, what we half-bred folks should call, light of carriage. She games with the women, coquettes with the men, and seems, in every respect, ambitious to become a woman of fashion. As for my lord, why, he is a—man of fashion

SEDUCTION.

[ACT I.]

Enter GENERAL BURLAND.

General. Is your lady up, Mr. Lapelle?

Lap. Yes, sir; I believe she has never been in bed.

General. Who? what do you mean?

Lap. My lady had a rout last night.

General. A rout! and never in bed! Impossible.

Lap. Yes; but it's very true, sir.

General. Lady Morden! she whom, but a few weeks since, I left so singular, so eminent an example of simplicity and purity of manners.

Lap. Sir Frederick Fashion was here.

General. Sir Frederick Fashion!

Lap. He staid after every body else had retired.

General. What! alone with Lady Morden?

Lap. So her ladyship's woman, who is scarcely yet undressed, informed me.

General. Why, then, all hopes of goodness, in this world, are vanished! Go; bid my daughter, my Emily, to come to me.

Lap. She is not stirring, I fancy, sir.

General. But I fancy she is, sir; I am sure she is. What, sir, she had not a rout to keep her up all night!

Lap. She was of my lady's party, I believe, sir.

General. Go, go; pray, go, and do as I bid you.

[Exit Lapelle.]

What will this town, this world, come to! The only perfectly amiable, the only enchantingly virtuous woman I knew, fascinated, at last, and sinking into the gulph of depravity! She will drag down my Emily, too. No; I'll hide her in a forest, seclude her in a cave, rather than suffer her to be infected by the pestiferous breath of this contagious town. But is she not already tainted? Of my lady's party! she that I left her with as a pattern; commanded her to observe, to study, to imitate, in all things!

Re-enter LAPELLE.

Well, where is my daughter?

Lap. I have called her woman, and she will call Miss Emily.

General. I'll call her myself; and it shall be the most ungentle call she has long heard from me. [Exit.]

Enter HARRIET, disguised.

Lap. Who comes here? Some foreign sharper, I dare say; one of my lord's morning duns for last night's debts.

Har. (With the brogue.) Harkye! young man, may I be asking you where I will find my Lord Morden?

Lap. He is not come down, sir.

Har. Oh! that, I suppose, is because he is not up.

Lap. My lord told me he expected a gentleman or two would call; but he has had so many calls lately—

Har. That he is a little slow in answering.

Lap. Rather. Riches, regularity, and roast beef, will soon, I fear, take their leave of our house.

Har. Faidth! and that may v'ry will be; for they are all three become great vagabonds. Riches is turned American pedler; regularity a Prussian grenadier; and, as for roast beef, why, the Frinoh are now so fond of good old English fashions, that poor roast beef is transported alive to Paris.

Lap. My lord, I believe, is a little out of cash, at present.

Har. Will, now, that is v'ry prudent of him to put it out; for, whin a man finds he can't keep his cash himself, he is v'ry right to lit odther people keep it for him.

Lap. Nay, then, I don't know a more careful gentleman.

Har. Careful! Why, sure, always whin a man's spirit begins to take care of his money, 'tis because he has none.

Lap. Well, sir, if you will please to leave your

card, his lordship, I suppose, will know who has called.

Har. Indeed, and he won't.

Lap. How so, pray, sir?

Har. Faidth, for a v'ry good reason,—he never saw me in his life.

Lap. Who, then, shall I say?

Har. And is it my name you would know?

Lap. If you please.

Har. Let me see: what the white divle is my name, now? Oh! Charles Phelim O'Fireaway: an Irishman by accident; a gentleman by policy; and a captain of croats in the Austrian sarvis, by design. Do you understand that riddle, now?

Lap. Not clearly.

Har. (Aside.) I did not intend you should.—What time can I see my lord?

Lap. Most likely, about one.

Har. Will, then, give him this litter, and inform his lordship I will take the liberty of calling, this afternoon, to bid him a good-morrow. [Exit.]

Enter LORD MORDEN.

Lord M. (Speaking as he enters.) Lapelle!

Lap. (Aside.) So, here he comes already.—My lord!

Lord M. What time is it?

Lap. Eleven o'clock, my lord.

Lord M. What a d—d night have I passed! Is my coffee ready?

Lap. I'll go and see, my lord.

[Exit.]

Lord M. (Throws himself on the sofa,) This head-ache!—No rest!—Oh! for half an hour's sleep! A cursed, silly course of mine! But, there is no accounting in the morning for the conduct of overnight.

Re-enter LAPELLE, with coffee.

This is not half strong enough. Get me some as strong as possible.—Any message? (Rings.)

Lap. This letter, my lord.

Lord M. From Lady Westbrook, I see.—(Reads.) Um—“A young lady in disguise—Um—will relate her own story.—Um, um—Rely on your honour to keep her secret, and serve her cause.—Would have addressed myself to Lady Morden, but for reasons which you shall know hereafter.”

Enter LAPELLE, with more coffee.

Who brought this letter?

Lap. An Irish gentleman, in a foreign dress.

Lord M. A gentleman!

Lap. Said he would call about one o'clock, my lord.

Lord M. Shew him into my room, and inform me the instant he comes.

Lap. General Burland is here.

Lord M. (Aside.) General Burland! Zounds!

Lap. Came to town late last night, my lord.

Lord M. Tell him I am come down.

[Exit Lapelle.]

Must not let him see the present temper of my mind. My guardian once, he is determined never to think me of age. I need not his reproof to increase my present chagrin; my own follies, and Lady Morden's unexpected, unaccountable reverse of conduct, are sufficient. He will lay it all to me; and, perhaps, with reason. Heigho! Here he comes. Really, one of these very prudent, plain-speaking friends, is a very disagreeable person, in these our moments of folly. Well, I must assume a cheerfulness I don't feel, and ward off his wisdom with railleury.

Enter GENERAL BURLAND.

General. Good morrow, my lord.

Lord M. General, good morrow.

General. You seem scarcely awake.

Lord M. (Stretching.) Slept ill; troubled with the night-mare.

General. Your troubles, I am afraid, are rapidly increasing.

Lord M. How so, General?

General. Lady Morden had a rout last night.

Lord M. Oh! and forgot to send you a card, I suppose. Is that my fault?

General. You are merry, my lord; but, he who drinks poison, out of a frolic, will soon be glad to send for a physician, out of fear; and the chances are, the doctor will come too late.

Lord M. Trope and figure!

General. My lord, my lord! this levity is unseasonable; blushes and shame would better become you.

Lord M. They are out of fashion.

General. Yes, you leave your friends to blush for your faults.

Lord M. My friends are very good; nay, indeed, generous; for, were they but to spare a single blush for each of their own faults, they would have none to bestow on mine.

General. Fie! The mirth of a madman is sport only to boys. I was your guardian, I wished to prove myself your friend. 'Twas I first discovered that, then, angelic woman, who is, now, Lady Morden; I was the cause of her union with you; and I am, therefore, accountable to myself, to her, and to society, for her conduct.

Lord M. That is, you are a kind of second-hand sponsor; godfather-in-law, as it were.

General. Very well, sir, proceed. Despise reproof; ridicule advice.

Lord M. Nay, good doctor, you really wrong me; 'tis not the advice, but the physic, I hate: at least, I hate the form under which it is administered.—But, pray, tell me: when last you saw Lady Morden, did you perceive any symptoms of that degeneracy in her ladyship, you now complain so loudly of?

General. None: I thought it impossible.

Lord M. And is it not rather extraordinary, then, that my example should, so suddenly subdue what, within this month, seemed so invulnerable?

General. (With great surprise and energy.) It is extraordinary, my lord; most extraordinary! but, not less true; and, had you any sense of your duty to yourself, your family, or society, the truth of it would make you tremble.

Lord M. See how differently different people understand things. My acquaintance are, every day, wishing me joy of her ladyship's reformation, and telling me how surprisingly she has retrieved her character in the world.

General. And Sir Frederick Fashion, no doubt, among the rest!

Lord M. (Endeavouring to conceal his feelings.) Hem!—yes—yes. He is one of our very first men, you know; and he is quite in raptures with her: swears she was born to lead and outshine us all.

General. (With continued irony.) The approbation of so great an adept must give you vast pleasure!

Lord M. Hem!—a—infinitesimal!—Not but this sudden change has rather surprised me.

General. How so?

Lord M. Just as you left town, her ladyship's melancholy seemed increasing; wandering over the house, like a perturbed spirit, as the play says, mournfully clanking her chains, and frightening the gentle smiles and pleasures from her, she seemed to way-lay me; and, with moving look and melting eye, entreat compassion; till, egad! I really, at last, began to pity her.

General. You did?

Lord M. Yes. But, suddenly forsaking the

penseroso, she broke in upon me, one morning, and, with an air of levity and good humour, and a small tincture of reproach, then and there read a very pretty, wife-like remonstrance.

General. To which you listened with a truly picktooth insensibility.

Lord M. Yes, you know my way.

General. And what was the subject of her discourse?

Lord M. Why, chapter the first was a recapitulation of my agreeable follies, and her own perverse virtues. She was no partaker in my pleasure; I had forgotten every endearment. She was left to dine, sup, and sleep, by herself; I dined, supped, and slept, nobody knew where. She more reclusive than the abbess of a convent; I more uncertain than the price of stocks, or the place of prime minister.

General. (With earnest concern.) And what did you say to this?

Lord M. (Aside.) I must face it out.—Say! What could I say to such a simple woman?

General. You did not attempt to deny the charge, then?

Lord M. What should I deny? 'Twas every syllable true; and every syllable in my praise.

General. Humph!—Then you do not think the sweets of affection ought, sometimes, to alleviate the bitterness of neglect.

Lord M. Sweets! Psha! they are too cloying to the stomach, and ought to be taken sparingly. I am fond of sweet music, but too much of it sets me to sleep. Besides, a wife, like a barrelled organ, can only play one set of tunes.

General. (Sighs.) Well, sir, but the conclusion.

Lord M. A very unexpected one, I assure you. I misunderstood this for a declaration of war; and, with a smile, was very obligingly about to entreat her ladyship would hush her melancholy into mischief her own way; when, turning short upon me, she chafed, seemed ashamed, began to apologize, applauded my conduct, ridicule the silliness of her own, and promised to become as fashionable a lady as I, or any lord in Christendom, could wish.

General. Your increase of happiness is, then, prodigious?

Lord M. Hem!—a—unspeakable. Lady Morden, I own, was, certainly, a kind of demi-angel, though my wife; but, then, her—her goodness seemed to throw one at such a distance, so much in the back-ground, that there was only one figure noticed in the picture.

General. 'Tis well, sir, you are so perfectly satisfied.

Lord M. Nay, General, I will own I have often felt a kind of inclination, a sort of wish, as it were, to become very prudent, and wise, and—all that; but, really, one has so much to do, that one does not know where to begin. Besides, you very good kind of people, you—upon my honour, you are, in many respects, the most queer, precise, particular species of beings, and have such notions! Instead of taking one's pleasure, and doing just what one likes best, which, you know, is so natural, one must live for the good of one's country, love one's wife and children, pay tradesmen, look over accounts, reward merit, and a thousand other of the—the most ridiculous whims; and what nobody—absolutely, nobody does.

General. Intolerable profligacy! I have listened to you, my lord, with grief, vexation, astonishment, and pity! Your mind is degraded; and the more dangerously so, because you believe your worst vices to be your greatest merits. You have had honour, happiness, and pleasure, of the most perfect kind, within your power; and you have re-

jected them, to clasp their shadows! To merit pity by misconduct is humiliating; but, by misconduct to incur contempt, is, to a manly spirit, insupportable; and the latter will, I fear, be suddenly your lordship's fate. Did not the remembrance of your noble father affect me, I should look upon your approaching puffishment with apathy; because you willfully have plunged to perdition; but, for your lady, if I cannot retrieve, if I cannot save her, I shall mourn, indeed! [Exit.]

Lord M. 'Faith! this good general is, like a cuckoo, always in a tune. (Sighs.) He has reason. I have laboured to laugh at my own follies; but the farce is over, the forced jest forgotten, and the sorceress recollection conjures up the ugly phantom disgust. Why, what a child am I! Oh! Lady Morden—Psha! absurd! I will not make myself the butt, and by-word, of my acquaintance. I—I—I will laugh—ha, ha, ha!—laugh at my lady's gallantries. I jealous! I! that have daily mad jealousy a standing jest; the criterion of an ill-red, vulgar mind!—No, no, no.—(Sees Lady Morden and Sir Frederick Fashion coming, and is seized with a suspicious anxiety, which he endeavours to conceal.)

Enter LADY MORDEN in an undress, followed by SIR FREDERICK FASHION.

Lady M. (Speaking as she enters.) No, no; Sir Frederick, you are partial,

Sir F. Not in the least, madam.

Lady M. Yes, you are—Good morrow to your lordship—Yes, you are. I feel, I still retain a leaven of former silly prejudices; but, a little collision, among you people of superior fashion, will soon wear these asperities smooth, and bring them to bear a proper polish.

Sir F. Ah! madam, you have a leaven of something celestial, which we inferior people wonder at, but cannot imitate.

Lord M. (Aside.) So!

Lady M. (Taps Sir Frederick Fashion with her fan.) Fie, flatterer! But, you are always saying civil things; and that, I fancy, makes you so agreeable.

Sir F. No, Lady Morden, you wrong me; my tongue is forced to give utterance to the effusions of my heart. By heaven, you are an angel! and I am, involuntarily, obliged to repeat, and repeat, and repeat, that you are an angel! You must not be angry with me, for I cannot help it.

Lady M. No, no; angry! no. 'Tough, I really believe, I do improve—don't I, my lord!

Lord M. Certainly, madam, certainly!

Lady M. Yes, I have discovered that one of my most capital errors, formerly, was being too sensible of my own defects. I find that to wear, on one's countenance, an open and avowed consciousness that one possesses every grace and perfection, is the grand secret of really possessing them; or, at least, of persuading the world one really does, which is the same thing.

Sir F. Your ladyship is very right; nothing can put a face of real fashion out of countenance: the placid features are all fixed.

Lady M. Oh! immovable. Like the owners' names, out in brass, and nailed to their doors.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! Charming!

Lady M. Do but observe one of our well-bred beaux, at a public assembly, and you will see him enter, plant himself in a spot, elevate his eyebrows, fix his eyes, half open his mouth, and stand like an automaton, with its head turning on a pivot. (Mimicking.)

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! Charming, charming!

Lord M. (Smiling.) But, don't you think this a little tending to the ridiculous, madam?

Lady M. Oh dear! no. Nothing can be ridiculous that's fashionable.

Sir F. Oh! no; impossible!

Lady M. Formerly, I should have blushed, if stared at; but, now, I find, the only way is to stare again, without looking—that is, without betraying the least indication of knowing whether one is looking towards the man, or the wall:—thus.

Lord M. (With forced pleasantry.) Ha, ha, ha! Your ladyship is very right: modesty—modesty is an obsolete bugbear.

Lady M. Yes; and, like the—the ghost in the tragedy, has been stared out of doors.

Sir F. Oh! the very Quakers despise it, at present.

Lady M. Yes; 'tis a shabby fellow, whose acquaintance every body wishes to drop. To be sure, I was a most absurd creature,—was not I, my lord?

Lord M. I—upon my honour, madam, I—you—no, no; not absurd—no.

Lady M. Oh, fie! not absurd! Why, do you know, Sir Frederick—ha, ha, ha!—I—ha, ha, ha! I was downright in love with his lordship.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! In love with his lordship!

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! Upon my honour, 'tis true, is it not, my lord?

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha! Ye—ye—yes, madam, yes.

Lady M. Thought him the most charming man in the whole world!

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! Is that possible?

Lady M. Why, it—it is scarcely credible; but such is the fact. Nay, I doated on him, and continually reproached myself for wanting power and attractions to obtain my lord's affection. For I never blamed him—ha, ha, ha!—I—ha, ha, ha!—I used to sit whole nights, while my lord was out, watching and weeping; and whole days studying which way I could regain his love.

Sir F. Regain, Lady Morden! Why, was his lordship ever so unfashionable as—

Lady M. As to love his wife! Why, yes, really, I—I do believe he was so singular, for—for a whole fortnight.

Sir F. Why,—ha, ha, ha!—Why, were you, Lord Morden?

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha!—I—I—I don't know, sir, what I was. (With chagrin.)

Lady M. Nay, don't be out of countenance, my lord! You hear I have the justice to relate my own foibles, as well as your lordship's; and mine—mine were infinitely the greater. It is exceedingly strange, but so fascinated was I, that—ha, ha, ha!—I—ha, ha, ha!—(Suddenly becoming very serious.) I am verily persuaded, I could have died with pleasure to have insured his affection.

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha! (Aside.) I cannot bear it.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! These things are unaccountable.

Lady M. (Resuming her levity.) Ay, one wonders how one could be so weak!—Oh! Sir Frederick, I am going to Charlotte's. There is a painting I have a mind to purchase: they tell me 'tis very fine.

Sir F. What is the story, madam?

Lady M. The Metamorphosis of Actæon.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! A fashionable subject.

Lady M. Yes! that—that—that is the very reason I wish to have it. Poor Actæon is taken at the precise moment when the—the change is taking place.

Sir F. In his forehead?

Lady M. Yes. I am going down there, now. Will you go with me, Sir Frederick?

Sir F. With pleasure, madam. Ha, ha, ha! Poor Actæon!

Lady M. Ay, poor Actæon!—Adieu, my lord!

[Exit with Sir F.]

Lord M. Madam! (Following, stops short.)—'Sdeath! what am I about? Shall I, at last, sink into one of the vulgar, and become jealous?—Wretched about a—oh, no! Actæon! (*Striking his forehead.*) Sure, all men are idiots, and never know the value of that most inestimable jewel, a lovely and a loyal wife, till in danger of having it purloined. . . [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

LAPELLE discovered coming from the door of the antichamber, as if he had been listening.

Lap. So, Mr. Irishman by accident! A lady in disguise! That's the riddle, is it? But, hush!

Enter LORD MORDEN and HARRIET.

Lord M. (To Lapelle.) Leave the room. [*Exit Lapelle.*] I am sorry we were disturbed. Your story, madam, has interested me deeply. Though too reprehensible for the irregularities of my own conduct, I cannot but condemn the licentious libertinism of this Sir Frederick. Indeed, I—I have reason, perhaps, to dread it.

Har. A man of honour, among men, the ruin of woman he thinks as necessary to his fame as to his pleasure; and, like too many others of your cruel sex, holds it no crime to make war upon those who cannot defend themselves.

Lord M. But, what do you propose by this disguise, madam?

Har. There is a contract, which I, indeed, refused, but which he forced upon me, to demonstrate, as he said, the purity of his intentions, wherein he bound himself in a penalty of ten thousand pounds, to marry me within a month; for, in his fictitious raptures, he protested no sum, no proofs, could sufficiently express the ardour and sanctity of his affection.

Lord M. And have you this contract?

Har. Oh! no. The day preceding that on which it was my good fortune to discover his real designs, he asked to see, and artfully exchanged it for a counterfeit copy.

Lord M. This contract you wish to regain?

Har. If possible; or some other unequivocal means of detection.

Lord M. And force him to marry you?

Har. Oh! no. To own the truth, I have a generous and a constant lover, who, perhaps, has been a little ill used.

Lord M. As most generous and constant lovers are.

Har. 'Tis too true. To avenge him, and humble the pride of one who thinks himself too cunning for our whole sex, is my determination.

Lord M. Well, madam, ours is a common cause; but, as we have both been imprudent, and invited misfortune, we must both endeavour to conceal our true feelings, mask our suspicions, and—Hush! here he comes; and with him a lady, whose principles are as free as his own; but who has had the art so well to conceal her intrigues, and preserve appearances, that she is every where received in society. I will introduce you in your assumed character.

Har. Not now; let us withdraw; when he is alone. The fewer eyes that are on me, the less liable I shall be to a discovery. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter MRS. MODELY and SIR FREDERICK FASHION.

Mrs. M. Really, Sir Frederick, there is no accounting for the strangeness of your present taste. I pity you; I foresee the downfall of your reputation. What, you who have vanquished so many

elegant coquettes, and driven so many happy lovers mad. you who were the very soul of our first societies, and whose presence made palpitate the hearts of belles and beaux,—the first with hope and delight, the latter with fear and envy; you signing at the feet of a prude, and become the rival of a husband!

Sir F. (Laughing.) Deplorable!

Mrs. M. Have not you, for this month past, buried yourself in Lady Morden's sober society, and dozed over crown whist with her, night after night? Nay, have not you attended her even to church; and there, with a twang, joined the amen chorus of charity-children, paupers, and parish-clerks; sitting with your face drawn as long as its shadow at sun-set; and a look as demure and dismal—

Sir F. As poor Doctor Faustus, waiting for the devil to come and fetch him! Ha, ha, ha!—Granted.

Mrs. M. And what do you think has been said of you, meanwhile, in the polite circles you have abandoned? Your very best friends have been the very first to condemn you.

Sir F. That's natural. When we are guilty of any folly, our very best friends are always the very first to condemn us; to shew they neither advise nor countenance us.

Mrs. M. I thought the gay, young beauty, besieged by pleasures, surrounded by flatteries, who believes herself the goddess she is painted, to fix her wandering fancy, to humble and bring her to a sense of frailty; or, to supplant the happy, the adored lover, while yet the breath is warm that vows eternal constancy; these I imagined were the only achievements worthy Sir Frederick Fashion!

Sir F. These have their *éclat*. But, to initiate a youthful, beauteous wife, who, from her childhood has been accustomed to say her prayers, believe in virtue, and rank conjugal infidelity among the most heinous of the seven deadly sins; to teach her to doubt, fear, wish, tremble, and venture, to be a witness, afterwards, of her repentance; her tears involuntarily falling, her eyes motionless, her form fixed, and the severe saint transformed to a statue of weeping sin; to read her fall in the public papers; be praised, reproached, admired, and cursed, in every family in England; in short, to be for ever immortalized in the annals of gallantry, and the hero of the tea-table for a whole month,—for this will be no common vulgar wonder,—this were glory equal to my ambition! And, this glory I am determined to acquire; nay, it is already within my grasp. This day, or, rather, this night, shall I gain the greatest of all my victories!

Mrs. M. Insulting!

Sir F. Nay, my dear Mrs. Modely, you know my enthusiasm, and must not take exceptions; nor can I, surely, be blamed. Lady Morden is a concealed hoard of native sweets, that delights the senses; while the made-up beauties we commonly meet, like artificial flowers, are all show, and no fragrance.

Mrs. M. Raptures!

Sir F. Inferior to her, in form and perfection, as the Venus of a Dutch image-hawker to the genuine Grecian antique!

Mrs. M. It matters not wasting your rhetoric on this topic, for I will not give my consent to your pursuing this affair any further, Sir Frederick.

Sir F. You will not?

Mrs. M. I will not.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! Don't provoke me, my dear Mrs. Modely; don't provoke me!

Mrs. M. Nay, no threatening.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! Well, to arms, then: war is the word.

Mrs. M. The choice remains with you.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. M. Lady Morden is my relation; and, though I despise prudery, and know the world,—
Sir F. (Aside.) That you do, indeed.

Mrs. M. Yet, you can hardly suppose I will silently acquiesce in her ruin.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! You—you forget yourself, dear madam: these qualms would do vastly well, in some places; but, to me—

Mrs. M. And, why not to you, sir? Though I do allow myself a little liberty of conscience,—

Sir F. (Aside.) Not a little.

Mrs. M. And, though you—you know I do, must I—in short, I have another favourite project, which I am determined not to give up.

Sir F. (Aside.) Oh, ho! But, it will be best to avoid a rupture.—May I ask what this favourite project may be?

Mrs. M. You know the public affront General Burland gave me, last winter; and you cannot suppose I have forgotten it.

Sir F. (Aside.) No; I know you better.—Oh! the General is an eccentric mortal; licensed to say anything; and, instead of being listened to, is laughed at.

Mrs. M. Yes; but I am determined he shall be punished!

Sir F. Which way?

Mrs. M. His daughter Emily is a pretty, simple girl; I mean, untutored in the world.

Sir F. (Conceiving her design.) True.

Mrs. M. To see her married to a man of fashion, would, at least, break his heart.

Sir F. (Laughs.) Infallibly!

Mrs. M. Your fortune, I believe, Sir Frederick, like your family seat, begins to want repairs; and she is a rich heiress, with twenty thousand pounds, at her own disposal, besides the General's estate, which must be hers—Why do you laugh so?

Sir F. Oh! the delights of anticipation!

Mrs. M. An—an-anticipation!

Sir F. (Still laughing.) It is a part of my plan to carry her off,—I mean, to let her carry me off this very night.

Mrs. M. Who, Emily?

Sir F. Emily.

Mrs. M. To-night?

Sir F. This active, this important, this blissful [night!]

Mrs. M. Lend me your eau de luce, you divel!

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! This surprise from you, Mrs. Modely, is the supreme of panegyric.

Mrs. M. And have you made any advances to Emily?

Sir F. Yes, yes,—ha, ha, ha!—I made advances to her, and she made advances to me. The conquest was too easy. Were it not for the circumstance of the elopement, which will give the sauce a flavour the food wants, it would scarcely invite my appetite.

Mrs. M. But, Lady Morden—

Sir F. Is mine, whenever I please to make my final attack. I am no bad brator, in general; but, in company with her, I seem inspired; am, absolutely, astonished at my own eloquence; nay, I have several times spoken with such energy, enthusiasm, and momentary conviction, in praise of virtue, that I have, actually, been in imminent danger of making a convert of myself.

Mrs. M. In praise of virtue?

Sir F. In praise of virtue. There is no making one of these virtuous visionaries rational, but by flattering their bigotry; and pretending to adore their idol; by pursuing which method, I have insured her to, and made her as familiar with, what is prudishly called vice and vicious sentiments, as she is with her own thoughts.

Mrs. M. Yes, yes, vile rake!—But, remember, I have no concern in this affair. I—

Sir F. Oh, pooh!—Ay, ay, that is understood. You wink, and know nothing of the matter.

Mrs. M. Nay, but, I here publicly protest against your proceedings.—

Sir F. (Aside.) And will privately do your utmost to promote them.

Mrs. M. I exclaim against such licentiousness.

Sir F. I know you do. But, if you are thus tender of her ladyship's reputation, you will feel no repugnance at assisting me to irritate his lordship's sensibility.

Mrs. M. What do you mean?

Sir F. To confess the truth, I am a little piqued at Lord Morden's want of feeling. I wish I could make him jealous.

Mrs. M. Jealous! Fie! he is too well-bred.

Sir F. That's unfortunate. The antics of a jealous husband add highly to the enjoyment as well as the reputation of an amour. The poor man is so injured, so enraged, so distressed, so industrious to publish his calamity, and is so sincerely pitted and laughed at—must, positively, rouse my lord to a sense of his misfortune, or it will want poignancy: a turtle-feast without French wines!

Mrs. M. Well, should I find any opportunity of asking you—

Sir F. Ay, ay; I have no doubt of your zeal in the cause.

Mrs. M. Nay, but, don't mistake me: I only mean as far as teasing his lordship is concerned.

Sir F. Oh! certainly, certainly.

Mrs. M. If his lordship had any real cause for jealousy, I should, for Lady Morden's sake, be the—the—the—the most miserable creature upon earth.

Sir F. To be sure.

Mrs. M. But, you seem mightily secure of your conquest.

Sir F. I am no novice; I can tell when a woman's time is come. Besides, her ladyship has granted me a rendezvous.

Mrs. M. When?

Sir F. Why, this very evening, to be sure.

Mrs. M. Where?

Sir F. Here, in this very house.

Mrs. M. Since you are so very certain, how came you not to take advantage of being alone with her, after the rout?

Sir F. I did: that is, should have done, had we not been interrupted.

Mrs. M. By whom?

Sir F. A new footman; an odd kind of—Oh! here the very fellow comes.

Enter GABRIEL, loitering and leering.

Mrs. M. What does the rude lout leer at?

Sir F. Country curiosity.

Gab. (Attempting to go once or twice, then pausing and turning back.) Did—did—did your ladyship's honour call?

Mrs. M. No.

Gab. I—thought, mayhap, you wanted my lord.

Mrs. M. What should I want you for, think you, friend?

Gab. Nay, marry, that's more nor I can tell.

Sir F. What is your name?

Gab. Gabriel, an't please you. In my last place, they used to call me the Sly Simpleton.

Mrs. M. And who did you live with last?

Gab. Why, you an' heard of my lady's brother, the rich nabob, that be just come over fro' the Eastern Indies?

Sir F. Mr. Wilmot?

Gab. Ees; I do come fro' his estate, out o' Staffordshire.

Sir F. You are part of the live stock?

Gab. Anan!

Mrs. M. Were you in his service?

Gab. N—ees.

Mrs. M. How long?

Gab. Better nur a week.

Sir F. What sort of a man is he?

Gab. Humph! A be well enough when a's pleased; though I canno' say as I do like him much for a measter.

Mrs. M. Why so?

Gab. Becase a'll neither let a servant tell lies nor take money.

Sir F. Indeed!

Gab. No, a wo'not; whereof, here, I find, I can no' please my lady, if I do no' tell lies; and, I am sure, I canno' please myself if I do no' take money.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. M. Ha, ha, ha! So, he did not suit you?

Gab. No; a's too high flown, as 'twere, in's notions.

Sir F. Which way?

Gab. A makes a great case o' what a calls friendship, and honour, and honesty, and such like; and, you know, if a poor sarvant gi's heed to that there sort o' stuff, a's not likely to get rich.

Mrs. M. Upon my word!

Sir F. So, Mr. Wilmot's head is full of such nonsense, is it?

Gab. Oh! a's brimful o' such nonsense, and so were I, while I lived wi' he; which wur the reasog, as I do suppose, that they called me a simpleton; but I am not so simple as folk think me.

Sir F. (To *Mrs. M.*) My dear *Mrs. Modely*, leave me for a moment with this fellow. You'll be upon the watch, to throw in any hints or aids you happen to see necessary, and apropos.

Mrs. M. Yes, yes; that is, for Emily and the eloquent: but be cautious; a defeat would turn the tables upon us, and make us the jest of the whole town, friends and enemies.

Sir F. How can you fear it?

Mrs. M. Nay, I do not; I know my sex, and I know you. [Exit.]

Sir F. Gabriel is your name, you say?

Gab. Ees.

Sir F. You seem a sharp kind of fellow, and one that understands his own interest.

Gab. Ees; I understand my own interest.

Sir F. Are you, if occasion should offer, willing to do me a piece of service?

Gab. Humph! What will you gi' me?

Sir F. I see you are a sensible fellow, and come to the point at once.

Gab. Ees; I love to come to the point.

Sir F. And you would not betray me to anybody?

Gab. Why, not unless somebody were to pay me better.

Sir F. Upon my honour, thou art the honestest rogue I ever met with.

Gab. Ees, that I be.

Sir F. Here, here is money for thee; and, observe, as thou seemest perfectly to understand a bargain, thou shalt have more in proportion to thy fidelity and capacity; and, moreover—Canst thou read and write?

Gab. Ees.

Sir F. Well, then, be faithful, and I will get thee a place in the excise: and now, observe, I—I have a very great respect and friendship for your lady.

Gab. Ees, ees; as we sen i'the country, you have more nur a month's mind to her.

Sir F. How, sirrah! Dare you suppose I have?

Gab. Nay, now, belike you think me a simpleton, too. Your great folk supposen a sarvant has neither ears nor eyes; but, lord! they are mistaken: eood! their ears are often plaguy long. What, mun, I wur no' so fast asleep as you thought me, i'the passage, this morning.

Sir F. (Aside.) The rascal!

Gab. Belike, because I be a country lad, you reckon I should think it strange, like, that one gentleman should teak a liking to another gentleman's

wife; bat, lord! I know well enough that's nought here. I ha' learned a little o' what's what.

Sir F. Nay, friend Gabriel, I am more and more convinced thou art a clever, acute fellow.

Gab. Lord! mun, your worship need no' be so shy, like; you do know, you ha' promised me a place; an' places that are no' bought one way, mun be bought another.

Sir F. Well said! friend Gabriel!

Gab. An' as for keeping o' family secrets, do no' you fear me; because why, I do find they be a sarvant's best parkisites; for, an' it wur no' for family secrets, how should so many poor country Johns so very soon become gentlemen?

Sir F. This fellow's thoughts run all in one channel; his ruling passion is money; the love of that sharpens his intellects, and opens his eyes and ears. (Aside.) Well, Gabriel, you shall find me generous as a prince, provided—here's somebody coming—go into the next room; I'll speak with you presently.

Gab. Yes; but I do hope your honour's worship wunna' forget the place, like?

Sir F. Never fear.

[Exit Gabriel.]

Enter EMILY.

My angel! my life!—

Emily. Hush! My papa is coming, and wants to take me away with him home.

Sir F. Away!

Emily. Yes; hush! take no notice.

Enter GENERAL BURLAND.

General. Come, Emily, are you ready?

Emily. I am always ready and happy to obey my dear papa, but surely, sir, you will not let me leave Lady Morden without so much as bidding her adieu?

General. I'll write a card of thanks to her ladyship, with your respects, and as many compliments as you please.

Emily. Nay, but, dear sir, consider; it will seem too abrupt. Lady Morden is so good, so kind! I would not give her a moment's pain for the world. Besides, I have so many obligations to her ladyship.

General. I begin to be afraid, child, lest you should have too many obligations to her ladyship.

Emily. Let me only stay to-night, and to-morrow morning I will go with all my heart, and as early as you please, if you desire me.

Sir F. I protest she is bantering him. Oh! the charming, malicious little angel! (Aside.) Ay, General, let Emily stay to-night; I will answer for her she will go to-morrow morning, as soon as you please, if you desire her.

General. You will answer for her!

Sir F. Yes: won't you permit me, Emily?

Emily. My dear papa knows I never attempt to break my word.

General. Yes, my child, I do know you have, hitherto, been unsported and pure as the morning lily; and my anxiety that you should remain so makes me thus desirous of your quitting this house. When I brought you here, these doors did not so easily fly open at the approach of such fine, such accomplished gentlemen as Sir Frederick Fashion.

Sir F. (Aside.) By heavens, he anticipates his misfortunes!

Emily. (Takes the General's hand.) Do, my dear papa, consent only for to-day; I don't ask any longer.

Sir F. (Aside.) I could hug the charming hypocrite!

General. Well, well, Emily; you know I never deny you anything; for, indeed, you never yet asked anything that could give the most anxious and affectionate father a moment's pain.

Emily. (Kisses his hand.) I thank you, dear, dear sir; you have made me happy.

Sir F. By my life, I shall find this a much more agreeable affair than I hoped. (*Aside.*) Yes, General, you—you are a very good papa.

General. You think so?

Sir F. Yes, I do, upon my soul!

General. Then I am what you, I am afraid, will never be. [*Exit with Emily.*]

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! He does not suspect we are so soon to be so nearly related. Ha, ha, ha! I should like to be present when he first hears the news. He—he will foam and bounce like a cork from a bottle of champagne.

Enter LORD MORDEN.

Lord M. Well, Sir Frederick, is her ladyship returned?

Sir F. Yes; she is dressing for dinner. She bought the Actæon.

Lord M. She did?

Sir F. Oh! yes. She is a charming woman! the eyes of the whole room were upon her. There were some smart things said: one observed a likeness between me and Actæon; another thought it bore a far greater resemblance to your lordship.

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha! About the head, no doubt?

Sir F. For my part, I said I thought the likeness was very capable of being improved.

Lord M. You were very kind.

Sir F. Oh! pray, have you heard that Sir Peter Pry is going to sue for a bill of divorce?

Lord M. No.

Sir F. 'Tis very true. I should not have suspected Sir Peter of such vulgar revenge; but, I find, our married men of fashion are far less liberal in their sentiments than the ladies.

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha! Yes; they often want a woman's philosophy in these matters.

Sir F. Yes; they are wasps that fly and feed wherever they can find honey, but retain a sting for any marauder that shall approach their nests.

Lord M. Somewhat selfish, I own.

Sir F. Much more liable to be jealous than the women; and jealousy, your lordship knows, is the most ridiculous, ill-bred, contemptible thing in nature.

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha! Yes, yes. Ha, ha, ha! Perfectly despicable.

Sir F. Oh! nothing so laughable as the vagaries of a jealous husband: no creature suffers so much, or is pitted so little.

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha! Ay, the thefts of love are applauded, not punished.

Sir F. Yes; and the poor, robbed husband, watchman-like, twirls his rattle, alarms the neighbourhood, and collects assistants, who never fail to aid the thief, and laugh at him and his loss.

Lord M. Ye—ye—yes.—Ha, ha, ha!—A husband is a very strange, ignominious animal.

Sir F. A jealous husband!

Lord M. A paltry, mechanical—

Sir F. Without an idea of life or manners!

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha! Very true. But come with me; there's a young gentleman in the antichamber, of a good family, who wishes to be introduced to you. A very pretty fellow! Has an ambition to do something which shall give him *éclat*, and is, therefore, desirous of being known to us men of the world.

Sir F. Well, I am your's for a few minutes; but I must attend Lady Morden at her toilette presently. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.—SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter LORD MORDEN, and GABRIEL introducing GENERAL BURLAND.

General. Well, my lord, is Lady Morden to be seen?

Gab. Oh! ees, your worship, hur will be, anon; for yonder is Sir Frederick, helping the maid to dress her ladyship.

General. Helping to dress her ladyship?

Gab. Ees; they sent me for some milk of roses, here; (*shows the phial*) and, would you believe it? I wur sich an oaf, I had never heard before that roses gave milk.

General. Ah! you are some half-taught country booby.

Gab. Why, so I do find; for, in the country, the folk do only clear-starch their aprons and ruffles; but here, eend! they clear starch their faces.

General. Well, go, carry in your milk; and inform her ladyship I am waiting her leisure. (*Laughing within.*)

Gab. Ecod! here they all come, your honour; and rare and merry they be! but your Londoners do lead a rare ranting life! [*Exit.*]

Enter SIR FREDERICK FASHION, LADY MORDEN, and MRS. MODELY.

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! Oh! you whimsical toad, you! Ha, ha, ha! You have half-killed me! I am glad to see you in town, General. We have been drawing the characters of our acquaintance; and Mrs. Modely and Sir Frederick Fashion have been so droll and so satirical!

General. Ah! no doubt.

Lady M. I could not have thought there was so much satisfaction in remembering the failings of one's friends.

Mrs. M. Oh! it makes one so cheerful!

Sir F. And keeps one so charmingly in countenance!

General. (Aside.) Which you stand in very great need of.

Sir F. I assure your ladyship, you have an exquisite turn for satire; you cut with excessive keenness, and yet, with a dexterity that makes the very patient tingle with pleasure.

Lady M. You are partial.

Lord M. I think you had not much company last night.

Lady M. Your lordship was so well-bred, and made your visit so short, else you would have found a great deal.

Mrs. M. Oh! yes, they poured in from all quarters.

Sir F. Sir Nathan Neaptide, the yellow admiral, came.

Lord M. An agreeable guest!

Lady M. Oh! rude as his own boatswain.

Mrs. M. That makes him so much respected.

Lady M. Yes; like a chimney-sweeper in a crowd, he makes his way by being dirty.

Sir F. I protest, your ladyship is prodigiously brilliant to-day.

Lady M. No, no; though I am a vast admirer of wit. A person of wit has one very peculiar and enviable advantage.

Lord M. What is that, madam?

Lady M. Long life.

Lord M. Long life!

Lady M. Yes; a wit has more ideas, consequently lives longer, in one hour, than a fool in seven years.

Sir F. For which reason, your ladyship is already three times the age of old Parr.

Lady M. Dear Sir Frederick, that is so gallant!

Mrs. M. And so new!

General. Why, yes; this is the first time I ever heard a lady told she was old, and receive it as a compliment.

Lord M. But, your visitors—Who had you next?

Mrs. M. There was Sir Jeremy Still-life.

Lady M. And his bouquet. He primmed himself up in one corner, and seemed to think that, like the image of a saint on a holyday, he was powdered and painted on purpose to be adored.

Mrs. M. He was not singular in that.

Lady M. Oh! no; there was a whole row of them! that, like jars and mandarins on a mantel-piece, looked vastly ornamental, and served charmingly to fill up vacancies.

General. Every trifle has its use.

Mrs. M. Lord Index came, and stalked round the rooms, as if he had been loaded with the wisdom of his whole library.

Lady M. Yes, he looked as solemn as a monkey after mischief.

Sir F. (*Mimicking.*) And drew up his face in form, like a writ of inquiry into damages, with a "Take notice" engrossed in front.

Lord M. He would not stay late, for his lordship is as careful of his health as he is vain of his understanding.

Lady M. And yet, he is but a kind of rush-candle; he may glimmer a long while, but will never give much light.

Lord M. It seems strange that your people who have acquired a little knowledge, always think they possess an infinite deal; while those who are the best informed appear continually conscious of wanting more.

General. Not strange at all, my lord. Amassing knowledge is like viewing the sun through a telescope; you enlarge the object, but you destroy the glare.

Mrs. M. Did not you observe that, notwithstanding the pearl-powder, my Lady Bloom's neck looked remarkably sallow?

Lord M. Oh! as a Jew's face under a green umbrella.

Sir F. The widow Twinkle, as usual, talked a vast deal about reputation.

Lady M. One is apt to admire a thing one wants.

Lord M. She always takes infinite pains to place her reputation, like broken china in a beaufet, with the best side outward.

Lady M. She may plaster and cement, but will never bring it to bear handling.

Mrs. M. Mr Pensive, the poet, came in, too.

Sir F. Yes; but as nobody took any notice of him, he presently went out again.

General. A great proof of his good sense.

Sir F. Your poets and sheriffs'—officers are a kind of people everybody has heard of, but that nobody chooses to know.

Lady M. Or, if you are under the necessity of receiving a private call from them, now and then, it would be quite disgraceful to be seen with them in public.

Lord M. Your ladyship used to be very partial to Mrs. Pensive.

General. Yes: her ladyship used to have many singular partialities. She was once partial to merit and virtue wherever she found them; she had a partiality for order, economy, and domestic duties, likewise; nay, she even went so far as to cherish a partiality for your lordship.

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! Odious partialities!

Sir F. and Mrs. M. Ha, ha, ha!

Lord M. Ma—ma—madam! Odious?

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! To be sure, sir: is it not odious to be unfashionable?

Mrs. M. Certainly. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! I protest, General, you are too severe.

General. Am I?

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! You are, really.

Mrs. M. Ha, ha, ha! Yes, you are, indeed, General.

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! Yes, yes, you absolutely are.

General. Humph! Why don't you laugh, my lord?

Lord M. I do. Ha, ha, ha! I—I do, General: though, as to severity, I own I—I don't see it in General. No? [that light.]

Lord M. No; I cannot accuse myself of any fault; unless the love of pleasure be one.

General. Ha! And your catalogue of pleasures, I fancy, is pretty extensive.

Lord M. Not half so extensive as one could wish.

General. A dice-box, for instance, is one.

Lord M. A very principal one.

Lady M. My short experience hardly entitles me to venture an opinion, but I find a wonderful similarity between gaming and a cold bath: you have a tremor, a—~~a~~ a hesitation, at first; but, having once plunged in, you are thrown into the most delightful glow!

Lord M. Oh! an ardent tingling—

General. Beware, sir, that a shivering fit does not succeed. (*Mrs. M. and Lady M. laugh.*)

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! You really have no mercy, General. You hit so often, and so hard, egad!

Lord M. I'm vastly happy to see you all so merry, though, upon my soul, I can't find out the jest.

General. That is strange, when you yourself make it.

Lady M. Not in the least: there is many a professed joker who does not understand his own wit.

General. I am tired, disgusted with this mixture of folly and wickedness. (*Aside.*) May I intrude so far upon your ladyship as to obtain half-an-hour's private conversation?

Lady M. Why, upon my word, General, I—I have so many affairs on hand to-day, that I must beg you to excuse me: to-morrow you may command me, for as long as you please.

Sir F. Ay, do, General, have the complaisance to wait till to-morrow, when my lady will be more at leisure.

General. Well, madam, I did not not use to be thought an intruder by your ladyship, and will not begin now; but since I cannot have the honour to tell you privately, I still think myself bound to do my duty, and inform you publicly, you are in the hands of sharpers, "who will filch from you your good name;" nay, perhaps, you are on the very eve of destruction. Oh, guile!—Can it be?—My heart is full!—I—Lady Morden, I have no utterance; but if there be such a thing as sympathy, some small portion of the horror I now feel will communicate itself to you. [Exit.]

Lady M. The—the General has the strangest way of affecting and harrowing—Has not he, my lord?

Lord M. Ye—yes; upon my honour, he—he—I don't know how—(*Putting his hand to his heart.*)

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! The General—the General is a true Don Quixote. He first creates giants, and then kills them.

Lady M. Yes. Ha, ha, ha! His head is full of—of windmills to grind moral sentiments. But, come, Mrs. Modely, you have not seen my new purchase.

Mrs. M. Oh! what, the Acteon?

Sir F. Is it come home?

Lady M. Oh! yes; I could not rest till I had it.

Mrs. M. Come, my lord; I long to see it.

Lady M. The tints are charming!

Mrs. M. So I hear. The grouping excellent!

Lady F. Oh, delightful!

[*Exeunt Lord and Lady M. and Mrs. M.*]

Enter HARRIET.

Har. Hiat! Sir Frederick!

Sir F. (*Turning back.*) Oh! well, sir, how proceeds your amour? I thought you had been busied in schemes about that affair.

Har. Faith! and I am so; but I don't believe I can succeed without your assistance.

Sir F. Perhaps you are a little scrupulous about the means.

Har. Me! Indeed, and you have mistaken your man. Why, you don't think, Sir Frederick, I regard the complaints or tears of women? You and I, sure, seek our own gratification, not their hap-

piness; for, if the love of man sought only the happiness of woman, 'faith! there would be nothing but dull marriages, fond husbands, and legitimate children; and we should lose all the satisfaction of seducing wives, raining daughters, and of bringing so many fine, sweet, innocent craters upon the town.

Sir F. Oh! it would strangely reverse the order of things.

Har. Order! 'Faith! and it would occasion a blessed confusion in Doctors' Commons.

Sir F. For my part, present pleasure is my pursuit; I never disturb my imagination with dismal conjectures on future consequences.

Har. 'Faith! and you are right: for, as you say, it would be dismal enough to trace these consequences into—into streets, and hospitals, and places that the imagination sickens at.

Sir F. Marriage, you say, is not your object?

Har. Oh! no; I don't like that said matrimony music.

Sir F. A mortgaged rent-roll, only, can make it supportables. A wife is like a child's whistle, which every breath can play upon, but which no art can make melodious.

Har. 'Faith! and you have very proper notions about wives. So, when the dare crater gave a marriage hint, why, I told her a dale of boister, consarnin an old cross father, and being under age, and that I could not marry these three months. For, you know, one does not stand for a good double handful of oaths and lies, whin one wants to ruin a sweet, kind angel that one loves.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! Suppose you were to make a sham marriage.

Har. A sham marriage! 'Faith! and I would make that, if there were not a parcel of low rascals that make halters.

Sir F. Psha! That's a paltry, mechanical fear.

Har. But you—you were telling me, you know, of a scheme—

Sir F. Oh! the contract.

Har. Ay, 'faith! the contract. You said you would show it me.

Sir F. I will; I have brought it for that purpose. I lately found it an efficacious expedient.

Har. And successful? [accident.]

Sir F. Would have been, but for an unlucky

Har. But there is one small impediment.

Sir F. What is that?

Har. Westminster-hall.

Sir F. Psha! A house of cards.

Har. Oh! and that it is; for 'tis supported by knaves, and full of tricks.

Sir F. Here—here is the very contract I myself gave. [Producing it.]

Har. Ay!

Sir F. And here a counterfeit copy, with a few slight, but essential, alterations.

Har. I understand:—to put the change upon her. [With an anxious eye continually toward the contract.]

Sir F. Which you may easily take, or make, an opportunity to do.

Har. Will, thin, lind them both to me; and, 'faith! you shall see fine diversion.

Sir F. No, I—I'll have them copied for you. This is signed and sealed.

Har. Arrah! what of that? Ha, ha, ha! Sure, you are not afraid you would be obliged to marry a man?

Sir F. No; the only danger in trusting them to you is that of losing them. And even then, there could be no ill consequence, except by falling into the hands of one who is far enough from London.

Har. Ay, ay; lit me have them. I give you my honour to make a proper use of them.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! You are a promising youth, and it would be a pity such talents should be banked, so, here—here.

Har. Promising! Oh, 'faith! and I hope to

surprise even you, yourself. You shall presently hear of the success of your schemes. [Exit.]

Enter GABRIEL.

Gab. [Looking after Harriet.] There a' goes! Hop, step, and jump! Eood! she does it feintly!

Sir F. She! What's that you say?

Gab. How a' skipped into the carriage! There! Off it drives! Whur! Rattling away!

Sir F. What does the fellow mean? 'Sdeath!—Sure—Who are you talking of?

Gab. Why, of that Irish gentleman-like lady.

Sir F. Lady!

Gab. I wur coming straight to tell you. There is a plot, mun, against you.

Sir F. A plot! [Runs toward the door.]

Gab. Nay, you are too late; a's gone; three streets off by this.

Sir F. Confusion!

Gab. Ees; she means to breed a confusion.

Sir F. Who?

Gab. Miss Harriet.

Sir F. Harriet! By heavens, 'tis she!

Gab. Ees, 'tis she.

Sir F. Scoure fool! Ineffable idiot! And, yet, in that disguise, Lucifer himself could not have discovered her. And who told you?

Gab. Why, his worship's gentleman, Mr. Lapelle; a' o'erheard her tell my lord aw her plot.

Sir F. What course shall I take?

Gab. Suppose I wur to watch, and, when she comes back, let your worship know?

Sir F. Do so; but be very careful, and be very secret.

Gab. Ees, ees; I remember the place, mun.

Sir F. Away; be watchful, and be rewarded. [Exit Gabriel.] This is a thunder-stroke! Lord Morden in the plot, too! It will come to Lady Morden's ears; I shall be blown, all my plans disconcerted, myself laughed at, and my reputation eternally ruined. [Walks about.] Ha! There is one way to prevent the mischief yet:—by heavens, it cannot fail!—I will go to Lady Morden, and, with feigned penitence, tell her every circumstance myself; only making her believe I knew Harriet when I returned the contract. She will admire my candour, think my contrition real, and thus will I turn this seeming disaster to excellent account, by making it an additional proof of sincerity and affection for her ladyship. Dear wit, I thank thee! thou never forsakest me at a crisis! Indeed, my lord, and my young lady! Ah, ha! But you shall find one, perhaps, who can plot, as deeply as yourselves. [Exit.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter LORD MORDEN and LAPELLE.

Lord M. Into what an abyss of evils have I plunged through inexperience, want of reflection, and an absurd imitation of fashionable follies!

—Lapelle!

Lap. My lord?

Lord M. Is the young—young gentleman returned?

Lap. No, my lord.

Lord M. I am on the rack! The liberties in which Lady Morden permits this Sir Frederiok are insupportable! Unable to be silent, and ashamed to complain, I am tortured by contending passions. [Aside.] Lapelle, let me know the instant the—the young gentleman comes back.

Lap. Yes, my lord. [Going.]

Lord M. Stay!—What if I were to inform Lady Morden of this affair? Surely, she could not shut her eyes against such a palpable, such an unprincipled attempt at seduction! [Aside.] Go, and tell

your lady I beg to speak with her a moment. [*Exit Lapelle.*] What an absurd being is man! Not a fortnight ago, Lady Morden was totally indifferent to me; and now I am in danger of losing her, I find I love her—todistract love her. Yet to sink into a civil, sober, domestic man; to become the standing jest of all those high-spirited companions whose society I have courted, whose maxims I have pretended to admire—

Enter LADY MORDEN.

Lady M. So, my lord, in melancholy contemplation; and at home, too!

Lord M. Yes, madam.

Lady M. Lud! I wonder how your lordship can endure home! Of all places in the world, home is, certainly, the most disagreeable.

Lord M. Did not your ladyship meet Lapelle?

Lady M. Lapelle! No.

Lord M. I—I wished to see your ladyship.

Lady M. To see me!—What can your lordship possibly want with me?

Lord M. To speak to you.

[*mc.*]

Lady M. Speak to me! You perfectly surprise

Lord M. On a subject which I—I scarcely know how to begin.

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! What can have made your lordship so serious? Ha, ha, ha! I declare, I never saw you look so grave before. This must be some very important secret, that can occasion your lordship to look so very dismal. I vow, I am quite impatient. Come, my lord, why don't you proceed?

Lord M. I—I begin to find I have been very foolish.

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! Is that the secret?

Lord M. I—I feel I have been to blame.

Lady M. To blame, my lord! How? Which way? Or, if you have, how does it concern me?

Lord M. Your ladyship used to think our interests inseparable.

Lady M. For which your lordship always laughed at me; and, I freely own, I was a very silly, out-of-the-way woman.

Lord M. Perhaps not, madam.

Lady M. How, my lord! not? Your lordship is very polite, but you know very well I was.

Lord M. Lady Morden, you once loved me. You yourself, not long since, kindly owned you did.

Lady M. Very true, my lord; but why—why, now, should you reproach me with my follies?

Lord M. I feel the severity of your reproof; it is no more than I merit.

Lady M. [*Affecting surprise.*] I really don't understand your lordship; I—I meant no reproof. We loved each other as long as it was agreeable to us, and if my passion happened to outlast your lordship's, that was none of your fault. These are the principles of all rational people, you know, my lord.

Lord M. They are principles, madam, that from my soul I wish I had never heard.

Lady M. Upon my honour, you astonish me. Have not I learnt them from yourself?

Lord M. Unjustifiable, madam, as my conduct may have been, I never carried them to the same excess as Sir Frederick Fashion.

Lady M. Sir Frederick Fashion, may, perhaps, be as capable of reformation as your lordship.

Lord M. Your ladyship may—may be partial.

Lady M. Partial!

Lord M. Who so great a libertine as this Sir Frederick?

Lady M. Has been. He has candour enough to confess it.

Lord M. Has been! Madam, there exists a present proof of deliberate seduction: an injured lady—

Lady M. Oh! what, the—the croak?

Lord M. Madam!

Lady M. What's your surprise, my lord? Don't I tell you he has confessed all his follies to me?

Lord M. But, madam, did he mention the contract?

Lady M. To be sure: and the counterfeit copy; with the generous manner in which he, just now, returned Harriet the original; though she thought he did not know her.

Lord M. I am petrified! Lady Morden, I perceive I have lost your affections.

Lady M. My lord, I am above dissimulation. Yes, I own I have a passion, too permanent to be shaken; and the satisfaction of a self-assurance that he, who, at present, possesses my heart, will not, so soon be weary of me as he who had it before.

Lord M. You cut me to the soul! Did you know what I feel—

Lady M. Feel, my lord! Ha, ha, ha! Oh, fie! Your lordship is a man of fashion, not of feeling.

Lord M. Hovering mischief, madam, has quickened benumbed nature in me. [*Kneels and takes her hand.*] Oh! let me conjure you, Lady Morden, to reflect on your present situation! I have introduced you to the horrid precipice of guilt and destruction! Oh! suffer me to save, to snatch you from danger. [*Lady M. laughs.*]

Enter SIR FREDERICK FASHION.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! How now, my lord! Ha, ha, ha! Making love to your wife?

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! Oh! Sir Frederick, if you had but come a little sooner, you would have heard the most delightful morality.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! Morality from my lord?

Lord M. Yes, sir, morality from my lord.

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! Nay, I assure you, he is quite serious. [*Retires coquetting with Sir F.*]

Lord M. Rejected, ridiculed, despised! their sport, their scorn! their subject for open sarcasm, laughter, and contempt! Oh, insupportable! [*Exit.*]

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! My lord has a mind to fall in love with me once more.

Sir F. Nobody but my lord, madam, would ever have ceased a moment to love you.

Lady M. Well, Sir Frederick, and may I, then, at last, flatter myself I have found that sympathy of soul for which I have so long sighed?

Sir F. Alas! madam, I dare not rank myself your equal; no, I dare not. There is such infinitude of perfection in your every thought, look, and expression, that to merit you, were to be, as you are, something celestial. Yet, such virtue as mere humanity may arrive at, I will exhaust nature with endeavours, and weary heaven with prayers, to acquire.

Lady M. There is, surely, some secret charm in your words.

Sir F. Did I think the gratification of any sinister passion influenced my present conduct; were it not my hope to remove you from the cold embrace of satiated apathy, to the sweet and endless transports of love, founded on, permit me to say, on a congeniality of soul and sentiment; did I not feel an innate conviction that there already subsists between us a tie of the most indissoluble nature, an immaculate tie, a marriage of the mind, superior infinitely to all human institutions; did I not think and feel thus, I would instantly, dreadful as the image is to thought, renounce that heaven which I have had the presumption to contemplate, nay, aspire to possess.

Lady M. And if, after all this, you should prove false, Sir Frederick?

Sir F. False, madam! Oh! let me conjure you to inflict any punishment on me, rather than that of suspecting my sincerity. Thus, kneeling, on this angelic hand, I vow—

Enter LORD MORDEN.

Lord M. I cannot resist the impulse which—How, Sir Frederick!

Sir F. (Rising.) My lord?

Lord M. So, madam—

Lady M. So, sir!

Lord M. You can listen to morality from others, madam, if not from me.

Lady M. Oh! I—I have no dislike to a sermon when I admire the preacher.

Lord M. Madam, if you have no respect for my honour, you might have some for my feelings, and—

Lady M. A—a—hold, my lord! You are beginning your discourse again; but I am in a hurry, and will hear you draw your conclusions some other opportunity.

Lord M. Madam—

Lady M. Nay, I will, upon my honour. [Exit.]

Lord M. Hold! sir, a word with you, if you please.

Sir F. With me, my lord?

Lord M. With you.

Sir F. Willingly. Your lordship seems in so pleasant a humour—

Lord M. Sir, I am in a humour neither to be trifled with nor sneered at.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! I can assure you—Ha, ha, ha!—your lordship, no man is happier to see you in your present temper than I am.

Lord M. Look you! Sir Frederick, you and I have been too long of the same school for me to be ignorant of your principles; but I begin to detest them. (*Sir F. laughs.*) They are now, at this very moment, rending my heart. They have planted a nest of adders in my bosom. In short, sir, you must forbear your visits to Lady Morden.

Sir F. My lord—

Lord M. I am serious—determined.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! When her ladyship gives me this advice, it may, perhaps, be followed.

Lord M. It must and shall be followed, sir, when I give it. (*Sir F. laughs.*) Ridiculous as it may appear to you, and such as you, I feel and will assert a husband's rights.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! I congratulate your lordship on the kindness and delicacy of your feelings; they give me great pleasure; infinite pleasure, upon my soul. Ha, ha, ha! As to a husband's rights, I have no doubt you will very shortly be in full possession of them all.

Lord M. Sir, I will have you know, I am, at present, in full possession of them all.

Sir F. May be so, egad!

Lord M. And can no longer forbear telling you I believe you to be a villain.

Sir F. Ah! now your lordship is perfectly explicit. (*They draw and fight.*)

Enter GABRIEL, who runs fearlessly between them, and looks first at one, then at the other.

Lord M. How now, sirrah! How dare you take this liberty?

Gab. Nay, ecod! there do seem to be some danger in it; an' I had not dared to dare, but that I thought your lordship would stick it.

Lord M. Begone, sirrah!

Gab. Nay, but my lady sent me, and would be glad to speak wi' your honour's worship.

Lord M. With me?

Gab. Oh! no; not wi' your lordship's honour's worship; but wi' his worship's honour, Sir Frederick Fashion.

Sir F. This is no place, my lord; we'll settle this business to-morrow. To-morrow, my lord, to-morrow. [Exit.]

Lord M. D—n!—Torture! To-morrow!—He has some concealed meaning. How now, sirrah! What do you stand gaping at? How dare you come between us?

Gab. Why, ecod! I knew that, wi' us, i'th' country, murder would have been against the com-

mandements; and I had forgotten that here, in town, you have no commandements.

Lord M. (Aside.) This fool can see the excesses of passion in their true light.

Gab. I'm sorry 'at I angered your lordship's worship; because as why, I was determined to do like the rest of my neighbours; for, sartinly, war a body to keep the commandements, while everybody else is breaking them—a'd be a poor devil, indeed. (*Lord Morden walks about.*) Belike, your lordship be a bit jealousy, like?

Lord M. How, sirrah!

Gab. Nay, I should no' a' wondered an you war, an I had no' been told that your Londoneers be never jealousy, like.

Lord M. Should not have wondered! Why not, sirrah?

Gab. Nay, ecod! I munna tell.

Lord M. Tell what?

Gab. Nay, that's it. As I said, I munna tell.

Lord M. (Puts his hand to his sword.) "Speak all you know, instantly, or—

Gab. (With half serious and half sulky reproof.) Nay, nay, donna be in a passion, your worship: I be no goose, you munna spit me.

Lord M. Speak, I say; I'll have your secret, or your soul.

Gab. Ecod! I believe, your worship will be puzzled to find either—though that Sir Frederick be an old fox, a's used to steal chicken.

Lord M. Be explicit. What has he done?

Gab. Done! Oh! a's—

Lord M. What?

Gab. Promised me a place.

Lord M. Zounds!

Gab. And, moreover, a' ga'ue a purse; which is better still: for, your worship's grace do know that an egg in hand is better nur a hen in expectation.

Lord M. Suppose, sirrah, I give you my purse, too.

Gab. Nay, ecod! an you gi' it me, I b'lieve, I shall—I shall take it.

Lord M. There, sir.

Gab. Thank your worship's lordship. (*Gabriel puts up the purse, and walks leisurely off.*)

Enter HARRIET.

Lord M. (Following Gabriel.) Why, hark you, sirrah!—Come back!—Why, rascal!

Har. (Calling.) Hist! My lord! My lord!

Lord M. (Looking back to Harriet, and then recollecting Gabriel.) Astonishing effrontery!

Har. My lord!

Lord M. (Returning.) Oh! madam, I am distracted.

Har. Have patience, but for one quarter of an hour, and I hope to rid you of all your fears, and inflict that punishment, on the author of them, which he dreads most.

Lord M. How, madam?

Har. By exposing him; making him what he delights to make others—a subject of laughter and contempt.

Lord M. Which way, madam?

Har. We may be overheard. Step with me into the antichamber, and I'll inform you. [Exit.]

Enter GABRIEL.

Gab. (Peeping after Lord Morden and Harriet, and then calling.) Sir Frederick! Sir Frederick!

Sir F. Well, what's the-matter? How camest thou off with his lordship?

Gab. Off!—Ecod! I—wish you may come off as well.

Sir F. I?

Gab. Ees. Why, mun, there be the bailiffs, below.

Sir F. Bailiffs!

Gab. Ees; sent by the Irish gentleman,—lady I mean, a'ter your worship. Eood! hur is determined to ha' you, safe.

Sir F. The devil! What's to be done? Is she with them?

Gab. No; hur be come back, and is gone into the antichamber wi' my lord.

Sir F. And has not seen them?

Gab. Likely not.

Sir F. Here! quick, change clothes with me, and tell them you are Sir Frederick Fashion.

Gab. Me!—Eood! thank you for that. No, no; I would na' be in your coat for fifty poynd.

Sir F. Fool! they dare not detain you.

Gab. I'll take care they sha'n't.

Sir F. 'Sdeath! What's to be done?

Gab. Eood! Suppose—suppose I wur to go, and tell the Irish gentleman somebody wanted hur; and so make 'em arrest abe?

Sir F. Ha! exquisite fellow, I conceive. Away, send her instantly.

Enter two Bailiffs.

Bailiff. Is your name Sir Frederick Fashion, sir?

Sir F. No, sir: but Sir Frederick will be here, directly: if you have any business with him.

Bailiff. (Aside to his companion.) Have your handkerchief ready, should he make any noise, for fear of a rescue. This is a very serious affair.—(To Sir Frederick.) Pray, sir, what kind of person is Sir Frederick?

Sir F. Um—a handsome—agreeable little gentleman, and very young.

Bailiff. May I ask, sir, how he is dressed?

Sir F. (Aside.) Gad! well remember'd.—(To the Bailiffs.) Dressed!—Oh! he is dressed for—the masquerade. Here he comes. (The Bailiffs retire a little upon the watch.)

Enter HARRIET.

(To Harriet.) Well, Sir Frederick! Ha, ha, ha! How goes your scheme?

Har. Oh, ho! Faith! and are you so jocular? Sir F. I have been thinking this is a dangerous business, and would advise you not to give the girl that contract; it may bring you into trouble.

Bailiff. (Aside to his companion.) You hear.

Har. Oh! faith! and she has it safe enough.

Bailiff. (Advances.) Sir Frederick Fashion,—(Touches Harriet on the shoulder.)—you are my prisoner, sir. I have a special writ against you.

Har. Ha, ha, ha! Against me! Arrahs frind, but you are making a bit of a bull, here.

Bailiff. We know what we are about, sir. My carriage is below; you shall be treated like a gentleman; but we must beg you to go with us instantly, and without a noise.

Har. (Alarmed and forgetting the brogue.) I tell you, friend, you mistake the person.

Enter GABRIEL.

Gab. (Goes up to Harriet.) Here, Sir Frederick, here be oard from Colonel Castoff, wi' his compliments.

Har. Sirrah! Me!

Gab. (With pretended astonishment.) Ees, to be sure.

Bailiff. Sir, we must be gone.

Har. This is a concerted trick. Here!

(As soon as Harriet begins to call, the Bailiffs clap the handkerchief over her mouth, and hurry off with her.)

Gab. Did not I do it rarely?

Sir F. Do! I could wonder and worship thee. In half a year, thou wouldst make an ass of Machiavel. Oh! that I could but retrieve that cursed contract.

Gab. I do think I could get it.

Sir F. Ay! Nay, I do, almost, begin to believe in miracles. Which way?

Gab. No matter for that. What will gi' me?

Sir F. Whatever thou canst wish: a hundred guineas—

Gab. And the place in the excise?

Sir F. Anything, everything!—Run, try, fly!—Think, succeed, and I'll make an emperor of thee.

Gab. Ees; I'll be emperor of excise-men. [Exit.

Sir F. The shrewdness and abilities of this fellow, are amazing.

Enter MRS. MODELY, followed by EMILY.

Mrs. M. (Speaking as she enters.) Yes, my sweet little Emily, the greatest beauty in London would be envied, had she made such a conquest.

Emily. Ah! you say so.

Mrs. M. Say! Why, to-morrow morning, the whole town will be in a flame.

Emily. Well, that will be pure!

Mrs. M. Oh! Sir Frederick—

Sir F. (Runs to Emily.) My life! my soul! my transport!

Emily. (To Mrs. Modely.) What sweet words!

Mrs. M. You are very much obliged to me, I assure you. I have been speaking to my sweet, dear, little Emily here in your behalf.

Sir F. Then, madam, I am inexpressibly obliged to you.

Emily. Yes; Mrs. Modely is very much your friend, and very much my friend—a'n't you, Mrs. Modely?

Mrs. M. Yes, my little dear, I am, indeed, very much your friend: and, if I had not the best opinion in the world of Sir Frederick, would not have spoken as I have.

Emily. Well, Sir Frederick, have you ordered the chaise and four?

Sir F. (Pretending to be afraid Mrs. Modely should overhear.) Yes. Hush!

Emily. Nay, you may say anything before Mrs. Modely. I have told her all; for, you know, she is my friend.

Mrs. M. Yes, yes, Sir Frederick; be assured I will not betray any secret, the keeping of which will make my dear Emily so happy.

Emily. Yes, we shall be so happy! You know, Sir Frederick, you swear to marry me.

Sir F. Solemnly. (All through the scene he looks anxiously round, at intervals, fearful of being surprised.)

Emily. Well, but, swear it again; now, before Mrs. Modely.

Sir F. By all the saints—

Emily. Saints! Psha! you should swear by—by my bright eyes that dim the stars.

Sir F. Oh! By those bright eyes that dim the blazing sun.

Emily. And—and, my beauties that eclipse the blushing moon!

Sir F. Ay, by those, and all your burning charms, I swear.

Emily. To marry me the moment we come to Scotland?

Sir F. The moment we come to Scotland.

Emily. And, if we be pursued—

Sir F. To fight for you! die for you!

Emily. Oh! that will be delightful.

Sir F. (Aside.) The devil it will!

Emily. Come, let us set off! My band-box is ready.

Sir F. That is impossible, my angel.

Emily. Impossible!

Sir F. I have not ordered the chaise till ten o'clock.

Emily. Oh, dear! What, two whole hours longer!

Sir F. They are two ages, I grant. (Looking

round.) Forgive my fears, my dearest Emily; but, though the pleasure of your company is the most precious thing on earth—a—yet—

Emily. What, you want me gone?

Sir F. Rather than you should think so unkindly, I will run the hazard of being surprised, and eternally separated from you.

Emily. Will you? I am sure you don't love me, then. However, I'll go. You will be sure to be ready, the moment the clock strikes ten. [Exit.]

Sir F. Time is precious. Here have been such plots against me.

Mrs. M. Plots!

Sir F. Oh! I have escaped Soylla and Charybdis: but wind and tide are now both with me. Lady Morden is to meet me here in half an hour. Through that door is her chamber.

Mrs. M. Oh! you vile creature.

Sir F. What prude, to-morrow, will dare pretend that woman and education are a match for man and nature?

Mrs. M. And so you will persist in your wickedness, in spite of my persuasions.

Sir F. Lady Morden has still all the rhodomontade of love in her brain: thinks of nothing but cooing-constancy, and eternal raptures.

Mrs. M. Simple woman!

Sir F. Except, indeed, tormenting her husband; which seems to give the sin a double sweetness.

Mrs. M. Or she would be no wife.

Sir F. So, as soon as I am gone off with Emily, I will have a consolatory epistle delivered to her.

Mrs. M. Compassionate too!

Sir F. Here it is, ready written; and, if I don't flatter myself, a master-piece.

Mrs. M. Let me see! let me see!

Sir F. No, you shall hear. (Reads.) "Dear madam,—Though you are an angel, if there be other angels, am I to blame?"

Mrs. M. Certainly not.

Sir F. (Reads.) "If man is naturally inconstant, and if I'm a man, am I to blame?"

Mrs. M. Certainly not.

Sir F. (Reads.) "If nature has made variety the highest enjoyment, am I to blame?"

Mrs. M. Certainly not.

Sir F. (Reads.) "If, since happiness is the pursuit of us all, I am happy as often as I can, am I to blame?"

Mrs. M. Certainly not.

Sir F. (Reads.) "Farewell, madam; circumstances, as you will find, force me, thus suddenly, from your arms, in which, I own, I found heaven centered: but, if you should call me cruel, perjured, and ungrateful, because I act naturally, and therefore rationally, am I to blame?"

Mrs. M. Certainly not. Well, as I live, this is a master-stroke! Perfectly as I thought I knew you, you have astonished me.

Sir F. Yes; 'tis the true Socratic mode. But, now, my dear Mrs. Modely, go you to Emily, prevent her disturbing us, and keep her in readiness.

Mrs. M. Well!—remember, everything is at stake, and be yourself.

Sir F. Fear me not; that prescience, which, they say, is the forerunner of all great events, gives me a happy assurance of success; a confidence, that makes success certain. [Exit.]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—The same.

GENERAL BURLAND discovered.

General. I cannot keep from this house! There is a foreboding of mischief which haunts and per-

turbs my imagination; and, I fear, with reason. The malignant joy, the smothered exult, the obscure, ironical, satire, which ran through the discourse of that Sir Frederick, were not without a meaning. I wish I had not consented to let Emily stay. He sneered, I remember, at the moment: nay, it seemed the sneer of triumph. I wish she were safe, at my own house. Poor Lady Morden! And, is it possible! Such rectitude of heart, such purity of sentiment! I wish Emily were at home. Should my child, my darling fall, I were a wretch indeed!

Enter LORD MORDEN.

Lord M. I am miserable! distracted! racked! The thunderbolt has struck before I heard it! Oh! that its exterminating power had been final! But it has maimed, and deformed, and left a full feeling of wretchedness.

General. How now, my lord?

Lord M. General, I am a wretch! an irretrievable, eternal wretch!

General. What! and are you come to a sense of this, now it is too late?

Lord M. There's the misery!—The curse is accomplished, and hope is fled!

General. Why, ay: such is the infatuation of folly and vice, they will not believe vengeance has an arm, till its fatal gripe is felt!

Lord M. I cannot support these tortures!—Oh! that it were possible—

General. What?

Lord M. To reclaim Lady Morden.

General. What, then? Another month and Sir Frederick Fashion, or any other libertine of fashion, might take her.

Lord M. Never, never! Were her affections once again mine, the stroke of death only could separate us.

General. Well, my lord, if you are, at last, convinced of the immensity of your loss,—I pity you!

Lord M. Oh! would you could relieve!

General. Would I could! But, you were a witness how ineffectual my endeavours were. However, walk with me into the antichamber, and let us consult what is best to be done. Her principles, I fear, are shaken; the only rock on which virtue can stand secure.

Lord M. Sapped, destroyed! She avows her intents; unblushingly avows them! And recapitulating my errors, my crimes, dares me to complain of or notice hers! Scorns and contemns me, and justly, too, that such a thing as I should pretend to repeat, or respect, the word virtue.

General. It is what every husband, every father of a family must expect: His smallest foibles will stand as precedents for a swarm of follies; and, if he have any vices, they will propagate a hideous brood, that shall extirpate his name from the earth, or overwhelm it with obloquy. [Exit.]

Enter GABRIEL and SIR FREDERICK.

Gab. Come, man!—Your worship, come!

Sir F. Are they gone?

Gab. Ees.

Sir F. Well, what hast thou done? Where is Harriet?

Gab. Oh! I ha' her safe.

Sir F. Thou!

Gab. Ees, mun; for, when the bailiffs found out a wur a woman, they wur partly ravenous,

Sir F. And let her go?

Gab. Ees.

Sir F. 'Sdeath!

Gab. But, I secured her.

Sir F. Secured! Impossible! How?

Gab. Nay, never do you mind how; I tell'ee, I ha' her safe.

Sir F. But where are the bailiffs?

Gab. In this house.

Sir F. The devil they are!

Gab. Ees, they be; waiting for your worship.

Sir F. Death and destruction!

Gab. But what o'that? I ha' got the contrast, man.

Sir F. Hast thou?

Gab. Ees, here it is.

Sir F. Precious fellow! I could worship thee!—Give it me.

Gab. Nay, hold there; I wanna do that.

Sir F. Won't!

Gab. No, I wanna.

Sir F. Psha! make no words, but deliver it;—and, here—here is—

Gab. Nay, put up your paper; for I wanna part wi' mine.

Sir F. 'Sdeath, fellow!

Gab. Nay, be mild tempered!—Stand where you be; for an you stir another step, I'll call the bailiffs.

Sir F. (*Aside.*) Cunning scoundrel! He has me in his power, and time presses.—Well, Gabriel, be faithful, and, depend on't, I'll make thee a clever fellow.

Gab. Why, eed! I think I am like a Monmouth-street coat—ready made.

Sir F. Thou rememberest the instructions I gave thee?

Gab. Parfitly.

Sir F. The chaise is to wait at the corner of the street.

Gab. Ees.

Sir F. Thou art to convey Emily's bandbox away, privately; and, if any questions be asked, to say it is Lady Morden's.

Gab. Ees.

Sir F. Hast thou taken care of the letter I gave thee?

Gab. Care! Ees, ees; I a' ta'on good care on't.

Sir F. Observe, thou art to deliver it to Lady Morden, half an hour after we are departed.

Gab. Half an hour before you are departed?

Sir F. Zounds! No, half an hour after, man.

Gab. Oh! Ees, ees; half an hour after.

Sir F. Now begone.

Gab. But—but how will your worship get by the bailiffs?

Sir F. 'Sdeath, that's true!—Is there no disguise?

Gab. Why—ees—there be a long great-coat i' th' hall.

Sir F. Ay, true.—Bring it me.

Gab. Nay, nay; I'll put it on first, and let 'em see me; so, then, when they see you, they'll think it be I.

Sir F. Excellent! Where are Lord Morden and the General?

Gab. I th't 'other chamber.

Sir F. Unlucky! I wish they were anywhere else.

Gab. Oh! an that be all, I'll soon make 'em budge.

Sir F. How?

Gab. Nay; lord, you're so quisitive!—I tell you, I'll do't. I'll saunter through this door, look it, and send 'em packing through t'other.

Sir F. Thou art the prince of plotters. Away! be vigilant.

Gab. Oh! never do you fear me! [*Exit.*]

Enter LADY MORDEN.

Sir F. This fellow would outwit a whole conclave of cardinals!

Lady M. Well, Sir Frederick, here I am, you see; punctual to my promise.

Sir F. (*With vast insinuation, seeming sincerity, and humble rapture, all through the scene.*) Oh! madam, how can I repay this bounty!—this condescension!—Never!—My life were a poor sacrifice, to such sweetness and such charms!

Lady M. Sir Frederick, this is a trying, a decisive moment! I am going to be either the most happy or the most wretched of women! You tell me, it is your wish, your resolution, to be no longer that general lover, that man of the world, you have, hitherto, been thought.

Sir F. Say not, dear lady, it is either my wish or resolution! Heaven can testify, I have not the power to be anything, but what it shall please you to make me!

Lady M. I have owned to you, that the levity I have lately affected is not natural to me! that my heart sighs for an acquaintance, a mate, that, like itself, is subject to all the sweet emotions of sensibility!—Yes, it was the first wish of my soul to find this correspondent heart. A heart beating with the same ardour, vibrating to the same sensations, panting for the same pleasures, shrinking from the same pangs; pliant, yet firm; gentle, yet aspiring; passionate, yet pure!—Such I once thought Lord Morden's. Should I a second time be deceived—

Sir F. I am poor in proofs of sincerity! I have none to offer! My former errors are present punishments! To deny or even palliate them would imply intentional deceit; and this is a moment, in which I would wish for mermaid gods to be witnesses of my truth! I have had, I must own, most libertine opinions of your gentle sex; but these I, now, solemnly renounce! Had I, before, met with a Lady Morden, I should, before, have made this renunciation! But, perhaps, the women it has been my misfortune to know, deserved, in part, the light esteem in which I held them. Never, till now, did I find one who could mutually inspire such passion and respect! Such agitated, burning hopes! Such excruciating fears, or thoughts so sanctified, as those I, this moment, feel!

Lady M. Yet, Sir Frederick, I cannot help observing your conversation, in society, seems still tinged with the impurity of your former libertine principles.

Sir F. I own, Lady Morden, with confusion own, I have not hitherto had the courage, or, perhaps, I have wanted strength to stem the torrent; but, aided by you, I feel, I dare promise any thing!

Lady M. I confess, Sir Frederick, the mind finds some difficulty in rooting out fears, planted in it by reiterated accusations. The stories the world tells of you are dreadful. And, yet, there is such heartfelt conviction attends your present words that, to me, it is impossible to listen and retain a doubt.

Sir F. This generous confidence transports me, fills me with gratitude, and inspires rapturous hope! (*Claps her round the waist.*) Oh, gently suffer me to conduct you, where love lies, in panting, breathless ecstacy—

Enter GABRIEL, abruptly, in a great-coat, stands fixed, and staring.

(*Sternly.*) How now!

Gab. (*Deliberately.*) Belike, you danna want company?

Sir F. No, sir.

Gab. I thought as much.

Sir F. (*Laying hold of him.*) Begone, instantly!

Gab. Nay! hands off! (*Throws him from him.*)

I sha'n't stir till I have delivered my message.

Sir F. What message? What have you to say?

Gab. (*Aloud.*) Why the chaise and four be come.

Sir F. How?

Gab. (*Still louder.*) The bandbox ready.

Sir F. Infernal booby!

Gab. Miss Emily waiting.

Sir F. (*Violently.*) Begone, I say.

Gab. Gone! Nay, sartinly; you would no' ha'

I run away wi' her.

Lady M. (*With contempt.*) Ha, ha, ha!

Sir F. Lady Morden!

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha!—Why, surely, you—the

never failing victor, the fertile-brained Sir Frederick Fashion, who knows not defeat, and who never, yet, was at a loss for stratagems!—though you are taken somewhat unawares, you cannot want inventions!

Sir F. You'll pardon me, madam, if I want understanding to comprehend your meaning.

Lady M. Indeed!—Well, if you be so dull of apprehension—"am I to blame?"

Sir F. Madam!

Lady M. Oh!—Do you recollect this letter?

Sir F. How!—Faithless fiend! (*Goes to assault Gabriel, who throws back his great-coat and appears dressed as a gentleman.*)

Gab. Keep off, or dread the chastisement I am prompted, instantaneously, to inflict!

Sir F. Chastisement!—What is this? Who are you?

Gab. A man!—You are—

Lady M. For heaven's sake, brother—

Sir F. Brother!

Gab. Gabriel Wilmot; whose head is so full of the nonsense of friendship, honour, and honesty.—

Sir F. I'll be revenged, however. (*Attacks Wilmot again.*)

Enter LORD MORDEN and GENERAL BURLAND.

Lord M. Turn, wretch, and receive your punishment from this arm! (*Sir Frederick turns on Lord Morden.*)

General. (*Benting down their swords.*) Oh! for shame!—Look to the lady.

Lady M. Oh, general!—Oh! my lord! (*Runs to*

Lord Morden and falls on his neck.)

Lord M. My life! my ecstasy! my saviour!

Enter MRS. MODELY and EMILY.

Mrs. M. Bless me, what uproar! Heyday!—(*Aside.*) So, so! Here is a very pretty denouement to our plot, indeed!—(*Aloud.*) I see, good folks, you are all embroiled here; and, as it is a very disagreeable thing to be present at family disputes, I'll—(*Is going; the General plants himself against the door.*)

General. Pray, madam, stay, and receive the compliments of the company: mine, and your friend Emily's in particular.

Mrs. M. Oh, with pleasure!

Lord M. Mr. Wilmot! My best brother; though you have, in part, acquainted me with what is past, yet, it is so sudden—and you, my dearest lady, to find you still the same is joy unspeakable.

Lady M. The task of making you suppose I had effectually become what I seemed, was, indeed, most painful; but the loss of your affection were not pain—'twere horror! I told you my passion was too permanent to be shaken.—Ah! how could you imagine I meant another? Or, think it possible I ever could forget that chaste, that ardent, that eternal love, I have so repeatedly vowed?

Lord M. Oh! for words!—I am all love, gratitude, rapture, and amègement!

General. And so is Sir Frederick, apparently; nay, even you, madam, seem a little surprised. (*To Mrs. Modely.*)

Mrs. M. Me! Oh, dear! no.

Lady M. (*To Sir Frederick.*) Dear sir, though

you are a deep and excellent plotter, if there have been counterplots—"am I to blame?" (*Curties.*)

Mrs. M. (*With affected candour.*) Certainly not.

Lady M. If man is sometimes vain, presumptuous and unprincipled, and if you are a man—"am I to blame?"

Mrs. M. Certainly not.

Wil. If I assumed a mean disguise, that I might aid a sister to detect and expose the mean machinations of seduction—"am I to blame?"

Mrs. M. Certainly not.

Emily. If, following the advice of this dear lady, (*to Lady Morden*) simplicity has made cunning out of it itself, "am I to blame?" (*Curties first to Sir Frederick, and then to Mrs. Modely.*)

General. (*With vast pleasure.*) Certainly not.

Lady M. If, since happiness is the pursuit of us all, I wish to be as happy as possible—(*Most affectionately taking Lord Morden's hand.*) "am I to blame?"

Omnes. Certainly not.

Sir F. (*With affected ease.*) Certainly not—So, the anticlimax being ended, the scholars may depart.

Wil. Certainly not.

Sir F. Sir!

Wil. You forget the bailiffs.

Lady M. Besides, Sir Frederick, before you go, you must give me leave to introduce you to—

Enter HARRIET in woman's clothes, presented by Lady Morden.

—This lady.

Sir F. Harriet!

Har. Yes, sir; that Harriet, whom, hearing she had happiness in view, and proportioning your ideal triumph to the weight of mine, you might entail, you raised heaven and earth to bring to wretchedness and ruin.

Mrs. M. Upon my honour, you—you are a sad man, Sir Frederick!—A very sad man! (*The company by their looks shew they understand Mrs. Modely's real character.*)

Har. But your vanity is humbled; you, now, stand detected; and, instead of envied, you will be sneered at by the depraved, pitied by the good, and henceforth, avoided by the credulous young creatures you, so manfully, have delighted to involve in guilt and destruction!

Mrs. M. A very dangerous man, indeed, Sir Frederick!

General. (*Ironically.*) Ay, beware of him, madam.

Mrs. M. Oh! I—I will.

Har. Yes, sir, the finger of scorn points where it ought: you are exposed, and my resentment is appeased.

Sir F. Then, madam—the—the contract—

Har. There it is, sir. (*Returns it.*) I never meant to make any other use of it than what has been better effected, by different means. (*Curties to Lady Morden and Mr. Wilmot.*)

Sir F. Madam!—

Har. No thanks, sir.

General. No; they would sit a little awkwardly.

Lady M. And now, Sir Frederick, if, after this lesson, you should still retain your former principles and practices, and, hereafter, receive a still severer punishment, I hope you will acknowledge—we are "not to blame."

[*Exeunt.*]

THE MOURNING BRIDE;

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY WILLIAM CONGREVE.



Act IV.—Scene I

CHARACTERS.

THE KING
OSMYN
GONSALEZ
GARCIA

ALONZO
PEREZ
HELI
SELIM

ALMERIA
ZARA
LEONORA
ATTENDANTS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Room of state.

The curtain rises slowly to soft music. ALMERIA in mourning, and LEONORA, discovered. Almeria rises and comes forward.

Almeria. Music has charms to sooth a savage breast,

To soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak.
I've read that things inanimate have mov'd,
And, as with living souls, have been inform'd
By magic numbers and persuasive sound.
What then am I? Am I more senseless grown
Than trees or flint? Oh! force of constant woe!
'Tis not in harmony to calm my griefs.
Anselmo sleeps, and is at peace: last night,
The silent tomb receiv'd the good old king;
He and his sorrows now are safely lodg'd
Within its cold, but hospitable bosom.
Why am not I at peace?

Leonora. Dear madam, cease,
Or moderate your grief. There is no cause—
Almeria. No cause! Peace, peace! there is eternal cause;

And misery eternal will succeed.
Thou canst not tell; thou hast, indeed, no cause.

Leonora. Believe me, madam, I lament Anselmo,

And always did compassionate his fortune;
Have often wept, to see how cruelly
Your father kept in chains his fellow king:
And oft at night, when all have been retir'd,
Have stol'n from bed, and to his prison crept,
Where, while his gaoler slept, I, through the grate,

Have softly whisper'd, and inquir'd his health;
Sent in my sighs and pray'rs for his deliverance;
For sighs and pray'rs were all that I could offer.

Almeria. Indeed, thou hast a soft and gentle nature,

That thus could melt to see a stranger's wrongs.
Oh! Leonora, hadst thou known Anselmo,
How would thy heart have bled to see his sufferings!

Thou hadst no cause but general compassion.

Leonora. Love of my royal mistress gave me cause;

My love of you begot my grief for him;
For I had heard, that when the chance of war

Had bless'd Anselmo's arms with victory,
And the rich spoil of all the field, and you,
The glory of the whole, were made the prey
Of his success,

He did endear himself to your affection,
By all the worthy and indulgent ways
His most industrious goodness could invent;
Proposing, by a match between Alphonso,
His son, the brave Valencian prince, and you,

To end the long dissension, and unite
The jarring crowns.

Almeria. Why was I carried to Anselmo's court?

Or there, why was I us'd so tenderly?

Why not ill-treated like an enemy?

For, so my father would have us'd his child.

Oh! Alphonso, Alphonso!

Devouring seas have wash'd thee from my sight;

No time shall raise thee from my memory:

No, I will live to be thy monument:

The cruel ocean is no more thy tomb;

But, in my heart thou art interr'd; 'there,
there,

Thy dear resemblance is for ever fix'd;

My love, my lord, my husband still, though
lost!

Leonora. Husband! Oh, heav'n's!

Almeria. Alas! what have I said?

My grief has hurried me beyond all thought:

I would have kept that secret; though I know

Thy love and faith to me deserve all confidence.

Leonora. Witness these tears!

The memory of that brave prince stands fair

In all report;

And I have heard, imperfectly, his loss;

But, fearful to renew your troubles past,

I never did presume to ask the story.

Almeria. If for my swelling heart I can, I'll tell
thee:—

I was a welcome captive in Valencia,

Ev'n on the day when Manuel, my father,

Led on his conqu'ring troops, high as the gates

Of king Anselmo's palace; which, in rage,

And heat of war, and dire revenge, he fir'd.

The good king, flying to avoid the flames,

Started amidst his foes, and made captivity

His fatal refuge. Would that I had fall'n

Amidst those flames! but, 'twas not so decreed.

Alphonso, who foresaw my father's cruelty,

Had borne the queen and me on board a ship

Ready to sail; and, when this news was brought,

We put to sea; but, being betray'd by some

Who knew our flight, we closely were pursu'd,

And almost taken; when a sudden storm

Drove us, and those that follow'd, on the coast

Of Afric; there our vessel struck the shore,

And, bulging 'gainst a rock, was dash'd in pieces!

But, heav'n spard me for yet much more affliction!

Conducting them who follow'd us, to shun

The shoal, and save me floating on the waves,

While the good queen and my Alphonso per-
ish'd.

Leonora. Alas! Were you, then, wedded to Al-
phonso?

Almeria. That day, that fatal day, our hands were
join'd!

For, when my lord beheld the ship pursuing,

And saw her rate so far exceeding ours,

He came to me, and begg'd me, by my love,

I would consent the priest should make us one;

That, whether death or victory ensu'd,

I might be his, beyond the pow'r of fate:

The queen, too, did assist his suit; I granted;

And, in one day, was wedded and a widow.

Leonora. Indeed, 'twas mournful.

Almeria. 'Twas as I have told thee;

For which I mourn, and will for ever mourn;

Nor will I change these black and dismal robes,

Or ever dry these swollen and wat'ry eyes;

Or ever taste content, or peace of heart,

While I have life and thought of my Alphonso.

(*Loud shouts.*)

Leonora. Hark!

The distant shouts proclaim your father's tri-
umph.

(*Shouts at a distance.*)

Oh! cease—for heav'n's sake, assuage a little

This torrent of your grief; for, much I fear,

'Twill urge his wrath to see you drown'd in
tears,

When joy appears in ev'ry other face.

Almeria. And joy he brings to ev'ry other
heart,

But double, double weight of woe to mine;

For, with him Garcia comes; Garcia, to whom

I must be sacrific'd, and all the vows

I gave my dear Alphonso basely broken.

No, it shall never be; for I will die

First,—die ten thousand deaths! Look down,
look down,

Alphonso, hear the sacred vow I make;

(*Kneels.*)

And thou, Anselmo, if yet thou art arriv'd,

Through all impediments of purging fire,

To that bright heav'n where my Alphonso reigns,

Behold thou also, and attest my vow:—

If ever I do yield, or give consent,

By any action, word, or thought, to wed

Another lord,—may, then, just heav'n show'r

down

Unheard-of curses on me, greater far

(If such there be in angry heav'n's vengeance)

Than any I have yet endur'd.—And now (*Rises.*)

My heart has some relief; having so well

Discharg'd this debt, incumbent on my love.

Yet, one thing more I would engage from thee.

Leonora. My heart, my life, and will, are only
yours.

Almeria. I thank thee. 'Tis but this:—anon,
when all

Are wrapp'd and busied in the general joy,

Thou wilt withdraw, and privately with me

Steal forth to visit good Anselmo's tomb.

Leonora. Alas! I fear some fatal resolution.

Almeria. No, on my life, my faith, I mean no
ill,

Nor violence! I feel myself more light,

And more at large, since I made have this vow.

Perhaps I would repeat it there more solemnly.

'Tis that, or some much melancholy thought;

Upon my word, no more.

Leonora. I will attend you.

Enter ALONZO.

Alonzo. The lord Gonsalez comes to tell your
highness

The king is just arriv'd.

Almeria. Conduct him in. [*Exit Alonzo.*]

That's his pretence: his errand is, I know,

To fill my ears with Garcia's valiant deeds,

And gild and magnify his son's exploits.

But I am arm'd with ice around my heart,

Not to be warm'd with words or idle eloquence.

Enter GONSALEZ.

Gonsalez. Be ev'ry day of your long life like
this!

The sun, bright conquest, and your brighter
eyes.

Have all conspir'd to blaze promiscuous light,

And bless this day with most unequal lustre.

Your royal father, my victorious lord,

Laden with spoils, and ever-living laurel,

Is ent'ring now, in martial pomp, the palace.

Five hundred mules precede his solemn march,

Which groan beneath the weight of Moorish
wealth;

Chariots of war, adorn'd with gitt'ring gems,

Succeed; and next, a hundred neighing steeds,

White as the fleecy rain on Alpine hills,

That bound and foam, and champ the golden bit,

As they disdain'd the victory they grace.

Prisoners of war, in shining fetters, follow;
And captains of the noblest blood of Afric
Sweat by his chariot-wheels;
The swarming populace spread every wall;
While you alone retire, and shun this sight;
This sight, which is indeed not seen (though
The multitude should gaze) in absence, of your
eyes.

Almeria. My lord, mine eyes ungratefully be-
hold

The gilded trophies of exterior honours;
Nor will my ears be charm'd with sounding
words,

Or pompous phrase,—the pageantry of souls;
But, that my father is return'd in safety,
I bend to heav'n with thanks.

Gonsalez. Excellent princess!
But, 'tis a task unfit for my weak age,
With dying words to offer at your praise:
Garcia, my son, your beauty's lowest slave,
Has better done, in proving with his sword
The force and influence of your matchless charms.

Almeria. I doubt not of the worth of Garcia's
deeds,
Which had been brave, though I had ne'er been
born.

Leonora. Madam, the king.

*Symphony of warlike music. Enter the KING, at-
tended by GARCIA and several Officers. Files
of Prisoners in chains, and Guards. Almeria
meets the King, and kneels; afterwards, Gonsalez
kneels and kisses the King's hand, while Garcia
does the same to Almeria.*

King. Almeria, rise; my best Gonsalez, rise.—
What, tears, my good old friend!

Gonsalez. But, tears of joy.
Believe me, sir, to see you thus, has fill'd
Mine eyes with more delight than they can hold.

King. By heav'n, thou lov'st me! and I am
pleas'd thou dost.

Take it for thanks, old man, that I rejoice
To see thee weep on this occasion: some
Here are, who seem to mourn at our success.
Why is't, Almeria, that you meet our eyes,
Upon this solemn day, in these sad weeds?
In opposition to my brightness, you
And yours are all like daughters of affliction.

Almeria. Forgive me, sir, if I in this offend:
The year, which I have vow'd to pay to heav'n,
In mourning and strict life, for my deliverance
From wreck and death, wants yet to be ex-
pir'd.

King. Your zeal to heav'n is great, so is your
debt;

Yet, something, too, is due to me who gave
That life which heav'n preserv'd. A day be-
stow'd

In filial duty, had aton'd and given
A dispensation to your vow. No more;
'Twas weak and wilful, and a woman's error.
Yet, upon thought, it doubly wounds my sight,
To see that sable worn upon the day
Succeeding that in which our deadliest foe,
Hated Anselmo! was interr'd. By heav'n!
It looks as thou didst mourn for him. Just so
Thy senseless vow appear'd to bear its date,
Not from that hour wherein thou wert preserv'd,
But that wherein the curs'd Alphonso perish'd.
Ha! What, thou dost not weep to think of
that?

Gonsalez. Have patience, royal sir; the princess
weeps

To have offended you. If fate decreed,
One pointed hour should be Alphonso's loss
And her deliverance, is she to blame?

King. I tell thee she's to blame, not to have
feasted

When my first foe was laid in earth; such ex-
mity,

Such detestation bears my blood to his.
My daughter should have revell'd at his death;
She should have made these palace walls to shake,
And all this high and ample roof to ring
With her rejoicings. What, to mourn and
weep!

Then, then to weep, and pray, and grieve! By
heav'n,

There's not a slave, a shackled slave of mine,
But should have smil'd that hour, through all his
care,

And shook his chains in transport and rude har-
mony!

Gonsalez. What she has done was in excess of
goodness;

Betray'd by too much piety, to seem

As if she had offended. Sure, no more.

King. To seem is to commit, at this conjunc-
ture.

I wo' not have a seeming sorrow seen
To-day. Retire, divest yourself with speed

Of that offensive black; on me be all

The violation of your vow; for you,
It shall be your excuse that I command it.

Garcia. (*Kneeling.*) Your pardon, sir, if I pre-
sume so far,

As to remind you of your gracious promise.

King. Rise, Garcia; I forgot. Yet stay, Al-
meria.

Almeria. My boding heart!—What is your plea-
sure, sir?

King. Draw near, and give your hand; and,
Garcia, yours:

Receive this lord, as one whom I have found

Worthy to be your husband and my son.

Garcia. Thus let me kneel to take—oh! not to
take—

But to devote and yield myself for ever
The slave and creature of my royal mistress.

Gonsalez. Oh! let me, prostrate, pay my worth-
less thanks—

King. No more: my promise long since pass'd,
thy services,

And Garcia's well-try'd valour, all oblige me.

This day we triumph: but, to-morrow's sun,

Garcia, shall shine to grace thy nuptials.

Almeria. Oh! (*Faints.*)

Garcia. She faints! help to support her.

Gonsalez. She recovers.

King. A fit of bridal fear. How is't, Alme-
ria?

Almeria. A sudden chillness seizes on my
spirits.

Your leave, sir, to retire.

King. Garcia, conduct her.

[*Garcia leads Almeria to the door, and
returns.*]

This idle vow hangs on her woman's fears.

I'll have a priest shall preach her from her faith,

And make it sin not to renounce that vow

Which I'd have broken. Now, what would
Alonzo?

Enter ALONZO and Attendants.

Alonzo. Your beauteous captive, Zara, is ar-
riv'd,

And with a train as if she still were wife
To Albuquerque, and the Moor had conquer'd.

King. It is our will she should be so attended.
Bear hence these prisoners. Garcia, which is

he,
Of whose mute valour you relate such wonders?

(*Prisoners led off.*)

Garcia. Osmyn, who led the Moorish horse; but he,
Great sir, at her request, attends on Zara.

King. He is your prisoner; as you please, dispose him.

Garcia. I would oblige him, but he shuns my kindness;
And, with a haught mien, and stern civility,
Dumbly declines all offers: if he speak,
'Tis scarce above a word; as he were born
Alone to do, and did disdain to talk;
At least to talk where he must not command.

King. Such sullenness, and in a man so brave,
Must have some other cause than his captivity.
Did Zara, then, request he might attend her?

Garcia. My lord, she did.

King. That, join'd with his behaviour,
Begets a doubt. I'd have 'em watch'd; perhaps,
Her chains hang heavier on him than his own.

Enter ZARA and OSMYN, in chains, conducted by PEREZ and a Guard, attended by SELIM and several Mutes.

King. What welcome and what honours, beautiful Zafra,

A king and conqueror can give, are yours:
A conqueror, indeed, where you are won;
Who with such lustre strike admiring eyes,
That had our pomp been with your presence grac'd,

Th' expecting crowd had been deceiv'd; and seen

The monarch enter, not triumphant, but
In pleasing triumph led, your beauty's slave.

Zara. If I on any terms could condescend
To like captivity, or think those honours,
Which conquerors, in courtesy, bestow,
Of equal value with unborrow'd rule
And native right, to arbitrary sway,
I might be pleas'd, when I behold this train
With usual homage wait: but, when I feel
These bonds, I look with loathing on myself;
And scorn vile slavery, though doubly hid
Beneath mock praises and dissembled state.

King. Those bonds! 'Twas my command you should be free.

How durst you, Perez, disobey?

Perez. Great sir,
Your order was she should not wait your triumph;

But, at some distance follow, thus attended.

King. 'Tis false! 'twas more! I bid she should be free;

If not in words, I bid it by my eyes.

Her eyes did more than bid. Free her and hers
With speed—Yet, stay! my hands alone can make

Fit restitution here. Thus I release you,

And, by releasing you, enslave myself.

Zara. Such favours, so conferr'd, though when unsought,

Deserve acknowledgment from noble minds.

Such thanks, as one hating to be oblig'd,
Yet, hating more ingratitude, can pay,
I offer.

King. Born to excel and to command!

As, by transcendent beauty to attract
All eyes, so by pre-eminence of soul
To rule all hearts.

Garcia, what's he, who, with contracted brow
(Beholding Osmyn, as they unbind him.)

And sullen port, glooms downwards with his eyes;

At once regardless of his chains or liberty?

Garcia. That, sir, is he of whom I spoke; that's Osmyn.

King. He answers well the character you gave him.

Whence comes it, valiant Osmyn; that a man
So great in arms as thou art said to be,
So hardly can endure captivity,

The common chance of war?

Osmyn. Because captivity
Has robb'd me of a dear and just revenge.

King. I understand not that.

Osmyn. I would not have you.

Zara. That gallant Moor in battle lost a friend,
Whom more than life he lov'd; and the regret
Of not revenging on his foes that loss,
Has caus'd this melancholy and despair.

King. She does excuse him: 'tis as I suspected.
(*Apart to Gonzales.*)

Gonzales. That friend may be herself. Seem not to heed

His arrogant reply. She looks concern'd.

(*Apart to the King.*)
King. I'll have inquiry made: perhaps his friend

Yet lives, and is a prisoner. His name?

Zara. Heli.

King. *Garcia,* that search shall be your care:

It shall be mine to pay devotion here;

At this fair shrine to lay my laurels down,

And raise love's altar on the spoils of war.

Conquest and triumph now are mine no more,

Nor will I victory in camps adore:

Fickle in fields, unsteadily she flies,

But rules with settled sway in Zara's eyes. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Aisle of a Temple.

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

Almeria. It was a fancied noise, for all is hush'd.

Leonora. It bore the accent of a human voice.

Almeria. It was thy fear, or else some transient wind

Whistling through hollows of this vaulted aisle.

We'll listen.

Leonora. Hark!

Almeria. No; all is hush'd, and still as death.

'Tis dreadful!

How reverend is the face of this tall pile,
Whose ancient pillars rear their marble heads,

To bear aloft its arch and pond'rous roof,

By its own weight made steadfast and immovable,

Looking tranquillity. It strikes an awe

And terror on my aching sight: the tombs

And monumental caves of death look cold,

And shoot a chillness to my trembling heart.

Give me thy hand, and let me hear thy voice;

Nay, quickly speak to me, and let me hear

Thy voice; my own affrights me with its echoes.

Leonora. Let us return: the horror of this

place,

And silence, will increase your melancholy.

Almeria. It may my fears, but cannot add to

that.

No, I will on. Show me Anselmo's tomb;

Lead me o'er bones and skulls, and mouldering

earth

Of human bodies, for I'll mix with them;

Or, wind me in the shroud of some pale corpse

Yet green in earth, rather than be the bride

Of Garcia's more detested bed: that thought

Exerts my spirit; and my present fears

Are lost in dread of greater ill. Then shew me,

Lead me, for I'm bolder grown: lead on

Where I may kneel, and pay my vows again
To him, to heav'n, and my Alphonso's soul.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A place of Tombs. A monument
fronting the view.*

Enter HELI.

Hel. I wander through this maze of monuments,
Yet cannot find him. Hark! sure, 'tis the voice
Of one complaining. There it sounds; I'll follow it.
[*Exit.*]

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

Leonora. Behold the sacred vault, within whose tomb
The poor remains of good Anselmo rest,
Yet fresh and unconsum'd by time or worms.
What do I see? Oh, heav'n! either my eyes
Are false, or still the marble door remains
Unclos'd; the iron gates, that lead to death
Beneath, are still wide-stretch'd upon their hinge,
And staring on us with unfolded leaves.
Almeria. Sure, 'tis the friendly yawn of death
for me;
And that dumb mouth, significant in shew,
Invites me to the bed, where I alone
Shall rest; shews me the grave, where nature,
weary
And long oppress'd with woes and bending cares,
May lay the burden down, and sink in slumbers
Of peace eternal. My father, then,
Will cease his tyranny; and Garcia, too,
Will fly my pale deformity with loathing.
My soul, enlarg'd from its vile bonds, will mount,
And range the starry orbs and milky ways
To my Alphonso's soul. Oh! joy too great!
Oh! ecstacy of thought! Help me, Anselmo!
Help me, Alphonso! take me, reach thy hand;
To thee, to thee I call, to thee, Alphonso!
Oh, Alphonso!

Enter OSMYN from the tomb.

Osmyn. Who calls that wretched thing that was
Alphonso?
Almeria. Angels, and all the host of heaven, sup-
port me!
Osmyn. Whence is that voice, whose shrillness
from the grave,
And growing to his father's shroud, roots up
Alphonso?
Almeria. Mercy! Providence! Oh! speak,
Speak to it quickly, quickly! speak to me,
Comfort me, help me, hold me, hide me, hide
me,
Leonora, in thy bosom, from the light,
And from my eyes.
Osmyn. Amazement and illusion!
Rivet and nail me where I stand, ye pow'rs!
(*Coming forward.*)
That motionless I may be still deceiv'd:
Let me not stir or breathe, lest I dissolve
That tender, lovely form of painted art,
So like Almeria. Ha! it sinks, it falls!
I'll catch it ere it goes, and grasp her shade.
'Tis life! 'tis warm! 'tis she! 'tis she herself!
Nor dead, nor shade, but breathing and alive!
It is Almeria, 'tis, it is my wife!

Re-enter HELI.

Leonora. Alas! she stirs not yet, nor lifts her
eyes!
He, too, is fainting. Help me, help me, stranger,
Whoe'er thou art, and lend thy hand to raise
These bodies.

Hel. Ha! 'tis he, and with Almeria!
Oh! miracle of happiness! oh! joy
Unhop'd for! Does Almeria live?
Osmyn. Where is she?
Let me behold and touch her, and be sure
'Tis she.
Look up, Almeria, bless me with thy eyes;
Look on thy love, thy lover, and thy husband.
Almeria. I've sworn I'll not wed Garcia: why
d'ye force me?
Is this a father?
Osmyn. Look on thy Alphonso.
Thy father is not here, my love, nor Garcia:
Nor am I what I seem, but thy Alphonso.
Am I so alter'd, or art thou so chang'd,
That seeing my disguise, thou seest not me?
Almeria. It is, it is Alphonso! 'tis his face,
His voice; I know him now, I know him all.
Oh! how hast thou return'd? how hast thou
charm'd
The wildness of the waves and rocks to this;
That, thus relenting, they have giv'n thee back
To earth, to light and life, to love and me?
Osmyn. Oh, I'll not ask, nor answer now, or
why,
We both have backward trod the paths of fate
To meet again in life; to know I have thee,
Is knowing more than any circumstance
Or means by which I have thee.
To fold thee thus, to press thy balmy lips,
And gaze upon thy eyes, is so much joy,
I have no leisure to reflect or know,
Or trifle time in thinking.
Almeria. Stay awhile.
Let me look on thee yet a little more.
Osmyn. And why? what dost thou mean? why
dost thou gaze so?
Almeria. I know not; 'tis to see thy face, I
think—
It is too much; too much to bear, and live!
To see him thus again is such profusion
Of joy, of bliss—I cannot bear—I must
Be mad; I cannot be transported thus!
Osmyn. Thou excellence, thou joy, thou heav'n
of love!
Almeria. Where hast thou been? and how art
thou alive?
Sure, from thy father's tomb thou didst arise!
Osmyn. I did; and thou, my love, didst call me;
thou!
Almeria. True. But, how cam'st thou there?
wert thou alone?
Osmyn. I was, and lying on my father's lead,
When broken echoes of a distant voice
Disturb'd the sacred silence of the vault,
In murmurs round my head. I rose, and listen'd;
And thought I heard thy spirit call Alphonso;
I thought I saw thee too; but, oh! I thought
not
That I, indeed, should be so bless'd to see
thee—
Almeria. But, still how cam'st thou hither? how
thus?—Ha!
What's he who, like thyself, is started here,
Ere seen?
Osmyn. Where?—Ha! what do I see? An-
tonio!
I'm fortunate, indeed,—my friend, too, safe!
Hel. Most happily in finding you thus bless'd.
Almeria. More miracles! Antonio, too, es-
cap'd!
Osmyn. And twice escap'd, both from the rage
of seas
And war; for, in the fight I saw him fall.
Hel. But fall unhurt, a pris'ner as yourself,
And as yourself made free. Hither I came
Impatiently to seek you, where I knew
Your grief would lead you to lament Anselmo.

Osmyn. What means the bounty of all-gracious heav'n,

That, persevering still, with open hand
It scatters good, as in a waste of mercy?

Where will this end? But, heav'n is infinite

In all, and can continue to bestow,

When scanty number shall be spent in telling.

Leonora. Or I'm deceiv'd, or I beheld the
glimpse

Of two in shining habits, cross the aisle;

Who, by their pointing, seem'd to mark this
place.

Almeria. Sure, I have dreamt, if we must part
so soon.

Osmyn. I wish, at least; our parting were a
dream,

Or we could sleep till we again were met.

Helì. Zara with Selim, sir; I saw and know
'em:

You must be quick, for love will lend her wings.

Almeria. What love? who is she? why are you
alarm'd?

Osmyn. She's the reverse of thee; she's my un-
happiness.

Harbour'd thought that may disturb thy peace;
I'll think how we may meet

To part no more. My friend will tell thee all;

How I escap'd, how I am here, and thus;

How I'm not call'd Alphonso now, but Osmyn,

And he Helì. All, all he will unfold,

Ere next we meet.

Almeria. Sure, we shall meet again.

Osmyn. We shall; we part not but to meet
again.

Gladness and warmth of ever-kindling love

Shall dwell with thee, and revive thy heart in absence.

[*Exeunt all but Osmyn.*]

Yet I behold her—yet—and now no more.

Turn your light inwards, eyes, and view my
thought,

So shall you still behold her.

. . . Enter ZARA and SELIM.

Zara. See where he stands, folded and fix'd to
earth,

Stiff'ning in thought, a statue among statues!

Why, cruel Osmyn, dost thou fly me thus?

Am I more loathsome to thee than the grave,

That thou dost seek to shield thee there, and
shun

My love? But, to the grave I'll follow thee.

He looks not, minds not, hears not! Barb'rous
man,

Am I neglected thus? am I despis'd?

Not heard! ungrateful Osmyn!

Osmyn. Ha! 'tis Zara!

Zara. Yes, traitor! Zara, lost, abandon'd Zara,

Is a regardless suppliant now to Osmyn.

The slave, the wretch that she redeem'd from
death,

Disdains to listen now, or look on Zara.

Osmyn. Far be the guilt of such reproaches
from me;

Lost in myself, and blinded by my thoughts,

I saw you not till now.

Zara. Now, then, you see me:

But, with such dumb and thankless eyes you
look,

Better I was unseen, than seen thus coldly.

Osmyn. What would you from a wretch who
came to mourn,

And only for his sorrows chose this solitude?

Look round, joy is not here, nor cheerfulness.

You have pursu'd misfortune to its dwelling,

Yet seek for gaiety and gladness there.

Zara. Inhuman! why, why dost thou rack me
thus,

And, with perverseness, from the purpose an-
swer?

What is't to me this house of misery?

What joy do I require? If thou dost mourn,

I come to mourn with thee; to share thy griefs,

And give thee for 'em, in exchange, my love.

Osmyn. Oh! that's the greatest grief; I am so
poor,

I have not wherewithal to give again.

Zara. Thou hast a heart, though 'tis a savage
one:

Give it me as it is; I ask no more

For all I've done, and all I have endur'd:

For saving thee, when I beheld thee first,

Driven by the tide upon my country's coast,

Pale and expiring, drench'd in briny waves,

Thou and thy friend, till my compassion found
thee.

Compassion! scarce will own that name; so soon,

So quickly was it love; for thou wert godlike

Ev'n then. Kneeling on earth, I loos'd my hair,

And with it dried those wat'ry cheeks, then
chaf'd

Thy temples, till reviving blood arose,

And, like the morn, vermilion'd o'er thy face.

Oh, heaven! how did my heart rejoice and ache,

When I beheld the day-break of thy eyes,

And felt the balm of thy respiring lips!

Oh! why do I relate what I have done?

What did I not? Was't not for you this war

Commenc'd? Not knowing who you were, nor
why

You hated Manuel, I urg'd my husband

To this invasion, where he late was lost,

Where all is lost, and I am made a slave.

Look on me now, from empire fall'n to slavery;

Think on my suff'rings first, then! look on me;

Think on the cause of all, then view thyself:

Reflect on Osmyn, and then look on Zara.

The fall'n, the lost, and now the captive Zara;

And now abandon'd—say, what then is Osmyn!

Osmyn. A fatal wretch—a huge stupendous
ruin,

That, tumbling on its prop, crush'd all beneath,

And bore contiguous palaces to earth.

Zara. Yet thus, thus fall'n, thus level'd with
the vilest,

If I have gain'd thy love, 'tis glorious ruin;

Ruin! 'tis still to reign, and to be more

A queen; for what are riches, empire, pow'r,

But larger means to gratify the will?

The steps on which we tread, to rise and reach

Our wish; and that obtain'd, down with the
scaffolding

Of sceptres, crowns, and thrones; they have serv'd
their end,

And are, like lumber, to be left and scorn'd.

Osmyn. Why was I made the instrument to
throw

In bonds the frame of this exalted mind?

Zara. We may be free: the conqueror is mine!

In chains, unseen, I hold him by the heart,

And can unwind and strain him as I please.

Give me thy love, I'll give thee liberty.

Osmyn. In vain you offer, and in vain require

What neither can bestow. Set free yourself,

And leave a slave the wretch that would be so.

Zara. Thou canst not mean so poorly as thou
talk'st.

Osmyn. Alas you know me not.

Zara. Not who thou art:

But what this last ingratitude declares,

This grov'ling baseness. Thou say'st true, I know

Thee not, for what thou art yet wants a name:

But something so unworthy and so vile,

That to have lov'd thee makes me yet more lost,

Than all the malice of my other fate.

Traitor, monster, cold and perfidious slave!

A slave, not daring to be free! nor dares
To love above him, for 'tis dangerous:
There, there's the dreadful sound, the king's thy
rival!

Selim. Madam, the king is here, and ent'ring
now.

Zara. As I could wish; by heav'n I'll be re-
veng'd.

Enter the KING, PEREZ, and Attendants.

King. Why does the fairest of her kind with-
draw

Her shining from the day, to gild this scene
Of death and night? Ha! what disorder's this?
Somewhat I heard of king and rival mention'd.
What's he that dares be rival to the king,
Or lift his eyes to like where I adore?

Zara. There! he, your pris'ner, and that was my
slave.

King. How! better than my hopes! does she
accuse him? *(Aside.)*

Zara. Am I become so low by my captivity,
And do your arms so lessen what they conquer,
That Zara must be made the sport of slaves?
And shall the wretch, whom yester sun beheld
Waiting my nod, the creature of my pow'r,
Presume to-day to plead audacious love,
And build bold hopes on my dejected fate?

King. Better for him to tempt the rage of
heav'n,

And wrench the bolt, red-hissing from the hand
Of him that thunders, than but think that in-
solence.

'Tis daring for a god. Hence to the wheel
With that Ixion, who aspires to hold
Divinity embrac'd; who whips and prisons
Drag him with speed, and rid me of his face.

(Guards seize Osmyn.)

Zara. Compassion led me to bemoan his state,
Whose former faith had merited much more:
And through my hopes in you, I undertook
He should be set at large: thence sprung his
insolence;

And what was charity he constru'd love.

King. Enough: his punishment be what you
please.

But let me lead you from this place of sorrow,
To one where young delights attend;
Where ev'ry hour shall roll in circling joys,
And love shall wing the tedious-wasting day.
Life without love is load, and time stands still:
What we refuse to him, to death we give;
And then, then only, when we love, we live.

[Exeunt.]

• ACT III.

• SCENE I.—A Prison.

OSMYN discovered alone, with a paper.

Osmyn. But now, and I was closed within the
tomb
That holds my father's ashes; and but now
Where he was pris'ner, I am too imprison'd.
Sure 'tis the hand of heav'n that leads me thus,
And for some purpose points out these remem-
brances.

In a dark corner of my cell I found
This paper; what it is this light will shew.

(Reads.) "If my Alphonso"—Ha!

"If my Alphonso live, restore him, heav'n!"

Give me more weight, crush my declining years
With bolts, with chains, imprisonment and want;
But bless my son! visit not him for me!"

(It is his hand! this was his pray'r;—yet more):

"Let ev'ry hair, which sorrow by the roots
Tears from my hoary and devoted head,
Be doubled in thy mercies to my son!"

Not for myself, but him, hear me, all-gracious!"

'Tis, wanting what should follow—Heav'n should
follow,

But 'tis torn off! Why should that word alone
Be torn from this petition? 'Twas to heav'n,
But heav'n was deaf; heav'n heard him not: but
thus,

Thus as the name of heav'n from this is torn,
So did it tear the ears of mercy from
His voice, shutting the gates of pray'r against
him!

If piety be thus debarr'd access
On high, and of good men the very best
Is singled out to bleed, and bear the scourge,
What is reward? or what is punishment?
But who shall dare to tax eternal Justice?
Yet I may think—I may, I must: for thought
Precedes the will to think, and error lives
Ere reason can be born.

What noise! Who's there? My friend! how cam'st
thou hither?

Enter HELI.

Hel. The time's too precious to be spent in
telling.

The captain, influenc'd by Almeria's pow'r,
Gave order to the guards for my admittance.

Osmyn. How does Almeria? But I know
she is

As I am. Tell me, may I hope to see her?

Hel. You may: anon, at midnight, when the
king

Is gone to rest, and Garcia is retir'd
(Who takes the privilege to visit late,
Presuming on a bridegroom's right), she'll come.

Osmyn. She'll come! 'tis what I wish, yet what
I fear.

She'll come; but whither, and to whom? Oh,
heav'n!

To a vile prison, and a captive wretch;
To one, whom had she never known, she had
Been happy. Why, why was that heav'nly trea-
sure

Abandon'd o'er to love what heav'n forsakes?
Why does she follow, with unwearied steps,
One who has tir'd misfortune with pursuing?

Hel. Have hopes, and hear the voice of better
fate.

I've learn'd there are disorders ripe for mutiny
Among the troops, who thought to share the
plunder,

Which Manuel to his own use and avarice
Converts. The news has reach'd Valencia's fron-
tiers;

Where many of your subjects, long-oppress'd
With tyranny and grievous impositions,
Are ris'n in arms, and call for chiefs to head
And lead them to regain their rights and liberty.

Osmyn. By heav'n, thou'st rous'd me from my
lethargy.

The spirit, which was deaf to my own wrongs,
And the loud cries of my dead father's blood—
Oh, my Antonio, I am all on fire!
My soul is up in arms, ready to charge
And bear amidst the foe with conqu'ring troops.
I hear 'em call to lead 'em on to liberty,
To victory; their shouts and clamours rend
My ears, and reach the heav'ns! Where is the
king?

Where is Alphonso? Ha! where, where indeed?
Oh! I could tear and burst the strings of life,
To break these chains! Off! off! ye stains of
royalty!

Off, slavery! Oh, curse! that I alone

Can beat and flutter in my cage, when I
Would soar, and stoop at victory beneath.

Heli. Zara, the cause of your restraint, may be
The means of liberty restor'd. That gain'd,
Occasion will not fail to point out ways
For your escape: meantime, I've thought already
With speed and safety to convey myself,
Where not far off some malcontents hold council
Nightly, who hate this tyrant; some, who love
Anselmo's memory, and will, for certain,
When they shall know who live, assist your
cause.

Osmyn. My friend and counsellor, as thou
think'st fit,

So do. I will with patience wait my fortune.

Heli. When Zara comes, abate of your aversion.

Osmyn. I hate her not, nor can dissemble
love:

But as I may, I'll do. Farewell,
My friend, the good thou dost deserve attend thee.

[*Exit Heli.*]

I've been to blame, and question'd with impiety
The care of heav'n. Not so my father bore
More anxious grief. This should have better
taught me;

This his last legacy to me; which here
I'll treasure as more worth than diadems,
Or all extended rule of regal pow'r.

Enter ZARA, veiled.

What brightness breaks upon me thus through
shades,

And promises a day to this dark dwelling!

Is it my love?—

Zara. Oh! that thy heart had taught
(*Lifting her veil.*)

Thy tongue that saying!

Osmyn. *Zara!* I am betray'd by my surprise!
(*Aside.*)

Zara. What, does my face displease thee?
That having seen it thou dost turn thy eyes
Away, as from deformity and horror!
If so, this cable curtain shall again
Be drawn, and I will stand before thee, seeing
And unseen. 'Is it my love?' Ask again
That question; speak again in that soft voice;
And look again with wishes in thy eyes.
Oh, no, thou canst not; for thou seest me now,
As she whose savage breast hath been the cause
Of these thy wrongs; as she whose barbarous
rage

Has loaded thee with chains and galling irons.

Osmyn. You wrong me, beauteous Zara, to
believe

I bear my fortunes with so low a mind.

But destiny and inauspicious stars

Have cast me down to this low being: or

Granting you had, from you I have deserv'd it,

Zara. Canst thou forgive me, then? wilt thou
believe

So kindly of my fault, to call it madness?

Oh, give that madness yet a milder name,

And call it passion; then be still more kind,

And call that passion love.

Osmyn. Give it a name,

Or being as you please, such I will think it.

Zara. Oh, thou dost wound me more with this
thy goodness,

Than e'er thou couldst with bitterest reproaches;
Thy anger could not pierce thus to my heart.

Osmyn. Yet I could wish—

Zara. Haste me to know it: what?

Osmyn. That at this time I had not been this
thing.

Zara. What thing?

Osmyn. This slave.

Zara. Oh, heaven! my fears interpret

This thy silence; somewhat of high concern,
Long fashioning within thy lab'ring mind,
And now just ripe for birth, my rage has ruin'd.
Have I done this? Tell me, am I so curs'd?

Osmyn. Time may have still one fated hour
to come,

Which, wing'd with liberty, might overtake
Occasions past.

Zara. Swift as occasion, I
Myself will fly; and earlier than the morn
Wake thee to freedom.

Osmyn. I have not merited this grace;
Nor, should my secret purpose take effect,
Can I repay, as you require, such benefits.

Zara. Thou canst not owe me more, nor have I
more

To give than I've already lost. But now,
So does the form of our engagements rest,
Thou hast the wrong till I redeem thee hence;
That done, I leave thy justice to return
My love. Adieu! [*Exit.*]

Osmyn. This woman has a soul
Of godlike mould, intrepid and commanding,
And challenges, in spite of me, my best
Esteem.

But she has passions which outstrip the wind,
And tear her virtues up, as tempests root
The sea. I fear, when she shall know the truth,
Some swift and dire event of her blind rage
Will make all fatal. But behold she comes,
For whom I fear, to shield me from my fears,
The cause and comfort of my boding heart.

Enter ALMERIA.

My life, my health, my liberty, my all!

How shall I welcome thee to this sad place?

How speak to thee the words of joy and trans-
port?

How run into thy arms, withheld by fetters?

Or take thee into mine, while I am thus ma-
nacled

And pinion'd like a thief or murderer?

Shall I not hurt or bruise thy tender body,

And stain thy bosom with the rust of these

Rude irons? Must I meet thee, thus, Almeria?

Almeria. Thus, thus; we parted, thus to meet
again.

Thou toldst me thou would'st think how we
might meet

To part no more—now we will part no more;

For these thy chains, or death, shall join us
ever.

Osmyn. Oh! Oh—

Almeria. Give me that sigh.

Why dost thou heave, and stifle in thy griefs?

Thy heart will burst, thy eyes look red and
start;

Give thy soul way, and tell me thy dark thought.

Osmyn. For this world's rule, I would not
wound thy breast

With such a dagger as then struck my heart.

Almeria. Why! why? To know it, cannot wound
me more,

Than knowing thou hast felt it. Tell it me—

Thou giv'st me pain with too much tenderness.

Osmyn. And thy excessive love distracts my
sense.

Oh! wouldst thou be less killing, soft, or kind,

Grief could not double thus his darts against me.

Almeria. Thou dost me wrong, and grief too
robs my heart,

If there be shoot not ev'ry other shaft:

Thy second self should feel each other wound,

And woe should be in equal portions dealt.

I am thy wife—

Osmyn. Oh! thou hast searched too deep!

There, there I bleed; there pull the cruel cords,

That strain my cracking nerves; engines and wheels,
That piecemeal grind, are beds of down and balm

To that soul-racking thought.

Almeria. Then I am curs'd

Indeed, if that be so; if I'm thy torment,
Kill me, then kill me, dash me with thy chains,
Tread on me:

Am I, am I of all thy woes the worst?

Osmyn. My all of bliss, my everlasting life,
Soul of my soul, and end of all my wishes,
Why dost thou thus unman me with thy words,
And melt me down to mingle with thy weep-
ings?

Why dost thou ask? Why dost thou talk thus
piercingly?

Thy sorrows have disturb'd thy peace of mind,
And thou dost speak of miseries impossible.

Almeria. Didst not thou say that racks and wheels
were balm,

And beds of ease, to thinking me thy wife?

Osmyn. No, no; nor should the subtlest pains
that hell,

Or hell-born malice can invent, extort

A wish or thought from me to have thee other.

But wilt thou know what harrows up my heart?

Thou art my wife—nay, thou art yet my bride;

The sacred union of connubial love

Yet unaccomplish'd.

Is this dark cell a temple for that god?

Or this vile earth an altar for such offerings?

This den for slaves, this dungeon damp'd with
woes;

Is this to call thee mine? Oh! hold my heart!

To call thee mine! Yes; thus, e'en thus to call

Thee mine, were comfort, joy, extremest ec-
stasy.

But, oh! thou art not mine, not e'en in misery;

And 'tis deny'd to me to be so bless'd,

As to be wretched with thee.

Almeria. No, not that

Th' extremest malice of our fate can hinder:

That still is left us, and on that we'll feed,

As on the leavings of calamity.

There we will feast and smile on past distress,

And hug, in scorn of it, our mutual ruin.

Osmyn. Oh! thou dost talk, my love, as one re-
solv'd,

Because not knowing danger. But look for-
ward;

Think of to-morrow, when thou shalt be torn

From these weak, struggling, unextended arms:

Think how my heart will heave, and eyes will
strain,

To grasp and reach what is deny'd my hands:

Think how I sm, when thou shalt wed with
Garcia!

Then will I smear these walls with blood, dis-
figure

And dash my face, and rive my clotted hair;

Break on this flinty floor my throbbing breast,

And grovel with gash'd hands to scratch a grave,

And bury me alive.

Almeria. Heart-breaking horror!

Osmyn. Then Garcia shall lie panting on thy
bosom,

Luxurious, revelling amidst thy charms—

Hell, hell! have I not cause to rage and rave?

What are all racks, and wheels, and whips to
this?

Oh, my Almeria!

What do the damn'd endure, but to despair;

But knowing heav'n, so know it lost for ever!

Almeria. Oh! I am struck; thy words are bolts
of ice,

Which, shot into my breast, now melt and chill
me.

Enter ZARA, PEREZ, and SELIM.

Zara. Somewhat of weight to me requires his
freedom.

Dare you dispute the king's command? Behold
The royal signet. *(Aside to Perez.)*

Perez. I obey; yet beg

Your majesty one moment to defer

Your ent'ring, till the princess is return'd

From visiting the noble prisoner. *(Aside to Zara.)*

Zara. Ha!

What say'st thou? *(Aside to Perez.)*

Osmyn. We are lost, undone, discover'd!

Speak of compassion, let her hear you speak

Of interceding for me with the king;

Say something quickly to conceal our loves,

If possible. *(Aside to Almeria.)*

Almeria. I cannot speak. *(Aside to Osmyn.)*

Osmyn. Let me

Conduct you forth, as not perceiving her,

But till she's gone; then bless me thus again.

(Aside to Almeria.)

Zara. Trembling and weeping as he leads her
forth!

Confusion in his face, and grief in hers!

'Tis plain I've been abus'd.

Perdition catch 'em both, and ruin part 'em!

(Aside.)

Osmyn. This charity to one unknown, and thus

(Aloud to Almeria, as she is going.)

Distress'd, heav'n will repay: all thanks are poor.

[Exit Almeria.]

Zara. Damn'd, damn'd dissembler! Yet I will

be calm,

Choke in my rage, and know the utmost depth

Of this deceiver. *(Aside.)* You seem much sur-
pris'd.

Osmyn. At your return so soon and unex-
pected!

Zara. And so unwish'd, unwanted, too, it
seems.

Confusion!—Yet I will contain myself.

You're grown a favourite since last we parted:

Perhaps I'm saucy and intruding.

Osmyn. Madam!

Zara. I did not know the princess' favourit:

Your pardon, sir—mistake me not; you think

I'm angry; you're deceiv'd, I came to set

You free; but shall return much better pleas'd

To find you have an interest superior.

Osmyn. You do not come to mock my mi-
series?

Zara. I do.

Osmyn. I could at this time spare your mirth.

Zara. I know thou couldst; but I'm not often
pleas'd,

And will indulge it now. What miseries?

Who would not be thus happily confin'd

To be the care of weeping majesty?

To have contending queens, at dead of night,

Forsake their down, to wake with wat'ry eyes,

And watch, like tapers, o'er your hour of rest?

Oh, curse!—I cannot hold.

Osmyn. Come, 'tis too much.

Zara. Villain!

Osmyn. How, madam?

Zara. Thou shalt die.

Osmyn. I thank you.

Zara. Thou liest, for now I know for whom

thou'dst live.

Osmyn. Then you may know for whom I'd
die.

Zara. Hell, hell!

Yet I'll be calm—Dark and unknown betrayer!

But now the dawn begins, and the slow hand

Of fate is stretch'd to draw the veil, and leave

Thee bare, the naked mark of public view.

Osmyn. You may be still deceiv'd; 'tis in my
power,

Chain'd as I am, to fly from all my wrongs,
And free myself at once from misery,
And you of me.

Zara. Ha! say'st thou? But I'll prevent it.
Who waits there? As you will answer it, look this
slave (To the Guard.)

Attempt no means to make himself away.
I've been deceiv'd. The public safety now
Requires he should be more confin'd, and none,
No, not the princess, suffer'd or to see
Or speak with him: I'll quit you to the king.
Vile and ingrate! too late thou shalt repent
The base injustice thou hast done my love;
Yes, thou shalt know, spite of thy past distress,
And all those ills, which thou so long hast
mourn'd,
Heav'n has no rage like love to hatred turn'd,
Nor hell a fury like a woman scorn'd. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Room of State.

Enter ZARA and SELIM.

Zara. Thou hast already rack'd me with thy
stay;

Therefore, require me not to ask thee twice:
Reply at once to all. What is concluded?

Selim. Your accusation highly has incens'd
The king, and were alone enough to urge
The fate of Osmyn; but to that, fresh news
Has since arriv'd, of more revolted troops.
'Tis certain Heli, too, is fled, and with him
(Which breeds amazement and distraction) some
Who bore high offices of weight and trust,
Both in the state and army. This confirms
The king in full belief of all you told him
Concerning Osmyn, and his correspondence
With them who first began the mutiny.
Wherefore, a warrant for his death is sign'd;
And order given for public execution.

Zara. Ha! haste thee; fly, prevent his fate and
mine;

Find out the king, tell him I have of weight
More than his crown t' impart, ere Osmyn die.

Selim. It needs not, for the king will straight be
here;

And as to your revenge, not his own int'rest,
Pretend to sacrifice the life of Osmyn.

Zara. What shall I say? Invent, contrive,
advise

Somewhat to blind the king, and save his life
In whom I live. Devise the means to shun it,
Quick; or, by heav'n, this dagger drinks thy
blood.

Selim. My life is your's, nor wish I to preserve
it,

But to serve you. I have already thought.

Zara. Forgive my rage; I know thy love and
truth.

But say, what's to be done? or when, or how
Shall I prevent or stop the approaching danger?

Selim. You must still seem most resolute and
fix'd

On Osmyn's death; too quick a change of mercy
Might breed suspicion of the cause. Advise
That execution may be done in private.

Zara. On what pretence?

Selim. Your own request's enough.

However, for a colour, tell him you
Have cause to fear his guards may be corrupted,
And some of them bought off to Osmyn's inter-
rest,

Who, at the place of execution, will
Attempt to force his way for an escape:

The state of things will countenance all suspi-
cions.

Then offer to the king to have him strangled
In secret by your mutes: and get an order,
That none but mutes may have admittance to
him.

I can no more, the king is here. Obtain
This grant, and I'll acquaint you with the rest.
[*Exit.*]

Enter KING, GONZALEZ, and PEREZ.

King. Bear to the dungeon those rebel-
lous slaves:

But for their leaders, Sancho and Ramirez,
Let 'em be led away to present death.
Perez, see it perform'd.

Gonzales. Might I presume,
Their execution better were deferr'd,
Till Osmyn die. Meantime, we may learn more
Of this conspiracy.

King. Then be it so.

Stay, soldier; they shall suffer with the Moor.
Are none return'd of those that follow'd Heli?

Gonzales. None, sir. Some papers have been
since discover'd

In Roderigo's house, who fled with him,
Which seem to intimate as if Alphonso
Were still alive, and arming in Valencia:
Which wears, indeed, this colour of a truth,
They who have fled have that way bent their
course.

Of the same nature divers notes have been
Dispers'd t' amuse the people; whereupon
Some ready of belief, have rais'd this rumour:
That being sav'd upon the coast of Africa,
He there disclos'd himself to Albucazim,
And by a secret compact made with him,
Open'd and urg'd the way to this invasion;
While he himself, returning to Valencia
In private, undertook to raise this tumult.

Zara. Ha! hear'st thou that? Is Osmyn, then,
Alphonso?

Oh! certain death for him, as sure despair
For me, if it be known. If not, what hope
Have I? Yet 'twere the lowest baseness, now
To yield him up. No, I will still conceal him,
And try the force of yet more obligations.

[*Aside.*]
Gonzales. 'Tis not impossible. Yet it may
be

That some impostor has usurp'd his name.
Your beauteous captive, Zara, can inform
If such an one, so 'scaping, was receiv'd
At any time in Albucazim's court.

King. Pardon, fair excellence, this long neg-
lect:

An unforeseen, unwelcome hour of business,
Has thrust between us and our while of love;
But wearing now apace with ebbing sand,
Will quickly waste and give again the day.

Zara. You're too secure: the danger is more im-
minent

Than your high courage suffers you to see:
While Osmyn lives, you are not safe.

King. His doom

Is pass'd: if you revoke it not, he dies.

Zara. 'Tis well. By what I heard upon your
entrance,

I find I can unfold what yet concerns
You more. One who did call himself Alphonso
Was cast upon my coast, as is reported,
And oft had private conference with the king;
To what effect I knew not then: but he,
Alphonso, secretly departed, just
About the time our arms embark'd for Spain.
What I know more is, that a triple league
Of strictest friendship was profess'd between
Alphonso, Heli, and the traitor Osmyn.

King. Public report is ratified in this.

Zara. And Osmyn's death requir'd of strong necessity.

King. Give order straight that all the prisoners die.

Zara. Forbear a moment, somewhat more I have

Worthy your private ear, and this your minister.

King. Let all, except Gonzales, leave the room.

[*Exeunt Perez, &c.*]

Zara. I am your captive, and you've us'd me nobly;

And in return of that, though otherwise

Your enemy,

I think it fit to tell you, that your guards

Are tainted: some among 'em have resolv'd

To rescue Osmyn at the place of death.

King. Is treason, then, so near us as our guards?

Zara. Most certain; though my knowledge is not yet

So ripe, to point at the particular men.

King. What's to be done?

Zara. That, too, I will advise.

I have remaining in my train some mutes,

A present once from the sultana queen,

In the grand signior's court. These from their infancy

Are practis'd in the trade of death; and shall,

(As there the custom is,) in private, strangle Osmyn.

Gonzales. My lord, the queen advises well.

King. What offering, or what recompense remains

In me, that can be worthy so great services?

To cast beneath your feet the crown you've sav'd,

Though on the head that wears it, were too little.

Zara. Of that hereafter; but, meantime, 'tis fit

You give strict charge that none may be admitted

To see the prisoner, but such mutes as I shall send.

King. Who waits there?

[*Enter PEREZ.*]

On your life take heed

That only Zara's mutes, or such who bring

Her warrant, have admittance to the Moor.

Zara. They and no other, not the princess's self.

Perez. Your majesty shall be obey'd.

King. Retire. [*Exit Perez.*]

Gonzales. That interdiction so particular,

Pronounc'd with vehemence against the princess,

Should have more meaning than appears bare-fac'd.

The king is blinded by his love, and heeds it not. [*Aside.*] Your majesty, sure, might have spar'd

The last restraint; you hardly can suspect

The princess is confederate with the Moor.

Zara. I've heard her charity did once extend

So far to visit him, at his request.

Gonzales. Ha!

King. How? She visit Osmyn! What, my daughter?

Seim. Madam, take heed; or you have ruin'd all. [*Aside to Zara.*]

Zara. And after did solicit you on his behalf.

King. Never. You have been misinform'd.

Zara. Indeed! Then 'twas a whisper spread by some

Who wish'd it so; a common art in courts.

I will retire, and instantly prepare

Instruction for my ministers of death.

[*Exit with Seim.*]

Gonzales. There's somewhat yet of mystery in this:

Her words and actions are obscure and double,

Sometimes concur and sometimes disagree: I like it not. [*Aside.*]

King. What dost thou think, Gonzales; Are we not much indebted to this fair one?

Gonzales. I am a little slow of credit, sir, In the sincerity of women's actions.

Methinks this lady's hatred to the Moor

Disquiets her too much; which makes it seem

As if she'd rather that she did not hate him.

I wish her mutes are meant to be employ'd

As she pretends—I doubt it now—Your guards

Corrupted! how? by whom? who told her so?

I! th' evening, Osmyn was to die; at midnight,

She begg'd the royal signet to release him;

I! th' morning, he must die again; ere noon,

Her mutes alone must strangle him, or he'll

Escape. This put together suits not well.

King. Yet, that there's truth in what she has discover'd,

Is manifest from every circumstance.

This tumult, and the lords who fled with Heli,

Are confirmation; that Alphonso lives,

Agrees expressly, too, with her report.

Gonzales. I grant it, sir, and doubt not, but in rage

Of jealousy, she has discover'd what

She now repents. It may be I'm deceiv'd:

But why that needless caution of the princess?

What if she had seen Osmyn? though 'twere strange;

But if she had, what was't to her? unless

She fear'd her stronger charms might pass the Moor's

Affection to revolt.

King. I thank thee, friend;

There's reason in thy doubt, and I am warn'd.

But think'st thou that my daughter say this

Moor?

Gonzales. If Osmyn be, as Zara has related,

Alphonso's friend, 'tis not impossible

But she might wish on his account to see him.

King. Say'st thou? By heaven, thou hast rous'd

a thought,

That like a sudden earthquake shakes my frame.

Confusion! then my daughter's an accomplice,

And plots in private with this hellish Moor.

Gonzales. That were too hard a thought: but, see, she comes.

'Twere not amiss to question her a little,

And try, howe'er, if I've divin'd aright.

If what I fear be true, she'll be concern'd

For Osmyn's death, as he's Alphonso's friend:

Urge that, to try if she'll solicit for him.

[*Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.*]

King. Your coming has prevented me, Almeria;

I had determin'd to have sent for you.

Let your attendant be dismiss'd; I have

To talk with you. Come near; why dost thou shake?

What mean those swollen and red-fleck'd eyes, that look

As they had wept in blood, and worn the night

In waking anguish? Why this, on the day

Which was design'd to celebrate thy nuptials;

But that the beams of light are to be stain'd

With reeking gore from traitors on the rack?

Wherefore I have deferr'd the marriage-rites;

Nor shall the guilty horrors of this day

Profane that jubilee.

Almeria. All days to me
Henceforth are equal: this the day of death,
To-morrow, and the next; and each that follows,
Will undistinguish'd roll, and but prolong
One hated line of more extended woe.

King. Whence is thy grief? Give me to know
the cause,
And look thou answer me with truth; for,
know,

I am not unacquainted with thy falsehood.

Why art thou mute? base and degenerate maid!

Gonsales. Dear madam, speak, or you'll incense
the king.

Almeria. What is't to speak? or wherefore should
I speak?

What mean these tears, but grief unutterable?

King. They are the dumb confessions of thy
mind:

They mean thy guilt; and say thou wert con-
fess'd

With damn'd conspirators to take my life.

Oh! impious paricide! now canst thou speak?

Almeria. Oh! earth, behold I kneel upon thy
bosom,

And bend my flowing eyes, to stream upon
Thy face, imploring thee that thou wilt yield;

Open thy bowels of compassion, take
Ino thy womb the last and most forlorn

Of all thy race. Hear me, thou common parent!—

I have no parent else—be thou a mother,

And step between me and the curse of him

Who was—who was, but is no more a father;

But brands my innocence with horrid crimes,

And for the tender names of child and daughter,

Now calls me murderer and paricide.

King. Rise, I command thee; and, if thou
wouldst

Acquit thyself of those detested names,

Swear thou hast never seen that foreign dog,

Now doom'd to die, that most accurs'd Osmyn.

Almeria. Never, but as with innocence I might,
And free of all bad purposes: so heav'n's
My witness.

King. Vile, equivocating wretch!

With innocence! Oh! patience, hear: she owns
it!

Confesses it! By heav'n, I'll have him rack'd,
Torn, mangl'd, flay'd, impal'd; all pains and tor-
tures

That wit of man and dire revenge can think,

Shall he, accumulated, under-bear.

Almeria. Oh! I am lost; there fate begins to
wound.

King. Hear me; then, if thou canst, reply:
know, traitress,

I'm not to learn that curs'd Alphonso lives;

Nor am I ignorant what Osmyn is.

Almeria. Then all is ended, and we both must
die.

Since thou'rt reveal'd, alone thou shalt not die:

And yet alone would I have died, heav'n knows,

Repeated deaths, rather than have reveal'd thee.

King. Hell, hell! do I hear this, and yet en-
dure?

What, dar'st thou to my face avow thy guilt?

Hence, ere I curse; fly my just rage with
speed;

Lest I forget us both and spurn thee from me.

Almeria. And yet a father! think, I am your
child.

Turn not your eyes away: look on me kneeling;

Now curse me if you can; now spurn me off.

Did ever father curse his kneeling child?

Never; for always blessings crown that posture.

Oh! bear me, then, thus crawling on the earth—

King. Be thou advis'd, and let me go, while
yet

The light impression thou hast made remains.

Almeria. No, never will I rise, nor loose this
hold,
Till you are mov'd, and grant that he may live.

King. Ha! who may live? take heed, no more
of that;

For on my soul he dies, though thou and I

And all should follow to partake his doom.

Away, off, let me go. Call her attendants.

Re-enter LEONORA and Women.

Almeria. Drag me, harrow the earth with my
bare bosom,

I'll not let go till you have spar'd my husband.

King. Ha! husband! Which? who?

Almeria. He, he is my husband—

King. Who?

Almeria. O— (Faints.)

Let me go, let me fall, sink deep—I'll dig,

I'll dig a grave, and tear up death; I will;

Yes, I will strip off life, and we will change:

I will be death; then, though you kill my hus-
band,

He shall be mine still, and for ever mine.

King. What husband? whom dost thou mean?

Gonsales. She raves!

Almeria. Oh! that I did! Osmyn, he is my
husband.

King. Osmyn!

Almeria. Not Osmyn, but Alphonso is my
dear

And wedded husband. Heav'n, and air, and
seas,

Ye winds and waves, I call ye all to witness!

King. Wilder than winds or waves, thyself dost
rave.

Should I hear more, I, too, should catch thy mad-
ness.

Watch her returning sense, and bring me word:

And look that she attempt not on her life.

[Exit.]
Almeria. Oh! stay, yet stay; hear me, I am not
mad.

I would to heaven I were!—he's gone.

Gonsales. Have comfort.

Almeria. Curs'd be that rogue that bids me be
of comfort!

Curs'd my own tongue, that could not move his
pity!

Curs'd these weak hands, that could not hold him
here!

For he is gone to doom Alphonso's death.

Gonsales. Your too excessive grief works on
your fancy,

And deludes your sense. Alphonso, if living,

Is far from hence, beyond your father's power.

Almeria. Hence, thou detested, ill-tim'd flat-
terer!

Source of my woes! thou and thy race be,
ours'd!

But doubly thou, who couldst alone have policy

And fraud to find the fatal secret out,

And know that Osmyn was Alphonso!

Gonsales. Ha!

Almeria. Why dost thou start? what dost thou
see or hear?

Is it the doleful bell, tolling for death?

Or dying groans from my Alphonso's breast?

See, see; look yonder, where a grizzled, pale,

And ghastly head glares by, all smear'd with
blood,

Gasping as it would speak; and after, see,

Behold a damp dead hand has dropp'd a dagger:

I'll catch it!—Hark! a voice cries murder! ah!

My father's voice! hollow it sounds, and calls

Me from the tomb—I'll follow it; for there

I shall again behold my dear Alphonso.

[Exit with Leonora.]

Gonzales. She's greatly griev'd: nor am I less surpris'd.

Osmyn Alphonso! nò; she over-rites
My policy: I ne'er suspected it:
Nor now had know'n it, but from her mistake.
Her husband, too! Ha! where is Garcia, then?
And where the crown that should descend on him,

To grace the line of my posterity?
Hold, let me think: if I should tell the king—
Things come to this extremity; his daughter
Wedded already—what if he should yield?
Knowing no remedy for what is past;
And urg'd by nature pleading for his child,
With which he seems to be already shaken.
And though I know he hates, beyond the grave,
Anselmo's race; yet, if—that if concludes me.
To doubt, when I may be assur'd, is folly.
But how prevent the captive queen, who means
To set him free? Ay, now 'tis plain: oh! well
Invented tale! He was Alphonso's friend.
This subtle woman will amuse the king.
If I delay—'twill do—or better so.
One to my wish. Alonzo, thou'art welcome.

Enter ALONZO.

Alonso. The king expects your lordship.

Gonzales. 'Tis no matter;

I'm not i' th' way at present, good Alonzo.

Alonso. If't please your lordship, I'll return and say

I have not seen you.

Gonzales. Do, my best Alonzo.

Yet stay; I would—but go; anon will serve—

Yet I have that requires thy speedy help.

I think thou wouldst not stop to do me service.

Alonso. I am your creature.

Gonzales. Say thou art my friend.

I've seen thy sword do noble execution.

Alonso. All that it can your lordship shall command.

Gonzales. Thanks; and I take thee at thy word.
Thou'st seen,

Among the foll'wers of the captive queen,
Dumb men, who make their meaning known by signs.

Alonso. I have, my lord.

Gonzales. Couldst thou procure, with speed
And privacy, the wearing garb of one
Of those, though purchas'd by his death, I'd give

Thee such reward as should exceed thy wish.

Alonso. Conclude it done. Where shall I wait
your lordship?

Gonzales. At my apartment. Use thy utmost
diligence;

And say I've not been seen: haste, good Alonzo.
[*Exit Alonzo.*]

So, this can hardly fail. Alphonso slain,
The greatest obstacle is then remov'd.
Almeria widow'd, yet again may wed;
And I yet fix the crown on Garcia's head. [*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Room of State.

Enter KING, PEREZ, and ALONZO.

King. Not to be found? In an ill hour he's
absent.

None, say you? none? what, not the fav'rite
counsellor?

Nor she herself, nor any of her mutes,
Have yet requir'd admittance?

Perez. None, my lord.

King. Is Osmyn so dispos'd as I commanded?

[*Perez.* Fast bound in double chains, and at full
length

He lies supine on earth: with as much ease
She might remove the centre of this earth,
As loose the rivets of his bonds.

King. 'Tis well.

[*A Mute appears, and seeing the King retires.*
Ha! stop and seize that mute; Alonzo, follow
him.

Ent'ring he met my eyes, and started back
Frighted, and fumbling one hand in his bosom,
As to conceal th' importance of his errand.

[*Alonso follows him, and returns with a paper.*

Alonso. A bloody proof of obstinate fidelity!

King. What dost thou mean?

Alonso. Soon as I seiz'd the man,
He snatch'd from out his bosom this; and
strove

With rash and greedy haste at once to cram
The morsel down his throat. I caught his arm,
And hardly wrench'd his hand to wring it from
him;

Which done, he drew a poniard from his side,
And on the instant plung'd it in his breast.

King. Remove the body thence; ere Zara see
it.

Alonso. I'll be so bold to borrow his attire;

'Twill quit me from my promise to Gonzales.
[*Aside and exit.*]

King. How's this? my mortal foe beneath my
roof! [*Having read the letter.*]

Oh! give me patience, all ye pow'rs! no, rather

Give me new rage, implacable revenge,

And trebled fury—Ha! who's there?

Perez. My lord?

King. Hence, slave! how dar'st thou hide, to
watch and pry

Into how poor a thing a king descends;

How like thyself, when passion treads him down!

Ha! stir not, on thy life! for thou wert fix'd

And planted here to see me gorge this bait,
And lash against the hook. By heav'n, you're
all

Rank traitors; thou art with the rest combin'd:

Thou knew'st that Osmyn was Alphonso, knew'st

My daughter privately with him conferr'd,

And wert the spy and pander to their meeting.

Perez. By all that's holy, I'm amaz'd—

King. Thou ly'st.

Thou art accomplice, too, with Zara: here,

Where she sets down—(*Reads.*) "Still will I set
thee free!"

That somewhere is repeated. (*Reads.*) "I have
pow'r

O'er them that are thy guards." Mark that, thou
traitor.

Perez. It was your majesty's command, I
should

Obeys her order.

King. (*Reads.*) "And still will I set

thee free, Alphonso." Hell! curs'd, curs'd Al-
phonso!

False and perfidious Zara! Strumpet daughter!

Away, begone, thou feeble boy, fond love,

All nature, softness, pity, and compassion;

This hour I throw ye off, and entertain

Fall hate within my breast, revenge, and gall.

By heav'n, I'll meet and counterwork this trea-
chery.

Hark thee, villain, traitor! answer me, slave!

Perez. My service has not merited those titles.

King. Dar'st thou reply? Take that. Thy ser-
vice! thine! [*Strikes him.*]

What's thy whole life, thy soul, thy all, to my
One moment's ease? Hear my command; and
look

That thou obey, or horror on thy head:
Drench me thy dagger in Alphonso's heart.
Why dost thou start? Resolve, or—

Perez. Sir, I will.

King. 'Tis well: that when she comes to set him free,
His teeth may grin and mock at her remorse.

(Perez going.)
Stay thee—I've further thought—I'll add to this,
And give her eyes yet greater disappointment:
When thou hast ended him, bring me his robe;
And let the cell where she'll expect to see him
Be darken'd, so as to amuse the sight.
I'll be conducted thither—mark me well—
There with his turban, and his robe array'd,
And laid along, as he now lies, supine,
I shall convict her, to her face, of falsehood.
When for Alphonso's she shall take my hand,
And breathe her sighs upon my lips for his;
Sudden I'll start, and dash her with her guilt.
But see, she comes! I'll shun th' encounter:
Follow me, and give heed to my direction.

[Exeunt.]

Enter ZARA and SELIM.

Zara. Ha! 'twas the king!
The king that passed hence! frowning he went:
Dost think he saw me?

Selim. Yes; but then, as if he thought
His eyes had err'd, he hastily recall'd
Th' imperfect look, and sternly turn'd away.

Zara. Shun me when seen! I fear thou hast undone me.

Selim. Avert it, heav'n! that yet should ever suffer

For my defect; or that the means which I
Devis'd to serve, should ruin your design!
Prescience is heav'n's alone, not giv'n to man.
If I have fail'd in what, as being man,
I needs must fail, impute not as a crime
My nature's want, but punish nature in me;
I plead not for a pardon and to live,
But to be punish'd and forgiv'n. Here, strike;
I bare my breast to meet your just revenge.

Zara. I have not leisure now to take so poor
A forfeit as thy life: somewhat of high
And more important fate requires my thought.
Regard me well, and dare not to reply
To what I give in charge; for I'm resolv'd.
Give order that the two remaining mutes
Attend me instantly, with each a bowl
Of such ingredients mix'd, as will with speed
Benumb the living faculties, and give
Most easy and inevitable death.
Yes, Osmyn, yes; be Osmyn or Alphonso,
I'll give thee freedom, if thou dar'st be free:
Such liberty as I embrace myself,
Thou shalt partake. Since fates no more afford,
I can but die with thee to keep my word.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A Prison.

Enter GONSALEZ, disguised like a Mute, with a dagger.

Gonsalez. Nor sentinel, nor guard! the doors
unbar'd!

And all as still as at the noon of night!
Sure, sleep already has been busy here.
There lies my way; that door, too, unlook'd!

(Looks in.)

Ha! sure, he sleeps; all's dark within, save what
A lamp, that feebly lifts a sickly flame,
By fits reveals—his face seems turn'd to favour
Th' attempt; I'll steal and do it unperceiv'd.
What noise? somebody coming? hush! Alonzo!
Nobody. Sure, he'll wait without. I would

'Twere done! I'll crawl and sting him to the
heart;
Then cast my skin, and leave it there to answer it.

[Goes in.]

Enter GARCIA and ALONZO.

Garcia. Where, where, Alonzo, where's my
father? where
The king? Confusion! all is on the rout!
All's lost; all ruin'd by surprise and treachery!
Where, where is he? Why dost thou mislead
me?

Alonso. My lord, he enter'd but a moment
since,
And could not pass me unperceiv'd—What, ho!
My lord, my lord! what, ho! my lord! Gonsalez.

Re-enter GONSALEZ, bloody.

Gonsalez. Perdition choke your clamours! whence
this rudeness?

Garcia!

Garcia. Perdition, slavery, and death,
Are entering now our doors! Where is the
king?
What means this blood? and why this face of
horror?

Gonsalez. No matter: give me first to know the
cause
Of these your rash and ill-tim'd exclamations.

Garcia. The eastern gate is to the foe be-
tray'd,
Who, but for heaps of slain that choke the pas-
sage,

Had enter'd long ere now, and borne down all
Before 'em to the palace walls. Unless
The king in person animate our arms,
Granada's lost; and to confirm this fear,
The traitor Herez, and the captive Moor
Are through a postern fled, and join the foe.

Gonsalez. Would all were false as that! for whom
you call

The Moor is dead. That Osmyn was Alphonso;
In whose heart's blood this poniard yet is warm.

Garcia. Impossible! for Osmyn was, while
flying,

Pronounc'd aloud by Perez for Alphonso.

Gonsalez. Enter that chamber, and convince your
eyes,

How much report has wrong'd your easy faith.

[Garcia goes in.]

Alonso. My lord, for certain truth Perez is
fled;

And has declar'd the cause of his revolt
Was to revenge a blow the king had giv'n him.

Re-enter GARCIA.

Garcia. Ruin and horror! Oh! heart-wounding
sight!

Gonsalez. What says my son? what ruin! ha!
what horror?

Garcia. Blasted be my eyes, and speechless be
my tongue,

Rather than to see, or to relate

This deed! Oh! dire mistake! Oh! fatal blow!

The king—

Gonsalez and Alonso. The king!

Garcia. Dead, well'ring, drown'd in blood!

See, see, attir'd like Osmyn, where he lies.

(They look in.)

Oh! whence, or how, or wherefore was this
done?

But what imports the manner or the cause?

Nothing remains to do, or to require,

But that we all should turn our swords against
Ourselves, and expiate, with our own blood.

Gonsalez. Oh, wretch! oh! sur'd and rash de-
luded fool!

On me, on me turn your avenging swords!
I, who have spilt my royal master's blood,
Should make atonement by a death as horrid,
And fall beneath the hand of my own son.

Garcia. Ha! what? atone this murder with a greater!

The horror of that thought has damp'd my rage.

Gonsalez. Oh, my son! from the blind dotage
Of a father's fondness these ills arose:
For thee I've been ambitious, base, and bloody;
For thee I've plung'd into this sea of sin;
Stemming the tide with only one weak hand,
While t'other bore the crown (to wreathe thy brow,)

Whose weight has sunk me ere I reach'd the shore:

Garcia. Fatal ambition! Hark! the foe is enter'd!

The shrillness of that shout speaks 'em at hand.

Alonso. My lord, I've thought how to conceal the body:

Require me not to tell the means, till done,
Lest you forbid what then you may approve.

Gonsalez. They shout again! Whate'er he means to do,

'Twere fit the soldiers were amus'd with hopes;
And in the meantime fed with expectation
To see the king in person at their head.

Garcia. Were it a truth, I fear 'tis now too late:

But I'll omit no care nor haste; and try
Or to repel their force, or bravely die. [Exit.

Re-enter ALONZO.

Gonsalez. What has thou done, Alonso?

Alonso. Such a deed,
As but an hour ago I'd not have done,
Though for the crown of universal empire.
But what are kings reduc'd to common clay?
Or who can wound the dead? I've from the body

Sever'd the head, and in an obscure corner
Dispos'd it, muffled in the mute's attire,
Leaving to view of them who enter next,
Alone the undistinguishable trunk;
Which may be still mistaken by the guards
For Osmyn, if in seeking for the king
They chance to find it.

Gonsalez. 'Twas an act of horror,
And of a piece with this day's dire misdeeds,
But 'tis no time to ponder or repent.
Haste thee, Alonso, haste thee hence with speed

To save my son. I'll follow with the last
Reserve, to reinforce his arms; at least
I shall make good and shelter his retreat. [Exeunt.

Enter ZARA, followed by SELIM, and two Mutes bearing the bowls.

Zara. Silence and solitude are everywhere!
Through all the gloomy ways and iron doors
That hither lead, nor human face nor voice
Is seen or heard.

Let 'em set down the bowls, and warn Alphonso
That I am here—so. [Mutes go in.] You return,
and find

The king; tell him what he requir'd I've done,
And wait his coming to approve the deed.

Re-enter Mutes.

What have you seen? Ha! wherefore stare you thus?

With haggard eyes? Why are your arms across?
Your heavy and desponding heads hung down?

Why is't you more than speak in these sad sighs?

Give me more ample knowledge of this mourning.
(*They go to the scene, which opening, she perceives the body.*)

Ha! prostrate! bloody! headless! Oh! I'm lost!
Oh, Osmyn! Oh, Alphonso! Cruel fate!
Cruel, cruel, oh! more than killing object!
I came prepar'd to die, and see thee die:
Nay, came prepar'd myself to give thee death—
But cannot bear to find thee thus, my Osmyn.
Oh! this accurs'd, this base, this treach'rous king!

Re-enter SELIM.

Selim. I've sought in vain; for no where can the king

Be found—

Zara. Get thee to hell, and seek him there! (Stabs him.)

His hellish rage had wanted means to act,
But for thy fatal and pernicious counsel.

Selim. You thought it better then—but I'm rewarded.

The mute you sent, by some mischance was seen,

And forc'd to yield your letter with his life:
I found the dead and bloody body stapp'd—
My tongue falters, and my voice fails—I sink—
Drink not the poison—for Alphonso is— (Dies.)

Zara. As thou art now—and I shall quickly be.

'Tis not that he is dead; for 'twas decreed
We both should die. Nor is't that I survive;
I have a certain remedy for that.
But, oh! he died unknowing in my heart.

He knew I lov'd, but knew not to what height;
Nor that I meant to fall before his eyes,
A martyr and a victim to my vows;
Imensible of this last proof he's gone:
Then wherefore do I pause? Give me the bowl.

(*A Mute kneels and gives one of the bowls.*)
Hover a moment yet, thou gentle spirit,
Soul of my soul, and I will wait thy flight.
This to our mutual bliss, when join'd above.

(Drinks.)

Oh! friendly draught! already in my heart.
Cold, cold! my veins are icicles and frost.
I'll creep into his bosom, lay me there;
Cover us close—or I shall chill his breast,
And fright him from my arms. See, see! he slides

Still further from me; look, he hides his face!
I cannot feel it—quite beyond my reach.

Oh! now he's gone, and all is dark—
(Dies. Mutes kneel and mourn over her.)

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

Almeria. Oh! let me seek him in this horrid cell;

For in the tomb, or prison, I alone
Must hope to find him.

Leonora. Heav'ns! what dismal scene
Of death is this?

Almeria. Shew me, for I am come in search of death,

But want a guide, for tears have dimm'd my sight.

Leonora. Alas! a little further, and behold
Zara all pale and dead; two frightful men,
Who seem the murderers, kneel weeping by;
Feeling remorse too late for what they've done.
But oh! forbear—lift up your eyes no more,
But haste away, fly from this fatal place,
Where miseries are multiply'd; return,
Return, and look not on, for there's a dagger
Ready to stab the sight, and make your eyes
Rain blood—

Almeria. Oh! I foreknow, foresee that object.
Is it at last then so? Is he then dead?
I do not weep; the springs of tears are dry'd,
And of a sudden I am calm, as if
All things were well; and yet my husband's murder'd!

Yes, yes, I know to mourn! I'll slay this heart,
The source of woe, and let the torrent loose.
Those men have left to weep; they look on me!

I hope they murder all on whom they look,
Behold me well; your bloody hands have err'd,
And wrongfully have slain those innocents:
I am the sacrifice design'd to bleed,
And come prepar'd to yield my throat. They bow
Their heads, in sign of grief and innocence,

(*They point at the bowl on the ground.*)
And point—what mean they? Ha! a cup! oh! well
I understand what medicine has been here.
Oh! noble thirst! yet greedy, to drink all—
Oh! for another draught of death!

(*They point to the other cup.*)
Thanks to the lib'ral hand that fill'd thee thus;
I'll drink my glad acknowledgment—

Let her. Oh! hold

For mercy's sake; upon my knee I beg—

Almeria. With thee the kneeling world should
beg in vain.

Seest thou not there? Behold who prostrate lies,
And pleads against thee; who shall then prevail?
Yet I will take a cold and parting leave,
From his pale lips; I'll kiss him ere I drink,
Lest the rank juice should blister on my mouth,
And stain the colour of my last adieu.

Horror! a headless trunk! nor lips nor face,

(*Coming near the body, sniffs and lets fall the cup.*)

But spouting veins and mangled flesh! Oh, oh!

Enter ALPHONSO, HELI, PEREZ, Guards, and Attendants; with GARCIA, prisoner.

Alphonso. Away, stand off! where is she? let me fly,

Save her from death, and snatch her to my heart.

Almeria. Oh!

Alphonso. Forbear! my arms alone shall hold her up,
Warm her to life, and wake her into gladness.
Give a new birth to thy long-shaded eyes;
Then double on the day reflected light.

Almeria. Where am I? Heav'n! what does this dream intend?

Alphonso. Oh! mayst thou never dream of less delight,

Nor ever wake to less substantial joys!

Almeria. Giv'n me again from death! Oh! all ye powers,

Confirm this miracle! Can I believe

My sight?

This is my lord, my life, my only husband:

I have him now, and we no more will part.

My father, too, shall have compassion—

Alphonso. Oh! my heart's comfort! 'tis not giv'n to this

Frail life to be entirely bless'd. E'en now,

In this extremest joy my soul can taste,

Yet I am dash'd to think that thou must weep:

Thy father fell, where he design'd my death.

Gonzalez and Alonzo, both of wounds

Expiring, have with their last breath confess'd

The just decrees of heav'n, which on themselves

Has turn'd their own most bloody purposes.

Nay, I must grant, 'tis fit you should be thus—

(*She weeps.*)

Ill-fated Zara! Ha! a cup! alas!

Thy error, then, is plain; but I were fain

Not to overflow in tribute to thy memory.

Oh, Garcia!

Whose virtue has renounc'd thy father's crimes,

Seest thou how just the hand of heav'n has been?

Let us, who through our innocence survive,

Still in the paths of honour persevere,

And not from past or present ills despair:

For blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds,

And though a late, a sure reward succeeds.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE SCAPE-GOAT;

A FARCE, IN ONE ACT.—BY JOHN POOLE.



Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

OLD EUSTACE
CHARLES

IGNATIUS POLYGLOT
ROBIN

HARRIET
MOLLY MAGGS

SCENE.—Polyglot's study. A door on each side, conducting to other apartments. An opening to the garden, at the back of the stage. Another door leading to the interior of the house. Globes, books, maps, &c. are scattered about.

ROBIN discovered, turning a globe.

Robin. 'Tis an extraordinary thing, that, do what I will, I can't make myself sensible. I turn the world topsy-turvy for hours together, as I see my young master, Mr. Charles, do; like Mr. Ignatius Polyglot, his tutor, I sometimes look into a book full of Greek or Latin; but all to no purpose. Ah! Mr. Polyglot must be in the right: he can't bear the sight of a woman in the house, for fear Mr. Charles should fall in love, and neglect his studies; and, for my part, I'm sure that if all the Greek I have got in my pocket (*showing a book*) were crammed into my head, one thought of my sweet little Somersetshire lass, Molly Maggs, would drive it out again.

Enter MOLLY MAGGS, from the garden.

Molly. Hist, hist! Robin!

Robin. What, my dear Molly! You may come in.

Molly. I'm afraid, Robin.

Robin. There's nothing to be afraid of just now.

Molly. Where's Mr. Ignoramus, the tutorer, then?

Robin. Mr. Ignatius you mean. He's out, taking his evening's walk.

Molly. By he? I hope he be gone down towards the little bridge.

Robin. Why?

Molly. The last time he went that way, he were

so busy at what he called soldering a problem, that he stambled over into the brook. If I had been in your place, Robin, before I pulled him out again I'd ha' made him promise to consent to our marriage, or I'd ha' let him bid there till doomsday.

Robin. Molly, Molly, you don't like Mr. Polyglot.

Molly. Why don't he like me, then?

Robin. It is not you alone, but he would dislike any other young maiden about the house the same.

Molly. And what for? there's no reason in that. Am I to blame? I'm sure 'tis no fault of mine, Robin, that I'm a young maiden. Ha, ha, ha! A pretty to do there'd be if he should catch me here; in his own apartments, too!

Robin. So there would. I tremble to think of it; and so, Molly, you'd better—

Molly. I don't care: if he says anything to me, I'll give him his own. Besides, our master, old Master Eustace, will be home in a few days, and we'll ask his leave to be married, in spite of old tutorer.

Robin. No, no; we must not displease him; he's steward as well as tutorer, and—

Molly. He'll discharge us? let him. I'm not afraid of wanting a service. I have relations who are up in the world. I'm first cousin to Sally Maggs, who is head chambermaid at the Bell, at Winchester—Chattering Sally, as they call her; and well they may, for she is chatter, chatter, chatter—

Robin. In that respect, Molly, you don't disgrace the relationship.

Molly. Discharge us, indeed! the sooner the better; we may then get married when we please. What does the foolish old chap mean by not liking folks to marry? I wish his father had been of the

same mind, and then Mr. Ignoramus would not have been here to torment us.

Robin. Well, well; though he is a little crabbed and sour, he's a good old soul at bottom. He'd go through fire and water to serve young Master Charles.

Molly. With a vengeance! Poor young gentleman! he's grown as melancholy as a willow tree; and no wonder: at four-and-twenty to be kept in leading-strings like a baby! But no good will come of it, see if there do; and I wish that Master Charles would give him the slip one of these days, on purpose to plague him. Oh! if I could but catch the old one doing anything amiss—

Robin. Think kinder of him, Molly; we'll wait till we find him in a good humour, and then, perhaps—

Molly. If we wait till then, Robin, you need be in no hurry to buy the wedding-ring. Well, I'll go.

Robin. Du; for, after all, 'twould do no good to anger him. And, lord! if he were to see us here together—Well, good b'ye, my dear Molly.

Molly. Good b'ye, Robin! (*Loitering.*) Good b'ye, Robin!

Robin. (*Kisses her.*) Bless your little heart!

Enter, from the garden, IGNATIUS POLYGLOT, with a book. Robin runs off.

Molly. Oh, crimini!

Poly. What do I behold! Under my nose, my very nose! here, too, in my study, the sanctuary of science and of learning!

Molly. Well, if nothing worse was ever heard here, Mr. Ignoramus—

Poly. Ignatius. But what atonement can you make for this?

Molly. Atonement! I've done nothing to atone for.

Poly. Nothing! Do you call that nothing? Did I not see? Did I not hear? Nothing! O tem—but you don't understand Latin.

Molly. Latin, indeed! no, nor Greek neither; and I'm sure 'tis all Greek you are talking to me. What did you see? what did you hear? You heard Robin say good b'ye, that was all.

Poly. Peace. I'm a linguist; and in none of the seventeen languages I'm acquainted with, does that mean good b'ye.

Molly. Then I wouldn't give seventeen figs to be as learned as you are, and your seventeen languages are not worth talking.

Poly. To what is the poor youth exposed! Mischievous serpent, woman! I pity and tremble for the unfortunate lad.

Molly. 'Tis a misfortune not likely to happen to you.

Poly. But 'tis I alone who am to blame. I ought not to have allowed one of the deluding sex to approach those innocent and unsuspecting youths. Had my pupil, Charles, beheld this, it might have put things into his head, which—But there will yet be time to save them. To-morrow, at day-break, you will quit this house.

Molly. Nay, and you wouldn't be so cruel, Mr. Poll-parrot.

Poly. Polyplot. I have said it; reply not.

Molly. I have not done any harm, and I'm sure I did not think any harm. 'Tis no fault of mine if Robin is in love with me: he fell in love of his own accord, indeed he did.

Poly. Love! (*Looking fearfully about.*) Silence! If Charles should hear that dangerous word—Retire, withdraw, begone!

Molly. (*Bursting into tears.*) Oh, dearest me! Pray, good, kind Mr. Ignoramus, forgive me this once. Would you have it upon your conscience to turn a poor lass out of her service, and send her upon the wide world without a friend to protect her? Would'st, now, Mr. Ignoramus, would'st?

Poly. Go away, my dear, and—No, I will not

give way to the weakness of our common nature, but prove myself, in the discharge of my duty, inflexible as the first Brutus.

Molly. And well you may call him so, if he was as stony-hearted as you are. Will you forgive me?

Poly. No.

Molly. You won't? Nay, then, I'll tell you a bit of my mind; I'll do that, an' I die for it. For all your grave looks, I'll be sworn you are no better than your neighbours; I know you aren't. I'll pass my days in watching you, I will; and if ever I catch you saying "good b'ye!" as I know I shall, then, when you are in trouble, and in need of indulgence, you shall find me as pitiless as yourself. There; carry that bundle upon your shoulders, and now—I'll go and pack up mine. (*Exit.*)

Poly. The little serpent! Her tears, her imploring looks, had well nigh—But I must be firm: I see the danger, and must protect my pupil against the snares of these pernicious creatures. Poor lad! he is innocent, and knows not the seductive power of love. My example and instructions have so fortified his mind, so hardened his heart against all silly, soft impressions, that, thanks to me, he may hope to pass through life as becomes a philosopher—in a happy indifference to all its joys, its pleasures, and its cares. He comes! My dear disciple!

Enter CHARLES, in violent agitation.

Charles. My dear sir, I'm glad you are returned.

Poly. Your impatience pleases me. Come, is it to be Sophocles this evening?

Charles. No: it is not that, sir; but—

Poly. Well, well; we must sometimes relax—make holiday; so, instead of Sophocles, we'll amuse ourselves with a problem in Euclid.

Charles. Confound Euclid! as he has often confounded me. No, sir; I—in short, you see me in the greatest distress.

Poly. In distress! You alarm me. My dear boy, my dear child, what is the matter?

Charles. My father is returning; he is now galloping up the avenue, and I see no refuge from my difficulties but in death.

Poly. Mercy on me! what do you mean? No refuge but in—and in his father's absence, too!

Consider, that for all that concerns you I am responsible. Wait, at least, till he arrives, and—

Charles. No, I am resolved; the matter is pressing, and there's no time for deliberation.

Poly. And he has not half finished his studies! (*Rushes into his arms.*) Charles, my dear boy, be composed; look at me; who am I? Have I not been your guide, your protector, your friend, since the hour you were born. You know I love you; that there is nothing on earth I would not do to see you happy; tell me, what it is afflicts you.

Charles. You will betray me to my father, and I dread his displeasure worse than death.

Poly. Betray you! Never; be it what it may.

Charles. Swear.

Poly. I never swear.

Charles. Swear, or this instant will I—

Poly. Hold! your danger inspires me with the devotion of an antique Roman: I swear, (*raising his hand*) *Per Jovem!* By Jupiter, I swear!

Charles. Enough; I will trust you.—And yet, I dare not tell him the whole. (*Aside.*) I—I am in love.

Poly. Oh, horror! In love! 'Tis epidemic; 'tis running through the house! Robin, Molly, and now—How, sir! and at your age; only just turned of four-and-twenty; the thing is incredible; and—

Charles. Do but hear me, sir.

Poly. In love! it cannot be: why, he has Greek, Latin, algebra, and mathematics at his finger's ends. And is this the termination of my hopes? You, whom I destined for a philosopher; you, whose name I fondly hoped to see placed side by side with the

glorious name of Archimedes and Aristotle. Did love find out the square of the hypothenuse? Did love—

Charles. Oh! sir, if the bare avowal of my affection so displease you, what will you say when I confess to you that—but here comes my father.—Where shall I conceal my dear Harriet? (*Aside.*)

Poly. Be composed; he must not observe our agitation.

Charles. Remember your promise, or I'll keep mine. Pop!

Poly. My dear boy, I'll not betray you, I—Oh!

Enter OLD EUSTACE, followed by ROBIN, to whom he gives his great coat, hat and whip.

Eustace. Charles, my boy, I'm glad to see you. Mr. Polyglot, my worthy friend, your hand. You did not expect to see me so soon.

Poly. No, sir; we—we didn't expect you till last week.

Eustace. Till next week, you mean. The truth is, I was willing to take you by surprise, and see how things had been managed during my absence; but I might have spared myself the trouble. You, Mr. Polyglot, have the superintendence of my servants, and are accountable for their conduct;—

Robin. Don't tell about Molly and me, sir. (*Aside to Polyglot.*)

Eustace. My son is under your especial care and observance;—

Charles. Remember. (*Aside to Polyglot.*)

Eustace. And so perfect is my reliance on your attention, prudence, and wisdom, that I am persuaded you have nothing to relate of what has passed in the house that will not receive my fullest approbation.

Poly. Yes—no—certainly.

Eustace. Well, Charles, my arrival must interrupt your studies; retire to your own room till supper is ready. Mr. Polyglot I have something of importance to communicate to you. Robin, desire the cook to be expeditious; my ride has given me an appetite: and do you put lights into my study; after supper, I shall be occupied there for an hour or two.

Charles. (*Stops Robin as he is going off.*) What, sir! the pavilion at the end of the garden?

Eustace. Ay, I have no other.

Charles. You had better not go there to-night, sir; 'tis damp, and—

Eustace. Damp! nonsense! Robin, do as I desire.

Charles. (*Aside.*) 'Tis there I have concealed her. There is not a moment to be lost. [*Exit.*]

Robin. (*Whispers Polyglot.*) Be kind to poor Molly, and forgive her, sir.

Poly. (*Lost in thought.*) No, Molly—yes, Robin, yes.

Robin. Thankye, sir; it shall never happen again. [*Exit.*]

Eustace. Why, what is the meaning of all this? Tell me, Mr. Polyglot, what is the matter here? This confusion and whispering! Surely, my sudden arrival cannot have occasioned any inconvenience. I expected to see you all delighted, and you receive me with faces as long as my arm.

Poly. Uncommonly long! uncommonly long!

Eustace. I perceive: the philosopher is in one of his fits of abstraction. (*Aside.*) But there is an air of restraint about Charles, for which I am at a loss to account. Has he done anything to provoke your displeasure?

Poly. I dare not inform him. (*Aside.*) No, no—a trifle.

Eustace. You are right to be severe with him: he is now arrived at an age when the strictest watchfulness over his conduct is necessary. Ah! Mr. Polyglot, your example has made him what he is; your vigilance must keep him so.

Poly. I—you flatter me.

Eustace. I will now, in few words, confide to you the object of the journey from which I have just returned: it was to make arrangements for the marriage of my son.

Poly. His marriage!

Eustace. I anticipate your objection, and will answer it.

Poly. I have no objection to offer. Then it turns out as it should be. Charles is already in love; so the marriage comes opportunely. (*Aside.*)

Eustace. No objection! Why, till now, you have always held that no man ought to marry till he's sixty; that is to say, till he have finished his education, and seen a little of the world.

Poly. You make a slight mistake; I always said, at least, I meant to say, four-and-twenty.

Eustace. Well, I'm glad it is so; for, to say the truth, although I am of your opinion, that it is not prudent to marry whilst a mere baby, yet I always thought sixty somewhat of the latest.

Poly. Ay, ay; for a young man it is; but—What a relief is this to my mind! How happy this will make my dear boy! (*Aside.*)

Eustace. I'm delighted to find you are of my opinion. Next week I'll take Charles to town with me; he shall see the young lady; I do not mean to control his choice, but if he like her, and she like him, they shall marry instantly.

Poly. Like her! my dear sir, I'm happy to tell you that he is already in—My oath, *per Jove*! (*Aside.*)

Eustace. Come, Mr. Polyglot, follow me to the supper room; we'll talk further of this. I can never repay you, my good friend, for your care of my son. As I said before, your example has made him what he is: for his virtues he is indebted to you; and were it possible he could be guilty of any crime or folly, so completely is he under your guidance, that I should hold you more to blame than him. [*Exit.*]

Poly. What a fortunate turn has this affair taken! Since he is in love, he must naturally be anxious to marry. Yet he did not tell me with whom he is in love. I do not pretend to understand those matters; but I presume that, being in love, he wants a wife, and—Oh! there can't be a doubt of it; so long as he get a wife, surely it can't signify who. He comes; I'll communicate the joyful tidings to him.

Enter CHARLES, in violent agitation.

Charles. I have been anxiously waiting the departure of my father.

Poly. My dear boy, quiet your apprehensions; 'tis all right.

Charles. 'Tis all wrong, and fifty times worse than before.

Poly. What mean you?

Charles. The unexpected arrival of my father has thrown me into a difficulty scarcely surmountable. Alas! you know but half my unhappy story.

Poly. I hope, then, it is the worst half; for, really, I have suffered—

Charles. I tremble to avow to you the full extent of my folly, and yet, I dare no longer conceal any circumstance of it from you. The urgency of our situation, the danger that awaits us—

Poly. Come, come, courage; tell me all.

Charles. Know, then, that having become acquainted with a young lady, the orphan daughter of an officer in the army, I grew enamoured of her, was assiduous in my attentions to her, succeeded in winning her affections, and finally—

Poly. Eh! what?—say no more. Oh! Charles, Charles—

Charles. Do but hear me to the end of my story.

Poly. I have heard too much already. And are these the fruits of my instructions? Is it by such wickedness you repay my anxious care of you?

Charles. You mistake me, sir; if you would but listen—

Poly. Never expect from me either pardon or indulgence. Had you, indeed, formed such a bond of union as might without a blush have been acknowledged, it is possible I might—

Charles. What, sir! would you have sanctioned our marriage? Obtained for us my father's pardon, his approbation?

Poly. In that case, perhaps, I would have interfered in your behalf; for marriage is a sacred contract, and must be respected: but, as it is—

Charles. (*Joyfully.*) Then, my worthy Mentor, my best of friends, be comforted: I am married.

Poly. (*Struck with astonishment.*) Married!

Charles. I am, I am. Marriage, as you say, is a sacred contract; and, by your own abewing, you are bound to assist us.

Poly. Married! So vigilant as I have been, yet has he contrived to—I must at once reveal this to your father. (*Going.*)

Charles. And your oath?

Poly. Oh!

Charles. Betray me, and my life, my dear wife's, too, may become a sacrifice. But no, you will not; for your own sake, you dare not. Upon you alone will fall the blame. Under whose especial care have I been placed? Your's. Whose duty was it to watch over my conduct? Your's. Whose vigilance was at fault when I could contrive a secret marriage? Your's. My father has made you responsible for my actions: *ergo*: it is against you alone that my father will manifest his displeasure at my misconduct.

Poly. (*His countenance gradually betraying his satisfaction.*) The dear boy! He is indebted to me for his logic. Aristotle himself would have been proud of such a pupil. That's something like conducting an argument. I have not a word to reply.

Charles. But there is no time to be lost; you must at once decide. If you consent to protect us, we shall for ever consider you our friend—our saviour. You shall pass your days with us; we will be a comfort to your age; our children shall thank you; and, as you moulded their father's mind, so shall you give the bent to theirs.

Poly. My dear Charles, I will encounter anything for your sake: whatever may befall me, I swear not to betray your interests. This will be a sad disappointment to your father. You must allow me a few days to consider the best mode of breaking the affair to him. But where have you left your—it was only this morning I rapped his knuckles for a false quantity—your wife?

Charles. Left her? She's here.

Poly. What, here? in the house?

Charles. In my father's study, in the garden. Taking advantage of his absence, I have, for many days, concealed her there; but his sudden return compels me to seek some other retreat for her. Aided by the growing darkness, I have removed her. She is waiting there in the garden. I will confide her to your care.

Poly. Hold, hold! Confide a woman to my care!

Charles. Ay; your apartment is the most secure. No one will suspect that a female is concealed there. (*Runs towards the garden.*) Harriet, Harriet! this way.

Poly. (*In great consternation.*) Stay! what would you do? Should she be discovered here, I'm ruined, undone!—Oh! she's here.

Enter HARRIET.

Charles. Fear nothing, my darling love; this is our best friend.

Harriet. In what terms can we express our gratitude, sir?

Poly. Indeed, miss—mistress—my good lady, I—my head is turning—But, tell me, Charles, how did you contrive, without my knowledge, to—

Charles. My wife will explain all to you. In the meantime I'll keep watch without. Should my father take us by surprise, all will be lost. My good, kind friend, I confide to your care all I value in the world—my own dear Harriet.

Poly. Why—why, you would not leave me alone with her?

Charles. (*Not attending to him.*) Be composed, love; all will be well. [*Exit.*]

Poly. Charles, Charles! Don't leave me alone with her.

Harriet. Once more, sir, let me thank you for your kindness.

Poly. (*Avoiding her.*) Thank me, indeed! Oh! if you knew—

Harriet. But why that angry look? Would you abandon us? In your friendship, and my husband's love, is now my only hope.

Poly. (*Aside.*) What touching accents! I never before—'Twas with tones like these the serpent must have seduced my poor innocent boy. (*Sincerely.*) It is my duty, miss—my duty, madam, to remind you that the step you have taken is—(*She looks abashed.*) Not that I would say anything to give you pain, about—tell me who you are, my dear.

Harriet. The daughter of Colonel Mowbray, who, dying five years ago, left me without fortune, without friends, without a protector. I sought an asylum in the neighbouring village, and soon afterwards became acquainted with Mr. Eustace. You know his worth, and can you wonder if—

Poly. Poor thing! Well, don't weep, my dear; your cares will soon be at an end. Not but that so imprudent a step as a clandestine marriage deserves the severest—(*As she appears affected, he relaxes in the severity of his manner.*) Yet you were very young, and that almost excuses you. But how appease his father?

Harriet. I dread to meet him.

Poly. And I, too, who must bear the responsibility of all this! But how did my Charles contrive to make your acquaintance? I watched him so closely, that—

Harriet. I believe, sir, he bribed the servants to conceal his absence from home; and whilst you thought he was in his own room, closely engaged in his studies, he used to—

Poly. The mischievous truant! I'll trim him for this. I beg pardon: I forgot I was speaking to you of a husband. Ah! I can imagine by what arts he won your affections. He has often delighted me. He solved some difficult problem in Euclid for you, perhaps—talked Latin to you, eh? or Greek?

Harriet. Greek, sir! he merely said he loved me. *Poly.* Where could he have picked up that? I never taught it him. But I always said the dear boy was blessed with a natural genius. And so you have taken advantage of his father's absence, to get married?

Harriet. No, sir; we have been married these four years.

Poly. Four years!

Harriet. Yet have I often lamented my impudence. His wife, yet not as such acknowledged, and exposed to the evil opinion of the inhabitants of the village, I was at the point of quitting the place, till Charles could openly avow our union. The departure of his father determined him to afford me a temporary refuge here, but his unexpected return has—(*A bell heard.*)

Poly. The supper bell! To avoid suspicion, I must leave you, and join old Mr. Eustace.

Harriet. Leave me! and Charles not here!

Poly. Possibly he is detained by his father. What is to be done? You must not be seen here, or—(*After some hesitation, and with a profound sigh.*) Ah! there is no other resource. Go into this room; it is mine; when the family shall have retired for the night, I'll contrive to let you out of the

house, and you may remain concealed in the village till we can obtain the sanction of your—your father-in-law.

Harriet. I will do all you desire, sir.

Poly. There, be quick; should you be discovered there, it would be my ruin. *(He puts her into the room, and as he is speaking to her through the door, which he holds ajar.)*

Enter MOLLY.

So, here, take the key and lock the door inside. Be cautious; do not open the door to any one but me, my little dear; the signal shall be three taps of the hand.

Molly. Oh, ho! his little dear!

Poly. *(Ad. mod.)* Who's there?

Molly. *(Looking shyly at him.)* 'Tis I, Mr. Polygot; and since, for my misbehaviour, you are resolved to send me away, I come to—But what was that I heard you say? Were you saying "good bye" to anybody?

Poly. No; I—I was talking to myself.

Molly. Oh! then, you are your own little dear. "Don't open to any one but me, my little dear."

Poly. *(Aside.)* The little imp has overheard us.

Molly. A'n't you ashamed of yourself, Mr. Ignoramus! You preach one thing and practise another. You would turn away a couple of poor servants because they love one another honestly, whilst you have a pretty dear concealed in your apartment. But master is come home now, and he shall know of this. *(Calls.)* Master, master! Mr. Eustace!

Poly. Molly, Molly, 'tis all a mistake: listen to me—

Molly. No; you had no pity for me just now; so as you said, you shall find me as flexible as the worst Plutus. Master!

Poly. I supplicate—I implore—you shall stay, Molly, you shall stay.

Molly. I stay in a house where there are such doings! No, no. But I'll have my revenge on you before I go, I will. Master! Mr. Charles! all the house! come all of you!

Poly. *(Aside.)* He comes! I am ruined; and poor Charles—

Enter EUSTACE.

Eustace. Why, what is all this noise about? And you, Mr. Polygot, didn't you hear the supper bell? The fish is getting cold, and—

Molly. He doesn't care about your fish, master; he has fish of his own to fry, the wicked old sinner.

Eustace. What does the girl mean?

Molly. I mean, master, that if one serpent, as he calls me, is to be sent out of your house, to let you know that you have another remaining in it.

Poly. Molly, my dear—

Molly. Don't whisper me; I'm not to be come over with soft words, that I can tell you. Here's Mr. Tutorer, sir, who would turn away a poor lass for having an honest lover of her own, has got a—I don't know what, looked up in his room.

Eustace. Why, how dare you accuse—

Molly. It is true enough, sir; and if it be not a woman, may I never be married! and I would not swear such a dreadful oath to a fib.

Eustace. A woman!

Poly. *(Aside.)* I don't know whether I am standing on my head or my heels.

Eustace. Is this true, sir?

Poly. I—you can't believe—you would not suspect—

Molly. There's no need to suspect, master, for it is true. 'Tis his little dear, for I heard him call her so.

Eustace. The girl's earnestness convinces me there is some truth in this. Your consternation now—your confusion at my sudden arrival—

Poly. Of course—my—my indignation at such a charge; my—

Eustace. In a word, sir, who have you concealed there?

Poly. I have no one concealed. I—I was talking to Robin, who is there arranging the—*(the furniture.)*—I scarcely know what I say. *(Aside.)*

Molly. Robin there, is he?

Poly. Leave the room, girl! Is my word to be doubted?

Molly. No, sir. *(Calls.)* Robin, Robin!

Enter ROBIN, from the garden.

Robin. Did you call me?

Eustace. How is this?

Poly. *(Aside.)* Ruined and undone! *(Charles is seen to cross the garden.)*

Eustace. What have you to say to this, sir?

Poly. *(Makes signs to Robin.)* He went out the other way, I suppose.

Molly. There is no other way out but the window.

Poly. The window is low, and that's the way he got out; and now there is no one else there. *(A noise as of breaking glass is heard in the room.)*

Molly. Dear me! Then the windows are breaking one another.

Poly. I shall faint. *(Aside.)* Pray, leave me just now, sir. I feel particularly unwell. I'll explain this to your satisfaction to-morrow.

Eustace. I'll not be trifled with: give me the key.

Poly. Unluckily it is inside, and the door is fastened.

Eustace. No matter; I'll force it open.

Molly. Stop, master; I have a key. *(Gives three taps with her hand.)*

Poly. *(Sinks into a chair.)* The little vixen will be the death of me.

Enter from the room, CHARLES; he closes the door hastily after him.

Eustace. What, Charles!

Poly. *(Aside.)* How came he there?

Eustace. What were you doing there? and why did not you come out at once?

Charles. The fact is, sir, I have been so unfortunate as to displease my tutor. He has kindly promised to conceal my offence from you, till he can hope to obtain your pardon for it. I heard your voice in anger, and dreading the effects of an abrupt disclosure, I—

Eustace. *(To Poly.)* So, that was it, after all?

Poly. Yes—after all.

Eustace. And what is his offence? a serious one, no doubt, to require so much mystery.

Charles. *(To Poly.)* Remember your oath.

Poly. For the present I must conceal it. I am bound by an—by a promise.

Eustace. Well! And how dare you, you little hussey, tell me such a rhodomontade? *(To Molly.)*

Molly. *(Confused.)* Why, master, I only told you what I thought.—I'll not give it up yet. *(Aside.)*

Eustace. Come, Mr. Polygot, to supper.

Poly. I have no appetite, thank you; and am rather unwell.

Molly. *(Aside.)* Guilty conscience.

Eustace. You look ill. Robin shall bring you something into your own room.

Charles. *(Aside.)* And my wife there!

Eustace. Come with me, Charles. Good night, Mr. Polygot: pardon my suspicion, my worthy friend.—*(To Molly.)* Do you go to bed, and let me hear no more of that chattering little tongue of yours to-night. Robin, go lock the outer doors, bring me the keys, and then take some supper to Mr. Polygot.

Charles. *(Aside.)* Then there will be no escape

Eustace. Come, Charles, come.

Charles. *(To Poly.)* Remember your promise. *[Exit,*

Molly. He's juggling the old gentleman, I'll lay my life on't: but I'll not sleep till I have found it out.

[*Exeunt all but Polyglot.*]
Poly. Is this a dream? Let me collect my scattered senses. Surely, it cannot be! Married! My pupil, who had never, as I thought, even so much as—Oh, lord! absolutely married! and I, Ignatius Polyglot, who have led the life of a hermit, to be suspected! I must not think: I'll retire to rest; heaven knows I have need of it. (*Approaches the door, and hastily retires.*) Bless us and save us! I forgot, she is there. And how am I to get her away? Hark! they are looking the outer gate. There is now no hope.

HARRIET opens the door gently, and enters.

Harriet. At length, you are alone. Tell me what is now to be done? Counsel me—advise me.

Poly. Yes; I—how shall I advise you? Advise me what I had best—at any rate, you must not remain here.

Harriet. Where would you have me go?

Poly. Wherever you please, my good young lady. But, this night, you know. These are my apartments; and, after the suspicions that have been excited against me, I—yet, how can I get you away? They have closed the doors, and—But what ails you?

Harriet. Reach me a chair. My agitation for the last hour has so—I am fainting.

Poly. Don't think of such a thing. I know not how to help you: 'tis not at all in my way. (*He leads her to a chair: her bonnet falls off.*) This was wanting to complete the pleasures of the evening. My dear lady—Miss—my kind madam, (*taps her hand*)—If any one should come—She recovers. Be composed. It occurs to me that I have a key of the little wicket that leads from the garden to the meadow; that way we may reach the village.

Harriet. Conduct me where you will; but I must take my dear Frederick with me.

Poly. Frederick! what's Frederick?

Harriet. Our darling boy.

Poly. (*Stammering.*) And have you a darling boy?

Harriet. He is in the room I have occupied at the end of the garden.

Poly. Oh! Charles, Charles! In love—married—a little boy! Have I anything more to learn? tell me at once.—So, then, I have been tutor to a father of a family!

Harriet. I can easily bring him away. (*Going.*)
Holy. No; you might be observed. There is but one thing to be done—I foresee my fate—Since I must be the scape-goat, I'll fetch him for you.

Harriet. My kind friend!

Poly. I'll not be gone an instant. (*Noise of footsteps.*) Ha! here comes Robin. Quick—retire. (*She goes towards the room.*) No, not there. He'll want to go into that room with my supper. There, there. (*He forces her into the room on the opposite side—a lock heard.*)

Enter ROBIN and MOLLY.

Robin. I have brought your supper, sir.

Poly. Leave it, leave it. And you, Mrs. Molly, what do you want here? (*Robin takes the tray into the room.*)

Molly. (*Stily.*) I came to ask whether I should stir away the broken glass yonder. Why, now, if there isn't some conjuration there! You told Master Eustace the key was inside the door, and see if it hasn't opened of itself.—Then I was right after all. (*Aside.*)

Poly. Ahem! you may go—you may go.

Molly. I hope, sir, you'll forgive my suspicions. (*Sees the bonnet.*) Oh, ho!

Poly. Begone, I say! and, in future, beware how you accuse an innocent person.

Molly. Yes, sir, if you please; and I repent—

the more, seeing, as I do, the proofs of your innocence before me.

Poly. Light my lanthorn. (*To Robin, who returns.*) I am going to walk.

Robin. At this time, sir; and in such weather? Why, it is pouring of rain.

Poly. No matter: I—I have a head-ache, and want air. Begone, both of you; and woe be to you if I find either of you here at my return. [*Exeunt Robin and Molly.*] There is not an instant to be lost. The poor innocent baby must not become a victim to the old man's displeasure; and if he should reach the pavilion before me—Into what a labyrinth has my affection for my pupil led me! [*Exit.*]

Enter MOLLY, cautiously; ROBIN following.

Molly. Robin, run and tell old Master Eustace to come here immediately.

Robin. Why, what would you be at now?

Molly. She's here; I'm sure of it.

Robin. Who's here?

Molly. Mr. Ignoramus's miss.

Robin. I'll not go and tell master any such thing. You know you have got into one scrape already this evening by telling a fib.

Molly. But this time I have proof positive. (*Takes up the bonnet.*)

Robin. Why, that does look rather queer, to be sure. But what does that signify? Depend upon it, she's gone.

Molly. How can that be? Haven't I been watching outside? Besides, the gates are locked.

Robin. Where can she be then?

Molly. There! I hear her move. Run, quick; fetch master.

Robin. And yet I don't like to tell upon old tutorer, neither.

Molly. Wouldn't he have told upon us? But we'll let master see what a sly old fox he has got in his house. Go, I tell you. (*Forces him off.*) Now, Mr. Pollypot, I'll teach you something better than Greek, I will. Ah! here comes Mr. Charles. He'll be delighted at this, for the tutorer leads the poor lad such a life, that he'll be glad enough to get quit of him, I warrant me.

Enter CHARLES, from the garden.

Charles. My anxiety is insupportable; and at all risks I must—Why, Molly, what do you want here?

Molly. Oh! sir, I have such news for you! You are the only one in the house who is kind to me, and now I'll prove my gratitude. I'll soon get the tutorer turned away, and make you your own master.

Charles. What do you mean?

Molly. I have discovered it at last: She is here after all.

Charles. Is the girl out of her senses?

Molly. No, no; here's proof! here's the creature's bonnet; and I've sent Robin to bring your father here.

Charles. Sent for my father! Unhappy girl, what have you done?

Molly. Lord! Mr. Charles, what ails you?

Charles. Alas! you know not the mischief you have effected. 'Tis not he who is to blame; he has interfered but to serve me: the lady, who is here concealed, is my wife.

Molly. (*With mingled astonishment and grief.*) Your wife!

Charles. This precipitate disclosure has rendered abortive our hopes of obtaining pardon from my father. Your malicious curiosity has destroyed the happiness of us all.

Molly. (*Bursting into tears.*) Oh! Mr. Charles, indeed, indeed, if I had but known—you, who are so good, so kind!—But don't ye grieve, don't ye, now. I'll die rather than harm you. I'll take all

the blame upon myself. There may yet be time: I'll run and stop Robin. (*Going.*)

Robin. (*Without.*) This way, sir, this way.
Molly. Oh! I am, indeed, an unhappy girl. But, Mr. Charles, dear Mr. Charles, don't ye be down-cast. Leave it to me, I'll get you through, though I lose my place, I will. (*Hastily wipes her eyes, and assumes an air of composure.*)

Enter EUSTACE, in his dressing-gown, preceded by ROBIN.

Robin. Yes, sir; Molly says you may now be convinced.

Eustace. So. You here, Charles?

Charles. Yes, sir; I—I heard a noise, and was fearful—

Eustace. This well; stay where you are: the speche you are about to witness will serve you as a lesson which may last you your life. (*To Robin and Molly.*) As for you, if you have called me out of my bed by another such a rigmarole as the last—

Robin. Oh! no, sir, it is all sure enough this time. (*To Molly, who makes signs to him.*) I had trouble enough to persuade master, but he is come, at last, you see.

Molly. Well, and what for?

Robin. What for! Why, to be sure, you know well enough. The lady, you know.

Molly. What lady? What is the simpleton talking about?

Robin. Why, the lady that is concealed there.

Molly. Robin, you have been at the ale-barrel.

Robin. Oh! the little gipsey! Didn't you tell me—

Molly. No, it isn't true.

Robin. Well, hang me! but—And, I suppose, you'll say you didn't send me to bring master.

Molly. To be sure I will, for it's false.

Robin. And that bonnet—

Molly. (*Putting it on.*) Is mine. Master, there ben't a true word in all he is telling you.—Can't you hold your tongue? (*Aside, and pinching his arm.*)

Robin. Oh! That isn't the way to make me. Master, I say again—

Molly. And I say, master—

Eustace. Hold your tongues both of you. There is some mystery here. The evident alarm of that girl—Silence! (*To Molly, who is about to speak. Takes a candle, and looks into the room at the left hand.*)

Charles. (*Aside.*) I almost sink with dread.

Molly. (*To Robin.*) I've a great mind never to marry you for this.

Eustace. (*Returns.*) No one there. (*Goes to the opposite door.*) The door is looked. (*Gives three taps.*)

Harriet. (*Within.*) Is that my kind protector?

Eustace. (*Staggering away.*) Her kind protector! 'Tis but too true, then! The old hypocrite! thus to deceive me and dishonour my house. The monster shall instantly quit it, and for ever. Hush! some one approaches! 'Tis he: silence, I command. (*He extinguishes the lights.*)

Enter POLYGLOT, with his dark lantern; MASTER FREDERICK is concealed under his cloak. He goes directly, but cautiously, to the door.

Poly. (*In an under tone.*) Open, open quickly; 'tis I. I have secured our precious charge. Now, quick; let us away, or we may be interrupted by old Argus.

Enter HARRIET.

Eustace. You are right, for old Argus has you.

Harriet. Oh, heavens! I'm lost! (*Robin lights the candles.*)

Eustace. No, madam, you are found. And you! Is it thus you repay the confidence I have reposed in you? Are you the man I have selected as a guide, as a monitor to my son? A female concealed in your apartment!

Charles. My dear father, I must no longer allow—

Eustace. Peace! And what is it you are endeavouring to hide there?

Poly. Nothing; a mere trifle.

Eustace. I insist upon knowing. (*Draws open his cloak and discovers Master Frederick.*) You call this a trifle, do you?

Harriet. (*Running towards him.*) My Frederick! my child!

Eustace. Oh! Now what have you to say for yourself?

Poly. That it is a Frederick—a child, I mean—I confess; but suffer me to explain, and—

Eustace. Explanation is needless: your mere trifle explains itself. And yet I would hope you are not the monster you appear. Answer me one question: is the lady your wife?

Poly. No, no; yet if you would only—

Eustace. The unblushing sinner! Then, will you marry her?

Poly. (*To Charles.*) I have done and suffered much to serve you; I can't do that, you know.

Eustace. Do you hesitate?

Charles. Will you but listen to me, sir?

Eustace. No, I will listen to but one thing only. (*To Poly.*) When a man has committed an error, is it not his first duty to do what he can to repair it?

Poly. Granted.

Eustace. To restore her respectability to the woman he has betrayed?

Poly. Granted.

Eustace. To protect and bestow his name upon his child?

Poly. Granted.—Farther concealment is impossible. (*To Charles, who is about to interrupt him.*) But suppose his family should refuse—(*To Eustace.*)

Eustace. Refuse! In such a case, no honest member of it would refuse to sanction the union; if he did he would share in the guilt of the offender.

Poly. I am quite of your opinion.

Eustace. Then why hesitate?

Poly. The lady is already married; but if you would just have the kindness to repeat to your son all you have said to me—

Eustace. My son!

Charles. Yes, sir; we throw ourselves at your feet, and implore your pardon. This lady is my wife.

Eustace. How! married! without consulting me! Leave me, ungrateful boy!

Charles. Will not the choice I have made procure your forgiveness, sir?

Poly. Let me intercede for them. Remember the lecture you have just delivered to me. Practice what you preach. Besides, you can't unmarry them, you know.

Eustace. And when had another scheme in view for him?

Poly. It is all as it should be. You wished him to marry—what can it signify? there he is, without farther ado, ready married to your hands.

Robin. You save the trouble and expense of a wedding.

Harriet. You have a daughter who will love you.

Molly. And a little grandson ready made, master.

Eustace. But the example—

Molly. 'Tis a good one, master; and, if you please, Robin and I will follow it.

Eustace. Well, well! since it is so—but there is a little urchin who, I foresee, will, one of these days, play us a similar trick.

Poly. Never fear: place him under my care—you know me; and I give him twenty years' notice, that if he too should attempt to elude my vigilance—Ah me! as I have done for the father, so shall I doubtless be induced to do for the son; and I trust to your indulgence for my re-appearance in the character of the Scape-Goat. [*Exeunt.*]

THE SPOILED CHILD;

A FARCE, IN TWO ACTS.



Act II—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

OLD PICKLE
LITTLE PICKLE

TAG
SERVANTS

MISS PICKLE
MARIA

MARGERY
SUSAN

ACT I.—SCENE I.—A Dining Parlour.

Enter OLD PICKLE and MISS PICKLE.

Old P. Well, well, sister; a little patience, and these holidays will soon be over; the boy, then, goes back to school, and all will be quiet.

Miss P. Ay, till the next breaking up. No, no, brother; unless he be severely punished for what he has already done, depend upon it, this vicious humour will be confirmed into habit, and his follies increase in proportion with his years.

Old P. Now, would not any one think, to hear you talk, that my son had actually some vice in him. I own there is something so whimsical in all his tricks, that I cannot but forgive him; ay, and for aught I know, love him better into the bargain.

Miss P. Yes, truly, because you have never been a sufferer by them. Had you been rendered as ridiculous as I have been by his tricks, as you call them, you'd have been the first to complain, and to punish.

Old P. Nay, as to that, he has not spared even his father. Is there a day passes that I don't break my shins over some stumbling block he lays in my way? Why, there is not a door but is armed with a basin of water on the top, and just left a-jar; so that, egad! I can't walk over my own house, without running the risk of being wet through.

Miss P. No wonder the child is spoiled, since you will superintend his education yourself. You, indeed!

Old P. Sister, do not provoke me!—At any rate, I have wit enough to conceal my ignorance: I don't pretend to write verses and nonsense, as some folks.

Miss P. Now, would you rail at me for the disposition I was born with? Can I help it, if the gods have made me poetical? as the divine bard says.

Old P. Made you poetical, indeed! 'Sblood! if you had been born in a street near a college, ay, or even the next door to a day-school, I might not have been so surprised; but, madam, in the middle of the Minorities, what had you to do with poetry?

Miss P. Provoking ignorance! [and stuff!]

Old P. Have you not rendered yourself the sneer of all your acquaintance, by your refined poetical intercourse with Mr. Tag, the author; a fellow that

strolls about the country, spouting and acting in every barn he comes to. Was he not once found concealed in your closet, to the utter scandal of my house, and the ruin of your reputation?

Miss P. If you had the smallest spark of taste, you would admire the effusions of Mr. Tag's pen, and be enchanted at his admirable acting as much as I am.

Old P. Do you tell me I can't educate my own child, and make a lord chancellor, or an archbishop of Canterbury of him, whichever I like? (*As he is about to sit, Young Pickle, by a string, draws the chair from behind him: Old Pickle falls.*)

Miss P. How's this! I'll lay my life, that is another trick of this little mischievous wretch.

Old P. An ungrateful little rascal, to serve me such a trick, just as I had made an archbishop of him. I'll immediately correct him. Here, Thomas! (*Going, he meets Servants with dinner.*) But, odso, here's dinner. Well, I'll defer my severity, till that be over. (*They sit.*) But, if I don't make him remember this trick one while, say my name is not Pickle. Sister, this is the first pheasant we have had this season. It looks well: shall I help you? They say anger makes a man dry; but, mine has made me hungry. Come, here's a wing and some of the breast for you.—[Enter SUSAN, in haste.]

Susan. Oh dear, sir—oh dear, madam! my young master—the parrot, ma'am—Oh dear!

Old H. Parrot, and your young master! What the deuce does the girl mean?

Miss P. Mean! why, as sure as I live, that vile boy has been hurting my poor bird.

Susan. Hurting, ma'am! no, indeed, ma'am. I'll tell you the whole truth. I was not to blame; indeed, I wasn't, ma'am: besides, I am morally certain 'twas the strange cat that killed it this morning.

Miss P. How! killed it, say you? But, go on; let us hear the whole.

Susan. Why, ma'am, the truth is, I did but step out of the kitchen for a moment, when in comes my young master, whips away the pheasant that was roasting for dinner, and claps down your ladyship's parrot, picked and trussed, in its place.

Old P. The parrot!—the devil!

Susan. I kept beating, and beating on, and never thought I was beating the parrot.

Miss P. Oh! my sweet, my beautiful young bird! I had just taught it to talk, too.

Old P. You taught it to talk! it taught you to talk, you mean: I am sure, it was old enough; 'twas hatched in the hard frost.

Miss P. Well, brother, what excuse now? But run, Susan,—and, do you hear? take John, and—

Enter JOHN, lame, and his face bound up.

Oh! John, here's a piece of business!

John. Ay, ma'am, sure enow—what, you have heard, I see—the poor thing will never recover.

Miss P. What, John, is it a mistake of Susan's—is it still alive? But, where, where is it, John?

John. Safe in stables; and it were as sound—as made her a hot mash—wouldn't touch it.—So, crippled, will never have leg to put to ground again.

Old P. No; I'll swear to that; for here's one of them. *(Holds up a leg on a fork.)*

Miss P. What does the fool mean? what, what, what is in the stable? what are you talking of?

[Exit with Susan.]

John. Master's favourite mare, Daisy, poor thing!

Old P. What—how—anything the matter with Daisy? I would not part with her for—

John. Ay, sir, quite done up; won't fetch five pounds at the next fair. *[her?]*

Old P. Why, what can it be—what the devil ails John. Why, sir, the long and the short of the whole affair is as how—He's out me, too, all across the face; mercy I did not lose my eyes.

Old P. (Aside.) This cursed fellow will drive me mad!—The mare, you scoundrel, the mare!

John. Yes, sir, the mare. Then, too, my shins—Master Salve, the surgeon, says I must 'noint 'em—

Old P. Plague on your shins! You dog, what is the matter with the mare?

John. Why, sir, as I was coming home this morn-

ing, over Black Down, what does I see but young master tearing over the turf, upon Daisy, though your honour had forbidden him to ride her; so I calls to him to stop; but what does he do, but smacks his whip in my face; but, what's worse, when I rated him about it, he snatches up Tom Carter's long whip, and lays me so over the legs; and, before I could catch hold of him, he slips out of the stable, and was off like a shot.

Old P. Well, if I forgive him this—no, I'll send him this moment back to school—Zounds! I'll send him to sea.—*[Re-enter MISS PICKLE.]*

Miss P. Well, brother, yonder comes your precious child; he's muttering all the way up stairs to himself; some fresh mischief, I suppose.

Old P. Ay, here he comes. Stand back. Let us watch him; though I can never contain my passion long. *(They retire.)—Enter LITTLE PICKLE.*

Little P. Well, so far all goes on rarely. Dinner must be nearly ready. Old Poll will taste well, I dare say. Parrot and bread sauce! Ha, ha! They suppose they are going to have a nice young pheasant; an old parrot is a greater rarity, I'm sure. I can't help thinking how devilish tough the drumsticks will be. A fire piece of work aunt will make when it's found out. Good! for aught I know, that may be better fun than the other: no doubt, Sauey will tell, and John too, about the horse. A parcel of sneaking fellows, always tell, tell. I only wish I could catch them at school once, I'd pay them well for it. Pd be bound. Oh, oh! here they are; and as I live, my father and aunt. It's all out, I see. To be sure, I'm not got into a fine scrape, now! I almost wish I were safe at school again.—Oh! sir, how do you do, sir? I was just coming to—

Old P. Come, no fooling now. How dare you look me in the face after the mischief you have done?

Little P. What, what have I done?

Old P. You know the value I set upon that mare you have spoiled for ever.

Little P. But, sir, hear me: indeed, I was not so much to blame, sir; not so very much.

Miss P. Do not aggravate your faults by pretending to excuse them. Your father is too kind to you.

Little P. Dear sir, I own I was unfortunate. I had heard you often complain, how wild little Daisy was—indeed, sir, I never saw you ride her, but I trembled lest some accident might befall you.

Old P. Well, and what is all this to the purpose?

Little P. And so, sir, I resolved, sooner than you should suffer, to venture my own neck, and so try to tame her for you; so, I was no sooner mounted than off she set. I could not help that you know, sir; and so this misfortune happened—but, sir—

Old P. Could I be sure this was your motive—and 'tis purely love and regard for your old father makes you thus tease and torment him, perhaps I might be inclined to— *[made him beat me so.]*

John. Yes, sir; but, 'tis no love and regard to me, *Little P.* John, you know you were to blame—

Sir, indeed the truth is, John was scolding me for it; and when I told him as I have told you, why I did it, and that it was to hinder you from being hurt, he said that it was no business of mine, and that if

your neck were broken, it was no great matter.

Old P. No great matter to have my neck broken!

Little P. No, sir, so he said. I was vexed to hear him speak so of you; and I believe I might take up the whip, and give him a cut or two on the legs: it could not hurt him much.

Old P. Well, I believe I must forgive you, and so shall John, too. But, I had forgotten poor Poll. What did you roast the parrot for, you young dog?

Little P. Why, sir, I knew you and my aunt were both so fond of it, I thought you would like to see it well dressed. *(Old Pickle laughs.)*

Little P. But, dear aunt, I know you must be angry with me, and you think with reason.

Miss P. Don't speak to me; I'm not so weak as your father, whatever you may fancy.

Little P. Indeed, aunt, you must hear me. Hadn't I loved you as I do, I should not have thus offended you, but it was my regard for your character.

John. Character! *[Old P. kicks him off.]*

Little P. My dear aunt, I always heard that no ladies keep parrots or lap-dogs till they can't keep lovers; and when at school, I told the boys you had a parrot, they all said you must be a foolish old

Miss P. Impudent young wretches! *[maid.]*

Little P. Yes, aunt; and, so I resolved you should no longer be thought so; for I think you are too young and too handsome for an old maid.

Old P. Come, sister, you must forgive him; no female heart can withstand that.

Miss P. Brother, you know I can forgive where I see occasion; but, though these faults be thus excused, how will you answer to a charge of scandal and ill-nature? *[can accuse me of that.]*

Little P. Ill-nature, madam! I'm sure, nobody

Miss P. How will you justify the report you spread, of my being looked up in my closet with Mr. Tag, the author! Can you defend so vile an attempt to injure my reputation?

Old P. What, that, if suppose, was from your care of her character; and so to hinder your aunt from being an old maid, you looked her up in her closet with this author, as he is called.

Little P. Indeed, dear madam, I beseech you, 'twas no such thing; all I said was, you were amusing yourself in your closet with a favourite author.

Miss P. I amuse myself in my closet with a favourite author! Worse and worse!

Old P. Sister, have patience—hear—

Miss P. I am ashamed to see you support your boy in such insolence. I, indeed, who am scrupulous to a fault! But, no longer will I remain subject to such impertinence. I quit your house, sir, and you shall quit all claim to my fortune: this moment will I alter my will, and leave my money to a stranger, sooner than to your family. *[Exit.]*

Old P. Leave her money to a stranger? Oh! the three per cent. consols! oh! the India stock!—Go, child, throw yourself at your aunt's feet—say anything to please her. Oh! those consols—

Little P. Shall I say she may die as soon as she please, but she mustn't give her money to a stranger?

Old P. Ay, ay; there's a good boy! say anything to please her. Say she may die as soon as she please, but she must not leave her money to a stranger. [*Exit Little Pickle.*] Sure, never man was so tormented. Well, I thought when my poor wife died, I stood some chance of being a happy man; but, I know not how it is, I could bear the vexation of my wife's bad temper better than this woman's. All my married friends were as miserable as myself; but now—Faith, here she comes, and in a fine humour, no doubt.

Enter Miss Pickle.

Miss P. Brother, I have given directions for my immediate departure, and am now come to tell you I will persist in my design, unless you this moment adopt the scheme I proposed yesterday for my nephew's amendment.

Old P. Why, my dear sister, you know there is nothing I would not do to satisfy you; but, to abandon my only child—to pretend that he is not mine—to receive a beggar brat into my arms—impossible!

Miss P. Very well, sir; then I am gone. [*Going.*]

Old P. But, sister, stop! Was ever man so used? How long is this scheme of yours to last? how long am I to be deprived of him?

Miss P. How long! why, until he be brought duly to reflect upon his bad behaviour; which nothing will induce him to do, so soon as thinking himself the child of poor parents. I yesterday spoke to Margaret, his old nurse, and she fully comprehends the whole affair.

Old P. Why, to be sure, as you say, 'twill reform him; and, as we shall have our eyes upon him all the while, and Margaret, his own nurse—

Miss P. You may be sure she will take care of him. Well, since this is settled, the sooner 'tis done the better, Thomas!—[*Enter Thomas.*—Send your young master, [*Exit Thomas.*]

Old P. I see you are finally resolved, and no other way will content you. I must comply.

Miss P. Brother, you are so blinded by your foolish fondness, that you cease to perceive what is for his benefit; 'tis happy for you there is a person to direct you.

Enter Little Pickle.

Little P. Did you send for me, aunt?

Old P. Child, come hither. I have a great secret to disclose to you, at which you will be much surprised.

Little P. A secret, sir!

Miss P. Yes! and one that requires your utmost courage to hear: you are no longer to consider that person as your father; he is not so. Margaret, who nursed you, has confessed, and the thing is sufficiently proved, that you are not his son, but hers: she exchanged you, when an infant, for my real nephew; and her conscience has, at last, compelled her to make the discovery.

Little P. I another person's child! Ah! you are only joking with me now, to see whether I love you or not; but, indeed, I am yours; my heart tells me I am only—only yours.

Old P. I'm afraid you deceive yourself. There can be no doubt of the truth of Margaret's account; but, still assure yourself of our protection; but, no longer can you remain in this house. I must not do an injury to my own child; you belong to others, to them; you must now go.

Little P. Yet, sir, for an instant hear me—pity me. Ah! too sure I know I am not your child, or would that distress which now draws tears of pity from a stranger, fail to move nature in you?

Miss P. Comfort yourself; we must ever consider you with compassion. But, now you must begone; Margaret is waiting without to receive you.

AIR.—LITTLE PICKLE.

Since, then, I'm doom'd this sad reverse to prove,
To quit each object of my infant love;
Torn from an hour's tender parent's care,
And driven the keenest storms of fate to bear.
Ah! but forgive me, pitee! let me part,
Your frowns, too sure, would break my blinking heart.
Where'er I go, what'er my lowly state,
Yet grateful memory still shall linger here;
And, perhaps, when musing o'er my cruel fate,
You still may greet me with a tender tear.
Ah! then forgive me, pitee! let me part,
Your frowns, too sure, would break my sinking heart. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.—SCENE I.—A Parlour.

Enter Miss Pickle and Margery.

Mar. And so, as I was telling your ladyship, poor little master does so take it to heart, and so weep and wail, it almost makes me cry to hear him.

Miss P. Well, well; since he begins already to repent, his punishment shall be but short. Have you brought your boy with you?

Mar. Ay, have I. Poor Tommy, he came from aboard a ship but now, and is so grown and altered—sure enough, he believes every word I have told him, as your honour ordered me, and I warrant, is so sheepish and shamefaced—But, here comes my master, he has heard it all already.—[*Enter Old Pickle.*—But, my lady, shall I fetch my poor Tommy to you? he's waiting without.

Old P. What, that ill-looking young rascal in the hall? he with the jacket and trowsers? [him.]

Mar. Ay, your honour. What, you have seen **Old P.** Seen him! ay, and felt him, too. The booby met me bolt at the corner, run his cursed, carrotty poll full in my face, and has loosened half the teeth in my head, I believe.

Mar. Poor lad! he's a sailor, and but awkward as yet, and so shy, I warrant—But, will your honour be kind to him?

[Father, am not I?]

Old P. Kind to him! Why, I am to pass for his **Mar.** Ay, I wish your honour had been poor Tommy's father; but no such luck for me, as I say to my husband.

Old P. Indeed! Your husband must be very much obliged to you, and so am I.

Mar. But do, your honour, see my poor Tommy once dressed in his fine clothes.

Old P. D—e, I don't half like that Tommy.

Miss P. Yes, yes, you shall. Now go and fetch him here to us; I should like much to see him.

Mar. Do you now, madam, speak kindly to him; for, poor boy, he's quite dashed. [*Exit.*]

Old P. Yes, and he has dashed some of my teeth out, plague on him!

Miss P. Now, Mr. Pickle, I insist upon your observing a proper decorum and behaviour towards this poor lad: observe the condescension of my deportment. Methinks, I feel a strange inclination already in his favour; perhaps, I may advance him, by-and-by, to be my page: shall I, brother?—Oh! here he comes; and, I declare, as prepossessing a countenance as ever I beheld.—[*Enter Margery, and Little Pickle as a sailor boy.*—Come hither, child. Was there ever such an engaging sir?

Mar. Go, Tommy; do as you are bid, there's a good boy. Thank his honour for his goodness to you.

Little P. Be you the old fellow that's just come to be my father?

Old P. [*Aside.*] Old fellow! he's devilish dashed, to be sure.—Yes, I am the old fellow, as you call it. Will you be a good boy?

Little P. Ay, but what will you give me? must I be good for nothing?

Old P. [*Mimicking.*] Good for nothing! nay, that I'll swear you are already. Well, and how do you like a sailor's life?

AIR.—LITTLE PICKLE.

I am a brisk and sprightly lad,
But just come home from sea, sir P
Of all the livers I ever led,
A sailor's life for me, sir.
Yoo, yoo, yoo, &c.
Whilst the boatswain pipes all hands,
With a yoo, yoo, yoo, sir.

What girl but loves the merry man?
We o'er the ocean roam, sir;
In every clime we find a port;
In every port a home, sir.
Yeo, yeo, yeo, &c.
Our fess subdu'd, once more on shore,
We spend our cash with glee, sir;
And when all's gone, we drown our care,
And out again to sea, sir.
Yeo, yeo, yeo, &c.
And when all's gone, again to sea,
With a yeo, yeo, yeo, sir.

Old P. So, this is the way I am to be entertained in future, with forecastle jokes and tarpaulin songs.

Miss P. Brother, do not speak so harshly to the poor lad; he's among strangers, and wants encouragement. Come to me, my pretty boy, I'll be your friend.

Little P. Friend! Oh! what, you're my grandmother. Father, must not I call her granny?

Old P. What, he wants encouragement, sister! Yes, poor soul, he's among strangers! He's found out one relation, however, sister.—(Aside.) This boy's assurance diverts me. I like him.

Little P. Granny's mortish cross and frumpish. La! father, what makes your mother, there, look so plaguy foul-weathered?

Miss P. Mother, indeed!

Old P. Oh! nothing at all, my dear; she's the best humoured person in the world. Go, throw yourself at her feet, and ask her for her blessing; perhaps, she may give you something.

Little P. A blessing! I sha'n't be much richer for that, neither. Perhaps, she may give me half a crown. I'll throw myself at her feet, and ask her for a guinea. (Kneels.) Dear granny, give me your picture? (Catches hold of it.)

Miss P. Stand off, wretch! Am I to be robbed as well as insulted?

Mar. Fie! child, learn to behave yourself better.

Little P. Behave myself! learn you to behave yourself. I should not have thought of you, indeed. Get you gone. What do you do here?

[Beats Margery out, and exits.

Old P. Well, sister, this plan of yours succeeds, I hope, to your satisfaction. He'll make a pretty page, sister. What an engaging air he has, sister!—(Aside.) This is some revenge for her treatment of my poor boy.

Miss P. I perceive this to be all a contrivance, and the boy is taught to insult me thus. You may repeat of this unparalleled treatment of unprotected innocence. [Exit.

Old P. What, she means her lover, the player-man, I suppose; but, I'll watch her and her consorts; and if I catch him again in my house, it shall be his last appearance this season, I can tell him that; and the next part he plays shall be Captain Macbeth in the prison scene, egad! [Exit.

Re-enter LITTLE PICKLE.

Little P. There they go! ha, ha, ha! my scheme has gone on rarely; rather better, than twice, I think. Blessing on the old nurse for consenting to it. I'll teach 'em to turn people out of doors. Let me see: what trick shall I play 'em now? Suppose I set the house on fire—no, no; 'tis soon for that, as yet; that will do very well by-and-by. Let me consider: I wish I could see my sister; I'll discover myself to her, and then we might contrive something together nicely. That staircase leads to her room: I'll try and call her. (Goes to the door, and listens.) There's nobody in the way. Hist! Maria! She hears me; she's coming this way. (Hides himself.)

Enter MARIA.

Mar. Sure, somebody called me. No; there's nobody here. Heigho! I've almost cried myself blind about my poor brother; for so I shall always call him, ay, and love him, too. (Going.)

Little P. (Running forward.) Maria! sister! stop an instant.

Mar. My brother Charles—impossible!

Little P. 'Tis e'en so; and, faith, 'twas all a trick about the nurse and child. I coaxed the old woman

to confess the whole to me—you can't contrive to kill yourself for the loss of me, can you? that would have a fine effect. Is there nothing I can think off? Suppose you pretend to fall in love with me, and we run away together.

Mar. That will do admirably. Depend upon my playing my part with a good will; for I owe some revenge for their treatment of you; besides, you know I can refuse you nothing.

Enter OLD PICKLE, behind.

Little P. Thank you a thousand times, my dear-est Maria. Thus, then, we'll contrive it. (Seeing Old P. coming behind, they pretend to whisper.)

Old P. What! how's this? "Dear Maria, and I'll refuse you nothing!" Death and the devil! my daughter has fallen in love with that scoundrel and his yeo, yeo! (They embrace.) She, too, embraces him! (Comes forward.) Mighty well, young madam, mighty well! But, come, you shall be locked up immediately; and you, you young rascal, be whipped out of the house.

Little P. You will not be so hard-hearted, sure. We will not part. Here is my anchor fixed; here am I moored for ever. (Old P. endeavours to take her away, she resists, and Little P. detains her.)

Mar. We'll never part. Oh! cruel, cruel fate.

Old P. He's infected her with his assurance already. What, do you own you love him?

Mar. Love him, sir! I adore him; and, in spite of your utmost opposition, ever, ever shall.

Old P. Oh! ruined, undone! What a wretched old man, I am!—But, Maria, child,—

Mar. Think not to dissuade me, sir! No, sir; my affections are fixed never to be recalled.

Old P. Oh! dear! what shall I do? what will become of me? Oh! a plague on my plots! I've lost my daughter; and, for aught I know, my son, too. Why, child, he's not worth a sixpence.

Mar. My soul abhors so low a thought! I despise wealth; know, sir, I cherish nobler sentiments.

"The generous youth shall own, I love him for himself alone."

Old P. What, poetry, too! Nay, then, 'tis time to prevent further mischief. Go to your room. A good key shall assure your safety; and this young rascal shall go back to sea, and his yeo, yeo, yeo, if he will.

Mar. I obey your harsh commands, sir, and am gone; but, alas! I leave my heart behind. [Exit.

Old P. Now, sir, for you: don't look so audacious, sirrah! don't fancy you belong to me; I disclaim you.

Little P. But that is too late now, old gentleman; you have publicly said I was your son, and I'll make you stand to it, sir.

Old P. The devil! here's an affair! John, Thomas, William!—[Enter Servants.]—Take that fellow, and turn him out of doors immediately!

Servants. Fellow! Who, sir?

Old P. Who! why, zounds! him there. Don't you see him?

John. What, my new young master? No, sir; I've turned out one already, I'll turn out no more.

Old P. He's not your young master; he's no son of mine. Away with him, I say!

Susan. No, sir; we know our young master too well for all that: why, he's as like your honour as one pea is like another.

John. Ay, heaven bless him! and may he shortly succeed your honour in your estate and fortune!

Old P. Rogues! villains! I am abused, robbed! (Turns them out.) There's a conspiracy against me, and this little pirate is at the head of the gang.

[Enter a Servant with a letter, and exits.]—[Odsso! but here's a letter from my poor boy, I see.—] This is a comfort, indeed. Well, I'll send for him home, now, without delay.—(Reads.) "Honoured sir, I heartily repent of having so far abused your goodness whilst I was blessed with your protection; but, as I fear no penitence will ever restore me to your favour, I have resolved to quit this country, and return to my country for ever."

